



2021 Virtual Arts & Culture Summit

P1 Welcome & MCACA

Mercedes Michalowski, Board President & Oliver Arts Center

Gary Gatzke, Interlochen Center for the Arts

Mary Bevans Gillett, NW MI Arts & Culture Network

Alison Watson, Michigan Council for Arts & Cultural Affairs

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Gary Gatzke (Interlochen Center for the Arts) [00:00:01] All right, good morning, everyone. It's nine thirty two a.m. and I think we will get started. I'd want to start off by welcoming you all to the twenty twenty one Arts and Culture Network or excuse me, the Arts and Culture Summit of the Northwest Michigan Arts and Culture Network. We want to thank the Michigan Council for Arts and Cultural Affairs, as well as Traverse Connect and Michigan's Creative Coast. I am an employee with Interlochen Center for the Arts and we are facilitating today's summit via zoo. And I'd like to turn things over to the Northwest Michigan Arts and Culture Networks Board President Mercedes Michalowski.

Mercedes Michalowski (Oliver Arts Center) [00:00:47] Thank you very much, Gary. I wanted to welcome everybody this morning to our fifth summit. As many of you remember, our first summit took place in 2013 at the lovely Interlochen Center for the Arts in the middle of a blizzard. And we held one every year up until last year, which made to cancel, obviously, due to the pandemic. So why we weren't able to gather in person again this year. We did feel it was really important to gather, to come together as a network, to come together as a region and discuss things that are facing our organizations and our individuals and our industry. As Gary said, my name is Mercedes's Michalowski. I'm currently serving as board president and then my day job as executive director at Oliver Arts Center in Frankfurt, Michigan. So, we hope you enjoy today's summit. We hope that you leave learning some new things, maybe having met some new people and added new tools to your toolbox. If at any time you have any questions, feel free to reach out to anyone of the board members or members of the network. And let's just enjoy our day.

Gary Gatzke [00:01:51] Thank you, Mercedes, I'm going to do a little bit of housekeeping before we dove into today's sessions, but again, my name is Gary Gatzke, associate director of Continuing and Community Education for Interlochen Center for the Arts. I oversee Interlochen College of Creative Arts, our lifelong learning wing of the organization, as well as a community education initiatives. I serve on the board of the Northwest Michigan Arts and Culture Network, as well as a musician, a classical double bassist with the Traverse Symphony Orchestra and the Great Lakes Chamber Orchestra. I wanted to start today by doing a bit of housekeeping. I'm going to share our schedule for the day up on the screen. So we're starting here with our welcome and we will move into our first panel, *The Pandemic Pivot*, at 9:45 a.m. we will have a few minute break between panels, moving into *Building Diversity and Inclusion*. Likewise, we'll take a very momentary break before the 11:30 panel, *Powering Art in Public*. Interlochen President Trey Devey will join us for a short presentation and question and answer session starting at 12:5 p.m.. We will then go into our lunch break between 12 30 p.m and 1:15 p.m. During today's lunch break, we will have the option available for some informal breakout sessions: one of those is a drop-in meeting with staff from MCACA; the other is for those

individuals who are new and or emerging leaders in our arts community; and the rest is an open networking session. And we will use the Zoom breakout function for folks to choose which breakout room they'd like to go into. And again, this is not mandatory, though, encouraged. We will reconvene at 1:15 p.m. today for a reconvening session before we dive into breakout sessions. Now, today, we are going to remain in this Zoom meeting and use the breakout session function within this room. So if you get cut off of this meeting for any reason, there's just one link that was sent to you via email. So, you just have to jump back onto that link and I'll make sure that you're let into the meeting. Between the two breakout sessions, we will take a very short break and then conclude the day together at three o'clock pm where we'll talk about next steps and our adjournment. And, for those who wish to stick around, we will network and socialize and if you're in the comfort of your own home or a location and you feel it's appropriate to crack open a beverage or libation, you're more than welcome to do so. With that, I want to mention, since we are using the standard zoom function for today's summit, if you choose speaker view and the upper right hand corner of your screen, that will allow you to focus more on those who are speaking as part of today's panels versus looking at the Brady Bunch screen. But, that is completely up to you as well. We ask that you keep your mic muted. If you have questions throughout a panel, please feel free to use the hand raising function or you may type your question in the chat. I am now going to turn things over to the northwest Michigan Arts and Culture Network's director, Mary Gillett.

