

Master of Arts in Arts Management E-Newsletter

The Program Continues to Move Forward! **By Richard Kamenitzer**

Full Membership

We were recently informed that the Board of the Association of Arts Administration Educators is recommending our MA in Arts Management program, in its very first year of eligibility, for full membership. The vote goes to the full membership at its annual meeting in April 2008. The meeting will be held in Wisconsin in 2008.

Curriculum Changes

This year we revised our curriculum to increase the number of credit hours required for core courses. Students must now complete 23 credit hours of core courses instead of the 18 credit hours previously required.

Board of Directors Course

MAM 606 - Board of Directors course has been reconfigured and is now a core course.

For the Board of Directors course, we are bringing in four of the region's true experts who have worked with and been on Boards of arts organizations for decades. They will take their respective experiences and set the stage for not only why Boards exist and what they intend to lend to arts preservation, nurturing and growth, but what arts managers need to know to help this group of most important volunteers be empowered to accomplish all they can. Michael Kaiser, President of the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, Mark Shugoll, President of Shugoll Research and Chairperson of Arena Stage, Brian Goldstein, attorney and board member of the Virginia Opera and Arts & Humanities Council of Fairfax County and Mary Chase, Principal of QM2 and museum/visual arts expert.

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New Courses, New Faces and Expanding Your Network

Four new courses have been added to the spring 2008 schedule: MAM 606 - Board of Directors (a reconfigured version); MAM 608 - Executive Communications Management (requires that MAM 604 be taken first); MAM 609 - Facilities Management; and MAM 705 - Budget/Finance for Arts Organizations II (the Budgeting sequel to MAM 704). MAM 704 - Budget/Finance for Arts Organizations I will also be offered again in the spring, but will be taught by a new instructor.

Professor Michael Hill will return, after having changed professional positions from Arena Stage to the National Cathedral, and will teach MAM 608. Julie Thompson, the guru of the Center of the Arts, will be teaching MAM 609. MAM 704 will be taught by Rick Johnson, The Chief Operating & Financial Officer of the Washington National Opera, and MAM 705 will be taught by Joe Beradelli, who is the Chief Financial Officer of Arena Stage. We also welcome back Professor Stephen Richard for the spring semester who returns to teach MAM 760 - Current Issues in Arts Management. He is the Executive Director at Arena Stage.

Richard Kamenitzer,
Associate Professor Arts Management,
Executive Director of the Center for Arts Management

Creative Economy News

[Editor's Note: The 2007 National Conference on the Creative Economy was held October 24-25, 2007 at the Hilton in Tysons Corner, Virginia. The following article is reprinted with the permission of the Fairfax County Economic Development Authority. For additional information about the Creative Economy in the Washington, DC metropolitan area, visit their web site <http://www.creativeeconomies.org>.]

An Arts Moment

Robert Lynch, president of Americans for the Arts, made a compelling presentation on the power of the arts in invigorating local communities. He showed a TV ad that is part of a \$130 million donated advertising campaign designed to promote more art in public education. Lynch cited statistics that underscored the arts' impact on the economy, including (1) there are 2,299 arts-related businesses in Fairfax County alone; (2) those businesses create more than 11,000 jobs, part of the 6 million arts-related jobs in the country; and (3) the economic impact of the arts in America is \$166 billion a year.

Lynch described the arts as a powerful force, albeit a quiet one. Because America was founded by and large by practical people who were not arts-oriented, our country's legacy is one that has undervalued the arts. Still, when it comes to improving the quality of life in the country, Lynch called the arts a "secret weapon," and that a greater investment in the arts would mean a "better child, better town, better America and better world."



About Robert Lynch. He is the president and CEO of Americans for the Arts, where he has served since the organization's inception in 1996.

Faculty's Corner

Three Grant Writing FAQs

By Sonja Carlborg

Over many years of teaching grant writing workshops and classes, I am repeatedly asked a number of questions. Here are answers to three that might benefit you:



Where can I find sample grant proposals? The Foundation Center is an exhaustive resource for research on private and corporate foundations. In addition to a free library you should absolutely visit (1627 K Street, NW in DC), the Foundation Center hosts a very useful FAQs page that gives some suggestions: <http://foundationcenter.org/getstarted/faqs/html/propsample.html>. Grant writing books usually have a few examples as well (770 section at the Foundation Center Library). The Foundation Center's Guide to Proposal Writing, 5th edition, is an excellent resource, including not only writing samples but comments from foundation personnel on how they like to be approached, what they look for in proposals, and answers to many other questions you may have wondered about.

