



NEWS FROM TCA: FEBRUARY 2024

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Poet Naomi Shihab Nye and TCA Executive Director Gary Gibbs stand with the students who competed in the 2023 Texas Poetry Out Loud finals. Photo by Amanda Klaus.

Texas Poetry Out Loud Competition Finals February 24

The 2024 Texas Poetry Out Loud finals will be held in person at the Texas Spirit Theater in the [Bullock Texas State History Museum](#) on Saturday, **February 24** at 1:00 PM Central. The finals will be open to the public and free to attend. This year's finals will bring together the top ten competitors from across the state to determine the state champion and runner up. As well, the program will recognize each school winner for the year. The event will be hosted by internationally renowned Texas poet Naomi Shihab Nye.

NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS
AND POETRY FOUNDATION PRESENT



The [Poetry Out Loud](#) recitation contest is a national project of the National Endowment for the Arts and the Poetry Foundation. This exciting program helps

students master public speaking skills, build self confidence, and learn about their literary heritage. High school students memorize poems and perform them in competition. At the state level, the winner and runner up receive cash awards and their school libraries receive money to help them buy poetry books. Each state champ will compete in the national competition in early May for a pool of \$50,000 in scholarships for students and cash awards for schools. TCA is proud to be a part of Poetry Out Loud, which helps high school students explore poetry interpretation and find new modes of self expression while refining their public speaking skills. The finals event is graciously hosted by the Bullock Texas State History Museum.

Beware of SAM-UEI Scams



If your organization has a SAM UEI (System of Award Management Unique Entity Identifier) issued by the federal government, TCA wants to remind you this service is **100% FREE**. Scammers are sending out convincing looking “official” emails offering to help with SAM UEI renewals for a fee. **Renewals are free**, so any mention of a fee should alert you that the email is a scam. TCA recommends marking those emails as junk, blocking those senders, and deleting those emails. Only organizations that apply directly to a federal agency for funding need to renew their SAM UEI.

TCA Speaker Series: Unlock the Power of Local Foundations

TCA is launching its first Speaker Series event of 2024. This free webinar will be conducted on Zoom and is centered on helping attendees learn about local foundations and their grants. The discussion will include the differences between community and family foundations, how you can work them into your funding plans more effectively, and what to expect in building and managing your relationship with your foundation supporters.

The virtual meeting will be on **Tuesday, March 26, 2024**, from 11:00 am to 12:30 pm Central. It is open to arts nonprofits and members of the public.

TCA staff will be joined by two foundation professionals with a wealth of experience to share:

Bao-Long Chu is Program Director at Houston Endowment where he oversees the Foundation’s strategy to support and grow the region’s arts, culture, and parks ecosystem. Chu is a poet and his libretto for the opera *Bound*, composed by Huang Ruo, premiered in Houston in 2014, New York in 2019, and Seattle in 2023.



Katy Sauer is the Program Officer at Still Water Foundation, a private family foundation that supports organizations working in the arts, education and environmental conservation. Katy’s background is in social work and nonprofit consulting, and she enjoys working together with nonprofits to execute grants that are responsive to community needs.



Mark your calendar and [register today!](#)

TCA selected this topic using feedback from constituents, and we expect that future meetings in this series will address other needs expressed by members of the Texas arts field.

Please note: registration does not guarantee a spot in this event, as spaces are limited. Be quick to join us on the day of to experience this conversation in real time!

Governor Abbott appoints TCA Commissioners, Chair



TCA is pleased to share news of appointments to our board. We look forward to working with our three new Commissioners, welcoming back reappointed Commissioner Patty Nuss, and celebrating the leadership of our new Chair, Karen Partee.

Karen Partee of McKinney was appointed to be the Chair of the Texas Commission on the Arts by Governor Greg Abbott in January of 2024. Partee is executive vice president and chief marketing officer of Texas Bank and Trust Company. She is past president and a sustaining member of the Junior League of Longview and a member of the Institute of Certified Bankers, Longview Regional Medical Center's Women's Advisory Council, and the Longview Ballet Advisory Board. Additionally, she is co chair of the Marketing Advisory Board for the American Bankers Association. Partee received a Bachelor of Arts in journalism from Texas Tech University. Additionally, she received a diploma from the American Bankers Association School of Bank Marketing and Management and the Institute of Children's Literature and a certification from the American Institute of Bankers.