Mary Gillett (NW MI Arts & Culture Network) [00:06:01] Welcome, everyone. Just a quick note that if anybody needs to access anything online, remember to access our website – www.nwmiarts.net under the connecting tab. We have the links directly to our summit. You can access speaker bios or the schedule online, and you can also download the PDF that Gary was just showing...and I have, admittedly, sent you probably five times in various states with various typos that you have all helped correct via crowdsourcing! Anyway, it's a pleasure to be here. I am honored and thrilled to welcome everyone to the group today and, especially, to introduce our first speaker, Alison Watson, who is the executive director for Michigan Council of Arts and Cultural Affairs and has been a long time partner and friend to all of the arts and cultural entities and artists in northern Michigan and throughout the state. MCACA serves to encourage development, facilitate and enrich the environment of creative and cultural activity in Michigan. The Council envisions a Michigan where every citizen celebrates the state's cultural treasures and arts and cultural experiences are accessible to all citizens. Alison has numerous years of experience in Michigan's arts and culture sector and has held leadership roles at the Michigan Theater in Jackson, the Arts and Cultural Alliance of Jackson County, as well as program work with VSA Arts of Michigan and the Michigan Association of Community Arts Agencies. I am thrilled to welcome my colleague, my friend and my boss overseeing the MCACA Regrant work that we do up here. Alison Watson.

Alison Watson (Michigan Council for Arts & Cultural Affairs) [00:08:10] Hello, everyone. Thank you so much for letting me join you today...seeing so many of your faces and you're smiling on a Tuesday morning. So, I love it. I think that I've decided two things in just the short period of time since we started: One, I want Gary to be the facilitator for every meeting I have from now on. He has such a calming voice of getting us together and walking us through. So, Gary, you're now in charge of every meeting I have. And I'm going to take that fabulous introduction with me, too. For every meeting. It makes me feel really good this morning. I know we've got a packed schedule today and we're already probably running short on time. I can talk for hours, as many of you know. So feel free to give me the hook sign and I will I will wrap up because I feel like there is so much that I want to share with all of you this morning. And keeping things brief is not my strong suit.

I wanted to give you all a huge thank you for everything that you've done in the past year. It's been it's been a crazy year, right, for us all, both personally and professionally in the last year or, gosh, over a year now, it's been crazy and insane for all of us. And it's hard, I get it, we all get it. There's so much going on in our personal lives with our families and our friends and trying to stay connected. And then you all are called upon so much to have been and continue to be that space where we as individuals, where our communities can go to find some sort of safe place to engage in arts and culture outside of our four walls of our home. And that's hard. That's hard. When you're juggling all of the things that we have going on personally and then trying to make these amazing experience is still possible for our communities. So I can't thank you enough to for all of the work that you're doing and the ways of you're thinking about your programs in the future. It's huge work. You're going to be called upon even more in the next few months or even a year, at least in the next year going forward of how do we get our communities back engaged? How do we continue to find and create programing that people want to take part of? People are craving for it. Everyone in this state is craving for those experiences. And you are going to all be called upon to do that work or continue to do that work. So thank you for finding those ways to be engaging and making sure that every citizen in your community can find a way to be creative to enjoy the benefits of arts and culture throughout their days.

I think sometimes we've been a little quiet over the last year because like you, we've been figuring on trying to figure things out. We had made some monumental shifts in the way that that we were trying to work and move forward and think about how we can be a resource in our state other than just for funding. Now, don't get me wrong, funding is a big part and we don't ever want to change that. But what are the other ways that we can be of use and use to you and use to the citizens in our state? And we felt that we were full steam ahead about a year ago. And then the brakes, like all of us, the brakes locked into place. And now in the last month or so, we feel like we're getting back on track of identifying what those resources are that we haven't tapped into that we can be part of. So I want to share with you some of those things and also make sure you understand that fighting for appropriation dollars, whether they're from our state or federal level, will be and will be and always will be, regardless of all these other initiatives that we're working at will always be at the forefront of what we want to do. We will continue to look for funding, to try to increase programming support in our state. Sometimes, like I said, as I talk about some of the new initiatives that we're working on, it might feel like we're veering off track a little bit. But the end goal is that if we can build some new initiatives and new programing, that that eventually can help you all in expanding the programs and services that you do so that every member of your community can engage in arts and culture.

