

HOUSTON ARTS PARTNERS 2014 CONFERENCE REPORT



REGIONAL ARTS EDUCATION CONFERENCE DRAWS 870 ATTENDEES TO DOWNTOWN HOUSTON

The 2014 Houston Arts Partners Conference, *The Global Classroom: Cultures and Communities*, was held September 5 – 6, 2014, and garnered a record-breaking 870 participants. **Rozie Curtis, Manager of Education at Theatre Under The Stars**, and **Larry Matysiak, Director of Fine Arts in Cypress-Fairbanks ISD**, served as co-chairs of the event, which was held at the **Hobby Center for the Performing Arts**.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Nationally Recognized Speakers
- 21 Arts & Culture Presentations
- 870 Attendees (Educators, Administrators, Principals, Non Profit Organizations, Artists, Community Members, Business Leaders, and Industry Professionals)
- 19 School Districts Represented (Texas)
- 2 Days Filled with Learning & Engagement
- Preview performances by Theatre Under The Stars cast members, Da Camera Young Artists, and students from MacGregor Elementary Jazz Ensemble

PANEL DISCUSSIONS

8 fascinating panels included *Creating Community through the Arts in Houston's Global Village*, *Arts Education Lowers Barriers to Higher Education*, *Arts as a Career Choice*, *The Art of Universal Design*, *STEM to STEAM*, *State of the Arts: Annual Legislative Update*, *Grants Toolbox for Schools*, and the 2015 Announcement and Kickoff Panel, *The Arts Fuel Innovation*.





NATIONAL SPEAKERS

Nick Rabkin is an arts consultant, planner, and researcher based in Chicago who has more than two decades of experience as an advocate for the arts in public education. He was a founder of CAPE, the Chicago Arts Partnerships in Education, which has pioneered the development of rich arts-integrated curriculum and pedagogy across the curriculum. He has written widely on arts education—in schools and out. He was an editor of the foundational collection of reports about the impact of arts education, *Champions of Change* (1999), and the president of the Michigan Board of Education said his book, *Putting the Arts in the Picture: Reframing Education in the 21st Century* (2005), “shows that arts integration is a practical solution to including the arts in busy schools where pressure to improve academic performance is high.”

Dr. James Haywood Rolling Jr., a dual professor of Art Education and Teaching & Leadership at Syracuse University, is the author of the new book *Swarm Intelligence: What Nature Teaches Us About Shaping Creative Leadership*, a surprising look at the social origins of creativity. Drawing upon cutting-edge research in the realms of biological swarm theory, systems theory, and complexity theory, Rolling shows why adaptive social networking and the natural principles of self-organizing, collaborative competition make us both smarter and more creative than a conventional emphasis on the promotion and high-stakes testing of individual achievement.

Dr. Anthony Brandt, Associate Professor of Composition and Theory at Rice University, **and Dr. David Eagleman**, a neuroscientist and *New York Times* bestselling author, drew on their upcoming book to show how integrating the arts and creativity into the classroom is necessary to prepare students for a fast-changing world that will require not only high-level skills but also flexibility, curiosity, and imagination.

MathDance: The Dr. Schaffer and Mr. Stern Dance Ensemble: Professional dancers/choreographers with backgrounds in math and science, Karl Schaffer and Erik Stern have pioneered active, creative workshops that help students understand underlying mathematical concepts and harness their physical energy. These Kennedy Center teaching artists have been creating cross-curricular performances and workshops for twenty years.



PARTICIPANT FEEDBACK

- “ This conference was paradigm shifting. I have already spoken to my administrators and will be sharing some of what I learned at a faculty meeting soon. THANK YOU HAP!”
- “ The conference was so well done!...it was so inspirational and got all the participants so ‘fired up.’ My art teachers are still talking about it and more specifically, they are integrating subjects with art and music with other subjects. Well done!”
- “ What a breath of fresh pedagogical air! Validation for a message I have been preaching for years!”
- “ It was a great experience! I’ve ALREADY contacted some of the organizations I learned about at the conference.”
- “ I wish I could have included my entire instructional team in this conference.”
- “ It was really a WOW! moment.”
- “ Best conference I have ever been to in my 29 years of teaching!”
- “ First time to go. Knocked my socks off. Really made me feel good to be surrounded by like minded peers. Reinforced so much of what I consider important in ways to teach/reach students. Discussions & Focus was so much more than I had anticipated! Cannot thank you enough for the rejuvenating feeling the conference gave me. Still chewing on what I heard & saw. Thank you so very much. When you’re the only art teacher in your school, it can be so isolating. There is so much disrespect & the feeling that you have to fight for everything because your curriculum is not considered worthy. It was nice to be surrounded by peers who support the feeling that it's a damn worthy battle to fight.”

SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS

- 94.26% of respondents agreed with this statement: *I have seen or experienced the value of using arts in non-arts classrooms.*
- 93.44% of respondents agreed with this statement: *I wish there were more opportunities for arts-based professional development besides the conference.*
- 66.12% of respondents agreed with this statement: *I would like my whole campus to participate in a large-scale arts partnership with at least one arts organization.*
- 42.15% of respondents agreed with this statement: *I need more help creating arts partnerships than I was able to receive at the conference.*
- 74.79% of respondents said they were Very Likely or Likely to attend more live arts events/museum exhibitions based on their experience at the conference.
- 67.22% of respondents said they were Very Likely or Likely to attend more professional development events from arts organizations at the conference based on their experience.
- 68.33% of respondents said they were Very Likely or Likely to create more partnerships involving classrooms and arts organizations based on their experience at the conference.





2014 DISTRICT PARTNER CONFERENCE COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Aldine ISD, Alief ISD, Brazosport ISD, Clear Creek ISD, Conroe ISD, Cypress-Fairbanks ISD, Fort Bend ISD, Galena Park ISD, Houston ISD, Humble ISD, Katy ISD, Lamar Consolidated ISD, Pasadena ISD, Spring ISD, Spring Branch ISD

2014 ARTS & CULTURAL PARTNER CONFERENCE COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Alley Theatre, Cynthia Woods Mitchell Pavilion, Da Camera of Houston, FotoFest, The Hobby Center for the Performing Arts, Holocaust Museum Houston, Houston Ballet, Houston Grand Opera, Houston Symphony, Main Street Theater, MECA, Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, Society for the Performing Arts, Theatre Under The Stars, Writers in the Schools, Young Audiences of Houston