Abid Neemuchwala of Little Elm is co founder and director of Dallas Venture Capital. He is a board member of the World Affairs Council of Dallas/Fort Worth. Neemuchwala received a bachelor's degree in electronics and communication from National Institute of Technology, Raipur, India, and a master's degree in industrial management from Indian Institute of Technology Bombay, Mumbai, India.



Patty Nuss of Corpus Christi is self employed in commercial real estate. She currently serves as president of the Corpus Christi Symphony Society, trustee of the Art Museum of South Texas, board member of the South Texas Botanical Gardens, and a sustainer of the Junior League of Corpus Christi. Previously, she volunteered as president of both the Art Center of Corpus Christi and the YWCA of Corpus Christi. Nuss is a graduate of Stephens College in Columbia, MO and of Southern Methodist University.

Kent Perkins of Mingus is a retired Screen Actors Guild and American Federation of TV and Radio Artists actor and currently owns Lincoln Village Shopping Center. He is a member of the Historic Camp Bowie Business District of Fort Worth and Farm Bureau of Erath County. Additionally, he is a philanthropic supporter of CASA, The Clarion Project, and Billy the Kid Film Festival.



Nancy C. Windham of Nacogdoches is president and CEO of the Texas Forest Country Partnership. She previously served as interim executive director of the Lufkin Economic Development Corporation, president and CEO of Nacogdoches Economic Development Corporation, and vice president of the Frisco Economic Development Corporation. She is an honorary life member of the Texas Economic Development Council and fellow of the Industrial Assets Management Council. She is a member of the Texas Rural Practitioners Executive Board, Nacogdoches County Hero Foundation, and Texas Forest Trail Region Board. Additionally, she is a former appointee of the Podiatric Medical Examiners Advisory Board, Texas Economic Development Corporation Board, and the Stephen F. Austin State University Board of Regents. Windham attended Stephen F. Austin State University and is a graduate of the University of Oklahoma Economic Development Institute. Her studies also include basic industrial development at Texas A&M University.

Real Places: Texas Historical Commission Conference



TCA is a member of a group of State agencies that work together under a memorandum of understanding to promote tourism. One of our partner agencies, the Texas Historical Commission, is holding a conference soon that will address the needs of museums and other cultural venues. In fact, TCA will participate in a

session about cultural districts and main street programs, and there are several other sessions about using the arts to add more value and understanding to history and Texas places.

The Texas Historical Commission's Real Places 2024 conference will take place both virtually and in person, in Austin, April 3-5. Presented by the Friends of the Texas Historical Commission in partnership with Phoenix I Restoration and Construction, LLC, Real Places is the premier historic preservation and heritage tourism event in the Lone Star State, where anyone interested in protecting our past can work directly with industry leading experts to learn practical, actionable solutions they can apply in their community.

The packed schedule features more than 60 workshops, tours, and sessions; over 100 expert speakers from across Texas and the U.S.; five keynote presentations; and several fun networking events. Recordings will be available to all attendees, whether joining online or in person, so you'll be able to watch the great presentations you

missed due to concurrent sessions.

Discounts are available for students and organizations registering multiple people at the same time. Learn more and sign up at realplaces.us.

Support Texas Arts with the *State of the Arts* License Plate



TCA's new black and silver *State of the Arts* minimalist design license plate is shipping and is available to order at <https://www.myplates.com/go/arts>.

This plate design can go on a passenger car, motorcycle, trailer, or private bus (attention, Texas bands!). TCA will receive a portion of the sales of the plate. Note that this plate is

part of MyPlates' "Lone Star Series," but only the *State of the Arts* plate supports TCA. There is a price break for those ordering their plate for multiple years. Make a long term commitment to the arts!

Apply to Be a TCA Grant Evaluator

Each year, TCA invites roughly 200 Texans to serve as peer reviewers of the grant applications we receive. We are grateful to these members of our arts field who donate their time and knowledge to our panel review process and assess the quality of grant applications. The peer review process is central to the Commission's efforts to maintain an accountable, accessible awards system for the State of Texas.