So thinking about this year's budget cycle, we've been working hard to secure funding both on a state and federal level. We did receive confirmation of our federal grant of work. So that is good news. We actually got a small increase. It's not much. It's about thirty thousand dollars. But hey, I will take a \$30,000 increase. It's better than a \$30,000 loss. So it's not a giant leap in the amount of allocation from our federal partners, but it's something so we know we have that secured and moving forward for our FY22 grants. The budget process in our state is still in process as it looks right now. I'm going to, fingers crossed, knock on wood and hopes that I don't jinx this. But we have the governor. So there's always three budgets in the process before a final budget is received. The first one is the governor makes her recommendation and which was status quo funding for us. Then the House and the Senate both released a budget. Of course, nobody agrees. So there becomes three separate budgets, one budget that was released left at status quo as we are. The other one gave us an increase, as I'd like to be Pollyanna and really push and drive the increased budget. But most likely, hopefully, there will be a meeting in the middle and will perhaps recover the six hundred thousand that we lost last year in the FY21 funding. But even if we continue to remain status quo or slight increase or back to the

level in these times, I'm OK with that. That might not sound as the right thing to say, but as long as there's not additional cuts, I'm still good with it. So we're working on that. And we thank our Cultural Advocacy Network folks for helping and any of you that attended the Cultural Advocacy Day and helping to spread that word. So we have that. So we're feeling good. We're moving forward with programming for FY22, a status quo in terms of grants. Now for the fun stuff that we've been able to work on and kind of move back and forth. We've got some stuff, several new initiatives that we are in the beginning stages of. And we hope that along the journey of developing these that you might perhaps want to take part in and we'll be working closely with Mary on a couple of them. She'll be sharing out information as that comes forward. So three of those. Three, maybe four. The first is that we've been able to secure some federal base resources for is a creative aging program. Although many organizations in our state are already providing programs for our aging population, this is a new initiative that in partnership with the National Assembly of State Arts Agencies and the Aroha Philanthropies. This will actually give us some planning to work with all of our regions in the state to develop what a creative aging program should be or could be in our state. So we'll be spending the next two years working with our regional regranting partners and convening folks within each of those 15 regions, as well as working with our counterparts in the Commission on Aging, because they too have regions set up similar to ours, looking at what would have strong regional impact and not just be large statewide program run out of Lansing. Perhaps it would run through our regional branching network so that you can have some individualized and personalized programming for your region that makes sense for a creative, aging based program. So that's one of the things. The other piece that we've already secured funding and are planning for is a folk and traditional arts programming program. And similar to what we're doing with the creative aging program, we're going to be, again, pulling people together based on our regional partners to really talk about on a regional level. What does folk and traditional arts mean in your region? Our state is huge. And the various one, if you look at your region compared to, say, Western up the idea and what you feel is folk and traditional arts, it's different. So how can we on a regional level again find out more about folk and traditional arts in our communities and then develop programs that can run on a regional basis so that it's tailored and specific to the needs of those in your communities. So, Mary is part of both of those conversations and will be sharing information when we get moving and holding those groups. So, if you or somebody else maybe that you work with or an artist, whoever it is that you might know, that you feel could be a part of these conversations, as we're looking to develop this on a regional basis, please connect them with Mary and we'll make sure that they're pulled into the conversation. I'm going to go to more things and then I promise I'll let you move on! We're working with our veteran affairs department here in our state. So we are, again, going from the idea that we want to make sure that every citizen, regardless of where you live, who you are, what you do, you have access to arts and culture. So with our friends at Veterans Affairs, we're working on a two-step program. The first one is identifying organizations that are already providing services that might be either that might be specific to our veterans and their families. So we're in the process. If you haven't seen it already, I can share with you the survey that we've set out for identifying organizations that are providing basic things as well as discounts. Right. To active or veterans and their families. So finding out basic information like that, as well as a program that is specific to veterans as well. So we're again, looking to compile a list of organizations in our state that are providing those programs and services and sharing them. Because another thing we found out, like our Friends and Commission on Aging, is that our Veterans Affairs Department has regional offices as well. And so we're figuring out where those overlaps are so that we can share with those veteran regional offices, programs and services that they're veterans that they engage with and take part in. We're also looking at expanding their thinking about how can we, as arts and culture organizations, be better suited to work with our veterans. And currently, the Veterans Affairs Department does a veterans training