What's an LOI? In grant writing parlance, LOI stands for Letter of Inquiry, Letter of Interest, or Letter of Intent. In any case, the LOI is brief letter, generally no longer than two and a half pages, that introduces your project and/or organization to a prospective funder. It is NOT a proposal. Usually funders will indicate how they prefer to be approached, either on their websites, in print guidelines, or in their Foundation Center descriptions. When in doubt, send an LOI, not a full proposal. If there are no other guidelines, an LOI should include: the ask (First line, please. Don't make the reader hunt for your request); mention of any interaction/history with the funder to date; a brief organizational history and mission; a statement of need; a short project description; a paragraph on finances, including total operating budget for current year, total project budget, and mention of any other funds secured or sought (including in-kind contributions); and a closing paragraph (indicate why you selected the funder, repeat the ask, thank the funder for consideration, and provide contact info). Enclose your brochure and a copy of your IRS 501(c)(3) letter.

Responses to LOIs can be: a) an invitation to submit a full proposal; b) check arrives in mail (very rare); c) not interested. In the final case, call to find out how your letter/project could have been improved and whether another submission would be welcome.

If funded, do we have to file a report? Absolutely, even if you are not asked for one. Next to forgetting to thank your donor, failure to file a report is the surest way to permanently damage your relationship with a funder. Not only will you be ineligible for renewal, but you'd be surprised how word gets around. If no other indication is given in your award letter, file your report one year from receipt of the check. Do not expect to be reminded by the funder. Keep track of these deadlines yourself.

Reports need not be lengthy. Return to the goals and objectives outlined in your original proposal. Report on activities that took place during the granting period and whether you achieved your objectives. Be frank about any unanticipated obstacles, lessons learned, and unexpected success. Give some indication of where you plan to go with this project in the future, if applicable. Talk about what you might do differently based on your experience.

If your program encounters serious obstacles, or you make significant changes during the granting period, alert the funder immediately. Do not wait until the report is due. Rarely do programs run exactly as planned. Most program officers understand that. They are invested in your success and will be willing to discuss alternatives or even brainstorm with you about solutions.

Good luck with your requests!

Alumni News

An Interview With Alison Christ

By Shawna Vacca

One day in 2004, after moving to Virginia from her home state of North Carolina, Alison Christ saw an ad in the City Paper soliciting individuals with management experience and a passion for the arts. She thought, "That's me!" And so she became the first student in the GMU MAM program. Today, she has her own arts enterprise, the Metamorphosis Art Space. It has shown local artists for the last couple years and will open a permanent home within the next year. Alison was interviewed about her work, education, management style and advice to MAM students for Dr. Meg Brindle's Seminar in Arts Management class.



Alison's undergraduate degree was in Restaurant Management, but she has always cared deeply about the arts and integrated it into her first career by having art shows in the dining rooms. Seven years ago, she became a self-taught mosaic artist herself. Her career in the restaurant business has fostered her arts management career. She gained 'people-skills,' contacts, some fundraising knowledge, and materially supportive employers. Her recent fundraiser was hosted by the Willow in Arlington, her current employer. They provided refreshments and were connected to about half of the participants. She has become very good at actively networking, as well, taking business cards with her everywhere and maintaining about 800 people on her contact list.

The MAM program was indispensable preparation for her enterprises today. Alison's 12 hours of fundraising classes and grant writing class have been directly helpful in sustaining her work.

As a manager, Alison is a natural leader. She has an extraordinary amount of energy, assumes more tasks than one might ordinarily, and people are drawn to her. She inspires others and motivates them, promoting their talents and mentoring whenever necessary. She helps her partner in business matters, trains and coaches volunteers and artists, and educates the general public. People like to be in her creative environment, be inspired and be motivated by her. She writes down a mission for every project, shares it with her partner and volunteers, and posts it on her websites.

One management dilemma she's encountered happened during her first Metamorphosis show. After designing the publicity postcards, she asked several people review them and provide her with feedback. One woman wanted an image of art showing a nude woman to be removed. Ms. Christ was dismayed at her reaction, but honored the request, although there was some controversy regarding whether she should. Her "lesson-learned" was to not ask for too many opinions. If you ask for too much then it can become someone else's project – not your own.

Two bits of advice Ms. Christ would give future arts managers are: 1) Know that you'll never be rich – you'll always be struggling. 2) Be 150% SUPER passionate about it – because that is the ONLY reason to get into it. Feel that you have something important to contribute. Her personal feeling is that the only thing that matters is art, "We are in a war. We've always been in a war... it's human nature to kill ourselves... If we succeed, and humanity ends as we know it, the art (literature, music, paintings, etc.) will be left and it will tell our story, describe our culture, and tell whoever finds it that there was beauty in humanity."