If you would like insight into the grant evaluation process, we invite you to nominate yourself to serve on a panel. TCA is not able to pay for this work, but it will allow you to gain experience as a grant evaluator, see how other organizations present their programs and challenges, and ensure that TCA grant decisions can be made—we really can't do this without you. Nominations are accepted year round and can be made [here](#).

Panels can be held online or in person in Austin. TCA reimburses for travel and hotel costs for in person meetings. For online panels, TCA assigns reviewers no more than 25 grant applications to help keep the workload reasonable. **Evaluators can also be grant applicants**—TCA excludes evaluators from reviewing and scoring an application that they submitted or have any other conflict of interest with.

Grantee Spotlight: Serving Artists, Schools, Organizations, & More!

Every fall, TCA staff spend many, many hours reviewing report forms that grantees submit as they close out their grants. These reports share organizations' trials and tribulations, challenges and solutions. Many of these stories will resonate with



others across our field, so we're sharing some of them through grantee spotlights.

Today we are highlighting the **Arts Respond Performance Support** grant program, which supports work done by **Texas Touring Roster** artists. These two related resources are designed to ensure that all Texans can enjoy work done by outstanding Texas based

companies and artists in their own communities. While we're focusing on work done in schools for this article, these programs can be used much more broadly, serving all ages.

The Texas Touring Roster consists of approved arts organizations, groups, and individual artists offering various services in all artistic disciplines. Each artist accepted onto the Roster goes through an adjudicated, competitive application process and has a profile on TCA's online [Texas Touring Roster](#).

Texas nonprofits and units of government (including schools and libraries) can use the Roster to select an artist or group to come to their community—for one performance, or several. They can also hire artists or groups to work with students or other community members over an extended time. For example, schools and libraries often engage teaching artists on the touring roster to lead workshops. Workshops include direct arts instruction for students or providing professional development services to educators. Once a Roster artist has been hired, their client may apply for the noncompetitive [Performance Support grant](#) to fund a portion of the artist's fee.

The simplest way to use the Roster is to hire an artist to give a performance. Many artists offer performances or presentations that are fun and reinforce student learning and understanding. For example, last year the **Magik Theatre** went to schools and performed *Eddy and Vinny*, a play that explores and raises awareness about dyslexia. Mary Beth Marek Elementary in Pearland brought in author **Chris Barton**, who discussed his process of writing books about subjects he's curious about. Through his presentation, he addressed how students could improve their writing by incorporating research, revision, and collaboration.



Arts organizations can hire Roster artists and present them in schools that may be unable to afford the artist on their own (or even with TCA help)—this way, the organization pays the artist's full fee with some help from TCA. Young Audiences of Houston has received Performance Support grants to hire **Brave Little Company** to provide semester long theater arts workshops in school settings, for example. TCA's rural tours program sends Texas Touring Roster artists like musician **SaulPaul** out into schools to give free performances in rural counties.

TCA is proud to be able to maintain the Texas Touring Roster and the Performance Support grant program. Together, they support Texas artists and provide expanded access to incredible arts experiences to Texans.

Brave Little Company photo by Alan Nguyen; SaulPaul photo collage courtesy of SaulPaul

Save the Date: 2024 Young Masters

In early March, TCA Commissioners will approve the 2024 class of Young Masters. We'll celebrate them in our March newsletter, and we can't wait to applaud them in person in April!


Texas Young Masters is a joint initiative between the Texas Commission on the Arts and the Texas Cultural Trust recognizing 8th through 11th grade students from across the state who demonstrate excellence in dance, theater, music, film/media, visual arts, literary arts, and folk & traditional arts. The program awards 15 students with \$10,000 in grants over two years to enhance and build their professional artistic study before they go to college.

The 2024 Young Masters will be honored at ZACH Theatre in Austin on **April 16!** The Young Masters event is fun for the whole family, featuring Ray Benson from Asleep at the Wheel, Trevor Scott from We Are Austin, and other special guests! More information on the event is [here](#).

2024
TEXAS YOUNG MASTERS

*Join us in supporting and celebrating the
Texas legends of tomorrow!*

APRIL 16TH, 2024 | ZACH THEATRE

A PROGRAM OF:
TEXAS CULTURAL TRUST  **TEXAS Commission on the Arts**

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