program for businesses so that they can be certified as veteran friendly workplaces. And so we're working with our Veterans Affairs Department to tweak their current programming so that nonprofit organizations can take part in it. And we look at it in a two-pronged approach is that, one, jobs that veterans. One of the things we heard two things when we met with. Some veterans is one, they said, well, I'm not an artist, so I'm not sure I would fit in with an arts and cultural organization, and I said, well, that's OK, because not everybody that works at an arts and cultural organization is an artist. We there's a lot of other jobs that are associated with working. So it's a business like any other well, you have maybe marketing communication skills. You're in finance, you're in communications, you're in facilities, you're in security. Guess what? All of our arts and cultural organizations need those types of jobs at their facilities as well. The other one thinking of nonprofits as being viable places of employment. And then the other part of it is that veterans that we heard from them, that they don't necessarily need the job, but they miss since they're since they're home now is the need for service. They miss the service to their country. And so how can nonprofits in their communities feel that help to fill that gap of the need for service? So we'll be working, developing, trying to develop and tweak this program so that arts and cultural as well as other nonprofits in your community can go through this training so they can be considered veteran friendly for both employment and for places of volunteering and B, that service to their community. So we're working through those programs. Obviously, when we get it ready, we'll be leaning heavy on all of our regional partners to get that information out into their communities and hopefully cut fingers crossed. We can do some piloting of that training by the end of the year and we'll be able to have some in-person training and meetings. So fingers crossed for that. And then the last piece that will be making a big push on, and I'm going to give you all a little bit of a heads up to. So hopefully nobody on my staff is here yet. I hope so, because they probably maybe don't say anything. One of the things that we have found out will be we're in the process of looking to expand our team and make some shifts in job responsibility, because with our new guidance from our federal partners is the expansion of accessibility ADA and accessibility is going to is a strong a strong push as we move forward. So what does this mean? This means that we're going to we're going to be making some tweaks and changes to some of the job responsibilities that Jeff has. The goal is this isn't all finalized. So, again, hopefully nobody on the staff will be giving it away. Jeff, it's going to be shifting some job responsibilities and he's going to be focusing 50 percent of his time on ADA and access going forward. As soon as we're able to get that position higher, he'll be he'll he will have a new operational support program manager. And then Jeff will handle just capital and access because with our federal partners and the strong push to making sure that our programs and services are not just physically accessible, but also programmatically accessible, Jeff will be working hard to get that to make that happen. Because if you are a current grantee of us in FY21 and are receiving operational support, you are getting federal dollars from us. The new federal requirement is that we will have to have in hand that ADA 54 workbook that we ask questions about in the grant application. We're going to have to start having those in hand if you're going to receive federal funding. So, what that means right now is that we'll be we're going through the list of our current grantees in FY 21 to see who has already completed that workbook and who hasn't. And we'll start working with you to make sure that you've completed that workbook for FY22. If you're awarded funds before you will be able to get a first payment from us, you will have to submit your 54 workbook. And at FY23, I know this seems a long way off, but for FY23, it'll be a required attachment as part of your operational support grant. It's a lot. I get it, but we have to be in federal compliance now, we will have to have readily accessible 54 workbooks. They've stepped up federal audits, and that's part of the compliance. So with it, it's perfect timing for us to make some adjustments to staff responsibility and get Jeff really working on that. But here's your little leg up. So if you can work, if you haven't completed those five final four workbooks, be thinking about it and start working on it to have those ready.

How am I doing? Am I out of time? I know that was kind of to end it but the silver lining is that you know about it now. And as you're starting to talk about community engagement and as we move forward, some of the new initiatives and thinking about whether it's creative aging based program, whether it's work with our veterans, we've got in the back burner and also some work with our Department of Correction friends to working with families who have a member incarcerated. All of those 54 workbook pieces is going to play a role in it. Right. And it's just going to get us ready not only for funding within our state, but also as far as funding becomes available on federal levels, that having that workbook will make you one step closer to be able to directly receive federal funding as well. I don't know about you all, but I'm pretty excited, I feel like we've got a lot of irons in the fire for the first time in a long time, but we all love the idea. For us, it's exciting to be able to kind of spread and expand some of the work that we want to do, that we love giving up funding. We love giving away money, don't get me wrong. But to be able to start thinking and exploring about new ways and trying to find and identify new funding that we can get into our state and push out into our communities is exciting for us. It gets us out of just the traditional grant cycle program year after year after year, and we get to have fun and think about it and talk with communities. And, you know, the piece of really working with our regional regranters is great because we don't want to just run our programs out of Lansing. With everything going forward, we want to really work and engage in in the regions and in communities so that it's not just us sitting in Lansing making decisions.