Events

Arts by George

By Kathy Beyer

The Arts by George gala was held September 29, 2007 at the Center for the Arts in Fairfax, Virginia. More than 400 guests attended and helped to raise \$50,000 in scholarship funds.

One of the unique benefits of the gala was the personal tour of the Performing Arts Building and Fine Arts Building. Patrons and guests were able to observe mini-performances by students and faculty within their own rehearsal/work environment.

Following the tour guests were treated to a performance by Broadway legend Barbara Cook in the Concert Hall. The choral students from the Music Department joined her on stage at the end of her performance to sing. It was a very moving experience.

The proceeds from the event support student scholarships for Art and Visual Technology, Dance, Film, Music, Theater, and Arts Management at George Mason University.

Many MAM students volunteered their time to help facilitate the evening--they staffed the student performance venues and were able to interact with guests. The MAM student's help was invaluable in making the event a success.

The 2008 Arts by George event is scheduled for Saturday, September 27. To volunteer or for additional information please contact Kathy Beyer at 703-993-4188 or via email at kbeyer2@gmu.edu.



From Left, MAM student volunteers Mike Hooke, Courtney Basich, Claire Sutherland, Whitney Gray, and Rebecca Friedman. Photo courtesy of Evan Cantwell



From Left, MAM student volunteers Whitney Gray, Mike Hooke, Elizabeth Cullins, and Allison Calhoun. Photo courtesy of Evan Cantwell

News From the MAM Student Advisory Board

The MAM Student Advisory Board continues to meet monthly to discuss student issues. The goal of the Student Advisory Board is to provide arts management students a means to communicate anonymously with faculty and staff about concerns regarding the program. We strongly believe that open communication between faculty and students is vital to the overall success of students. All Arts Management students are encouraged to communicate regularly with members of the advisory board regarding any issues, concerns, or ideas that may arise.

To help facilitate open discussion, the Student Advisory Board will conduct an open student forum at the beginning of the spring semester. Please read the weekly announcements for date, time, and location.

In addition to the advisory role, the Student Advisory Board strives to host a variety of student events throughout the year. Our next event, "A Holiday Social" will be held Friday, December 14 from 7:30 – 9:30 p.m. at The Townhouse to celebrate the close of fall semester. All attendees are encouraged to bring an unwrapped gift for Toys for Tots or arts supplies that will be donated to a local arts organization.

Please check your email or your Facebook page for the Evite and additional information regarding the event. Please make sure to RSVP as soon as possible; we look forward to seeing you all there!

Thanks for helping make this another great year for the MAM program

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Student Column

Symposium - "The Arts Manager - as Professional

By Shawna Vacca

"The arts really make a difference in people's lives. I've seen it. If you keep that front and center, you'll be fine" - Theresa K. Cameron

Amidst the promises of long hours, low starting pay and initial inability to use all of our newfound wisdom as MAM graduates, the flame of passion for midwifing the arts grew brighter. We were told to make many and good connections with others – and to learn from and leverage them; listen carefully to grantees and to our own guts as grant-makers; not be run over by boards – learn how to manage them; set our boundaries but work hard; learn our weaknesses because everyone else will; get a mentor... We learned what is sought in arts managers, organizations, and grant applications; what literature would be helpful to us; the typical day in the life of an arts manager; what advocacy arguments are effective; how the grant process works; the importance of strategic plans; what public resources are available to grant applicants... Did I miss anything? I'm sure I did. What a dense and inspiring talk Katherine Freshley, Theresa Cameron and Professor Richard Kamenitzer delivered on Thursday, November 15, 2007.

At the onset of the evening, Kamenitzer indicated that he wanted us to feel our community as Arts Managers. I'm not sure another forum could have accomplished it so well. As I listened to the humility, passion and utter devotion of these amazing women, I recognized their sentiments in myself. I looked around and realized our professor was right – everyone here shares the concern and commitment of our speakers. Passion has carried me a long way in this program (and I'm only a year in!), but to know you are one among many is another matter altogether. I once was a rock-climber. Most people think rock-climbers are a little 'out there' (they are). So, if you are at the crag and run into someone else there – this person is a friend just because he's 'out there' with you. It's a community even if we don't know one another personally. I felt this way that night. We as future Arts Managers share something very important and unique to us that was articulated beautifully by our future predecessors. As I make more connections in our network, learn their lessons and their networks, I increasingly grasp the power we wield by engaging our mutual passion and default friendship. What world are we going to build? Whose lives are we together going to help?



From left, Katherine Freshley, Theresa Cameron, and Richard Kamenitzer. Photo courtesy of Evan Cantwell

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