

January 11, 2021

TO: Board of Directors
FROM: Delia Zielinski
RE: Teaching Artist Task Force Progress Report

All Teaching Artists received an invitation on November 23, 2020 to participate in the Task Force (attached). A follow up reminder was sent November 30, 2020.

Twelve Teaching Artists signed on. The Teaching Artist Task Force is now composed of Teaching Artists ranging from co-founders to new Teaching Artists, with Inclusive Theatre Company, Cabaret, and tuition/contract class experience.

The first meeting of the Task Force was held on December 17, 2020. A summary is attached.

The second meeting is scheduled for January 9, 2021.

Invitation sent to 48 Teaching Artists

Subject Line: Calling all interested ArtStream Teaching Artists!

WE WANT YOU to join our new Teaching Artist Task Force! If you are intrigued, please keep reading...

As you know, we have been online for almost 8 months now! The 2020-2021 season is well underway, with 4 Inclusive Theatre Companies (and 2 more on the way), 2 Cabarets, and many successful classes. In addition to completing 4 Inclusive Theatre Company performances and the *Salute to ArtStream*, two Cabarets, and numerous classes, 24 ArtStream Artful Moments, and two international collaborations, YOU have figured out how to make Zoom into an effective teaching tool. Your dedication to each ArtStreamer's creativity and learning is the key to our success. Now we want your creativity and knowledge on this new Task Force.

The ArtStream Board of Directors, including Teaching Artist Liaison Delia Zielinski, **wants YOU to take the lead on a Teaching Artist Task Force(s) designed to help ArtStream fulfill its mission:** *Through collaborative performance and lifelong learning opportunities, people with intellectual and developmental disabilities gain the skills and confidence to engage with the world.*

For example, in order to fulfill our mission, the Task Force will:

- Review our current programs (also consider what other organizations are doing) and recommend program format and curriculum design improvements, new topics, or new models to better serve more people with IDD's and reduce barriers to participation.

- Assist ArtStream with outreach to attract a diverse group of students and Teaching Artists (this could take the form of new programs, outreach activities by Teaching Artists and/or staff, new marketing materials, etc.).
- Assess what parts of online programming might continue after the pandemic ends, or how we can make it easy for people with transportation or tech challenges to participate now and in the future.

Note that this list was not created to be limiting or to be in any way “required”. The overall goals are to fulfill ArtStream’s mission by bringing in new participants, expanding existing programs if needed and feasible, and piloting new or enhanced programs that have the promise to better fulfill our mission and attract new participants.

The Task Force will report to the Board of Directors. Delia will be a member of the Task Force. Teaching Artists will have full control over the meeting leadership and agendas. Lyndsey and Sarah will assist the Task Force by arranging the meetings and supporting tech needs.

In recognition of your commitment of thought, creativity and time, we will pay you \$80 for each Task Force meeting. We anticipate the meetings will last 1-2 hours each, with additional work completed between meetings. A minimum of 3-4 meetings is anticipated. We appreciate your participation and your commitment to ArtStream.

We plan to start the Task Force on zoom in December 2020. The Board requests that during the initial meetings you develop a preliminary proposal outlining your objectives, steps you plan to take to achieve your objectives, additional costs you anticipate, and a schedule for additional meetings.

Please let us know your interest in serving on the Task Force by 6 p.m. November 30, 2020.

Please contact me at h.shapiro@art-stream.org or Delia at delia.zielinski@gmail.com with any questions or suggestions.

Sincerely,
Heller An

TEACHING ARTIST TASK FORCE SUMMARY FIRST MEETING: DECEMBER 17, 2020, 5 - 7 p.m.

Present: Luke Scaros, Kathryn Hamilton-Lodge, Becky Webb, Nic Stearns, Sandy Roachford, Natalie Zanin, Mehdi Raoufi, Elana Polin, Delia Zielinski

Absent: Wendy Lanxner, Patti Woolsey

Teaching Artists serving on this Task Force represent a vast diversity of experience and discipline. We are directors, class teachers, special ed teachers, and some of us work for other artistic organizations, run our own theaters, studios, and have advanced degrees in artistic and educational fields.

What has worked well for you in ArtStream this year?

Comments included: Teamwork - keeping our students social and moving forward - saving lives! - created joy - connection - we transitioned to online well and quickly - we learned new skills by teaching online - some students are more focused and more comfortable on Zoom - they don't have to worry about going somewhere and being late, etc. - we were able to reach folks across the world! - the "world stage" would not have happened otherwise - feeds my soul - TA Happy Hours have been positive for developing and strengthening our AS community.

What has been challenging/not as easy this year?

Had a student registered for a class who rarely attended - student fell asleep in class (and stayed asleep!) - expectation of class with one student was off (they thought it would be one-on-one) - we don't really know how our students are doing (like other schools and organizations) - can we check in more on them? - technical problems with some students persist, how can we help them better? Can there be a devoted tech person for this issue?

NOTE: ArtStream has grant funding to contract for more tech support.

More Challenges and some specific suggestions for Improvements:

Can we promote more diversity in AS? How about considering a person of color for the newly opened position of Program Manager?

NOTE: Leah Robinson starts 1/11/21

How do we reach clients in DC/Takoma Park area? We need diversity to attract diversity.

Can we better delineate roles of management in rehearsals? Who manages what: ie., what does the AD do, what do the mentors do, etc.

Can we have more training sessions for TAs?

ITC's feel like we are reaching the "same ceiling" and are in a bit of a rut. Can we tie in classes to ITC's more efficiently? What about beyond the ITC? Kennedy Center? Other opportunities?

Can we make a Zoom tutorial ourselves for our clients? Something fun and less "lecturey?"

We teachers also need more tech training for this pandemic time.

Should we consider an alternative to Zoom? How about "Big Blue Button?"

Can we teachers “practice” some skills with the ArtStream zoom account? Outside of class/rehearsal? An hour before?

What else can be done for us teachers in terms of zoom fatigue and general checking-in?

NOTE: This training and practice time is available. We provided it in the spring of 2020 and can do so again.

Some new proposals were made for new classes, but responses not received. When can we suggest more class ideas? (Delia mentioned that this will be an objective of this new task force).

Recruitment

Do we have a “pitch” or “elevator speech” for ArtStream? What is it?

What flyers/postcards can we hand out? Kathryn mentioned she keeps AS materials in her car just in case.

How about more TA networking workshops?

“ArtStream Challenge” on social media: record content and tag folks on Facebook and IG to promote AS.

Can we teachers post AS content on social media? An admin could just “approve” a post.

NOTE from our Communications Manager: “Having teaching artists do a social media takeover would be great. But getting them to do a challenge, or a takeover during a tech week would be really interesting and engaging. We could easily work with teaching artists to make that happen!”

Perhaps AS should be on TikTok? It’s very popular. There are different “communities” there, too, to help pinpoint potential clients/interested parties. Comment added later: maybe this option is just for teachers and mentors, not our clients, as that would potentially expose them too much.

Nic does a “talk show” with Special Olympics that really engages the audience and sends them home with concrete info. S.O. is also very strong on social media.

How about a Podcast?

Becky has ideas about mentor training.

Last idea in this meeting

The newly opened position of Program Manager was brought up - some teachers feel that this position could possibly incorporate more support for the TA’s. Nic will mention some ideas to Heller An. To be continued...

NOTE: Leah Robinson has an MA in Special Ed.