

Saturday March 18, 2023
NCECA Conference
Open Board meeting/listening session
Duke Energy Convention Center room 205.

Meeting called to order by NCECA President Rhonda Willers at 12.45PM ET.

Board and staff in attendance: Rhonda Willers, Alex Hibbitt, PJ Anderson, Pam Kravetz, Cal Cullen, Ife Williams, Dina Perlasca, Stacy Larson, Pete Pinnell, Antra Sinha, Simon Levin, Angelique Scott, Chanda Zea, Michelle Castro, Adam Chau, MaPó Kinnord, Marko Biddle, Jeff Vick, Heidi McKenzie, Gerald Brown, Tammy Lynn, Allyson Hoffelmeyer, Josh Green, and around 50 members.

Meeting called to order by NCECA President Rhonda Willers at 12.45PM ET.

Rhonda welcomed the attendees and gave some guidelines for the listening session, asking attendees to introduce themselves as they spoke.

Jonathon Kaplan- thanked the board and staff for a fabulous conference. He has lobbied the board over the years to please consider Denver again as a conference venue. Denver has a great clay culture and robust infrastructure.

Chris Salas- 2nd year student at Cranbrook, ran a project with a group of 5 in the project space. They had a great time, with over 400 participants, but wished they had received more support. Their honorarium did not cover their costs for materials and the number of people involved. An honorarium should be extra after costs are covered. They also had some communications issues with NCECA. They suggested requesting a budget form with proposals, and award proposals based on financial disbursement.

Rhonda thanked them and appreciated the specificity of the feedback.

Lynn Hughes, from North of Seattle suggested that the Emerging Artists should be put in the opening ceremonies so folks could appreciate their work more and know more about them.

Sam Shamard commented about the project space and the need to have a mechanism of volunteers to help cover when they had to go get food etc.

Jeff Rogers, Orlando Florida, stated that the last conference he attended was in Denver (23 years ago), because he has been working abroad. Most of his work in life has been centered within social justice. He had no idea there was so much DEIA movement in NCECA, "it is a joy to see it and truly wonderful".

Garnet, Ceramics Studio Garnet, Colorado asked how NCECA is going to respond to the 12 LGBTQ+ ban bills currently moving through the West Virginia legislature. Rhonda responded that she did not have information currently about the legislation Garnet was referring to, but that

NCECA takes great care in decisions around conference locations and chose Salt Lake City partially based on how much it is ranked as a safe space for LGBTQ individuals.

Rhonda will Connect with Garnet to discuss how we communicate to our membership about our discussions and intentions about these issues. Heidi added that the Collaboration and Engagement Statement is inclusive of LGBTQ + communities.

Jesse Albrecht is at the conference to be more proactive. He is a military veteran who has had a long road home. Clay has been paramount as a bumper for him to get back. He offered his help.

Shirah Ruben, Boston, Harvard ceramics- Thanked everyone for a fabulous conference. She appreciated the throughline of community engagement and is interested in how we think about that in the future- She is thinking about the notion of introducing folks and how we can connect with one another.

Rhonda gave a very brief introduction to the online platform NCECA is working on for members to build community and connection.

Chris Salas said the opening and closing lectures were really impactful. They found the conference particularly impactful in bringing in marginalized voices. Sometimes the Keynote lecture focus can be an individual from outside art or ceramics, They found this year's format to be more impactful to them as an artist.

Bob Feder K-12 clay- thanked the board and staff for their amazing support.

Holly, from Saginaw, Michigan, a first-time conference attendee asked about resources for early career artists, for example is there a mentor/mentee program that can be implemented? Rhonda asked Holly what resources Holly would particularly want to see that they do not currently. Holly responded that everyone's needs are different and situational. What are the locations, where to find mentors, people don't know what to ask. MaPó- asked the attendees for input in organizing how we do that and with tagging needs- if you need something, help us design the solution.

Garnet suggested that it would be nice if there were rooms at the conference that could be topic based where people could drop in and have informal conversations (focused on those who may not already have communities at the conference.)

Liz Duarte- noted that the conference is spreading out a bit from Tuesday, Wednesday through Saturday. She suggested it be spread out and focus on less programming, allowing for more conversations and more community building on a Tuesday including maybe topic led conversation rooms Tuesday.

Rebecca Harvey, Archie Bray, Montana Thanked NCECA, to be able to have the conversation with loads of folks. She loves the framing of NCECA as "WE"

Mohamad Soudy from Egypt- First time attendee and Multicultural Fellow- he felt the conference was "like a flashlight in the eyes" an incredible experience where you can find any information you are looking for about clay and ceramics. He had some visa issues and suggested NCECA think about how we can allow international folks to attend through zoom as they can't be here because of cost, visa etc. How does NCECA create greater access and support?

Jesse Albrecht is excited to bring his daughter to the NCECA conference, but as a single dad wondered about daycare or caretaking options.

Aisha Patel expressed that after leaving school it can be hard to afford to come to the conference. Could there be more support for folks to come to the conference? Is there a grant funding webpage we could link to the NCECA webpage?

MaPó suggested folks think about regional or local events that could be more affordable and possibly sponsored by local institutions.

Sam Shamard From Austin Texas asked for better communications around engaging with the board and voting, as well as transparency. She is interested in being connected.

Rhonda closed the meeting by letting everyone know they will receive a survey after the conference and are welcome to reach out at any time to her or the board. She thanked everyone for joining the board and sharing their thoughts and thanked the board and staff for their work.

The meeting was adjourned by NCECA President Rhonda Willers at 1.45PM ET.