

GEORGIA ART AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE FORUM:

**Igniting the
Impact of the Arts
in our Criminal
Justice System**



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GEORGIA LAWYERS
FOR THE ARTS



EMORY
UNIVERSITY



Emory University Law School | Friday, September 28th

WITH SPECIAL APPRECIATION TO:

Georgia Council for the Arts

The Art for Justice Fund

The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts

The Quentin Hancock Fund

AGENDA

9:00 - 9:30 Registration Hunter Atrium

9:30 - 9:45 Welcome Tull Auditorium

Dean Rita Sheffey, *Emory University Law School*

Meredith Ragains, *Georgia Lawyers for the Arts*

Alma Robinson, *California Lawyers for the Arts*

Sheila Cavanagh, *Emory University*

Karen Paty, *Georgia Council for the Arts*

Governor Nathan Deal (*via video*)

9:45 - 10:45 Plenary Panel Tull Auditorium

Setting the Stage: Georgia Criminal Justice Reform & the Arts

MODERATOR:

Doug Ammar, *Georgia Justice Project*

PANELISTS:

State Senator Brian Strickland

Dr. Heather Corbett, *Georgia Department of Corrections*

Marissa McCall Dodson, *Southern Center for Human Rights*

Beth Bienvenu, *National Endowment for the Arts*

Fred Eason, *Returning Citizen and Resident Artist at Atlanta Transition Center*

10:55 - 11:40 Workshops

Addressing Trauma through the Arts Room 1B

Trauma plays a powerful hand, though one often unseen, in the way in which we live our lives. This session will explore the impact of trauma on those in the criminal justice system and the dynamic role of the arts in healing. Our panel included experts in neuroscience, social work, psychology and arts programming in prisons.

FACILITATOR:
Sheila Cavanagh, *Emory University*

PANELISTS:
Andrea Pack, *Emory University Neuroscientist*
Sarah Higinbotham, *Common Good Atlanta*
Susan Bishop, *Lee Arrendale State Prison Choir*
Dr. Eric Schumacher, *Georgia Tech*

The Arts & Juvenile Justice Room 575

The impact of youth arts programming as a means of empowerment, skills building, developing perseverance and nurturing creativity is well known. The panelists in this session will discuss the successes, opportunities and lessons learned in developing arts programs that serve youth in various settings relating to the juvenile justice system including as a disruptor of the prison pipeline, as an alternative to sentencing, and as an educational and social emotional development opportunity for incarcerated youth. Opportunities to become engaged with the GA Department of Juvenile Justice will also be discussed.

FACILITATOR:
Gina Moore, *Crosswalk Ministries, ARTreach 180*

PANELISTS:
Latera Davis, *Georgia Department of Juvenile Justice*
Kate McLeod, *High Museum of Art*
Dare Dukes, *Deep Center*
Chris Appleton, *WonderRoot*

How To: Bringing Arts Programs to State Prisons Room 5F

This session will serve as a how-to training on developing arts programs for adult offenders in the state prison system. The panelists will share their experience, tips and invaluable insights on developing prison art programs in Georgia that will positively impact offenders' lives and assist them in reintegrating into today's world.

FACILITATOR:
Gail Deschamps, *Rome Shakespeare Festival*

PANELISTS:

Lucy Fugate, *HeartBound Ministries' Art From the Inside*

Andrea Shelton, *HeartBound Ministries*

Deputy Warden Jeanie Kasper, *Georgia Department of Corrections*

Wende Ballew, *Reforming Arts*

11:50 - 12:30 **Keynote Conversation** Tull Auditorium

Tayari Jones, *author of An American Marriage*

12:30 - 1:10 **Networking Lunch**. Hunter Atrium

1:15 - 1:40 **Performance** Tull Auditorium

The Voices of Hope, *Lee Arrendale State Prison Choir*

1:50 - 2:30 Workshops

**Arts as Access to Empowerment,
Enrichment & Employment.** Room 5E

This session will discuss the intersections of art, advocacy and healing with members of the criminal legal reform and creative communities. Panelists will discuss how art can be used by impacted people to both advocate for change and empower the voiceless to heal themselves and transform their environments.

FACILITATOR:

Beverly Iseghohi, *BMI & Associates*

PANELISTS:

Dantes Rameau, *Atlanta Music Project*

Fabian Williams, *Artist*

Nancy Flake Johnson, *Urban League of Greater Atlanta*

Cadeem Gibbs, *The ROUNDTABLE Project*

Shanti Das, *The Hip-Hop Professional Foundation, Inc*

Arts Programs and Reentry Room 5F

The role of the arts in the lives of ex-offenders as a social and emotional support in reintegrating into society will be discussed on this panel. Participants will share program

successes and lessons learned and personal stories in the context of employment, community support and building confidence in reentry.

FACILITATOR:
Andrea Shelton, HeartBound Ministries

PANELISTS:
Rachel May, *Synchronicity Theatre*
Omar Howard, *Chaplain, Atlanta Transitional Center*
John Turner, *Community Review Board member*
Angela Marshall, *Urban League of Greater Atlanta*
Page Dukes, *Piedmont College Student*

2:40- - 3:30 Plenary Panel Tull Auditorium

Catalyzing Opportunity: Art in Criminal Justice

MODERATOR:
Bill Taft, *Common Good Atlanta*

PANELISTS:
Deputy Warden Jeanie Kasper, *Georgia Department of Corrections*
Omar Howard, *Atlanta Transitional Center*
John Turner, *Citizens Advisory Board Member*

3:30 Closing Remarks and Next Steps Tull Auditorium

Sheila Cavanagh, *Emory University*
Karen Paty, *Georgia Council for the Arts*
Meredith Ragains, *Georgia Lawyers for the Arts*
Alma Robinson, *California Lawyers for the Arts*

3:45 Reception and Exhibit. 1st Floor Rotunda and Bacardi Plaza

PANELIST & MODERATOR BIOGRAPHIES

Douglas B. Ammar has been associated with the Georgia Justice Project GJP since its inception in 1986 – serving first as a volunteer, then as a staff lawyer in 1990, and since 1995, as the Executive Director. In 1984, Doug earned his Bachelor's degree in history from Davidson College and he received his law degree in 1989 from Washington and Lee University. Doug has received the prestigious Annie E. Casey Foundation Fellowship and a number of other awards including most recently the Elbert P. Tuttle Jurisprudence Award from the Southeastern Anti-Defamation League; The University of Georgia's Milner S. Ball Working In the Public Interest Lifetime Achievement Award; the Georgia Center for Nonprofits' Evelyn G. Ullman Innovative Leadership Award; Davidson College's John W. Kuykendall Award for Community Service; and the Georgia Indigent Defense Council's Commitment to Excellence Award.

Chris Appleton is Co-founder and Executive Director of WonderRoot, an Atlanta-based organization founded in 2004 that works at the intersection of arts, community development, and social justice. An Atlanta native, Chris is engaged with organizations and national networks that focus their efforts on creating more thriving, equitable communities for all people. A leader and voice for progressive change in Atlanta, Chris is the recipient of a number of local and national awards including the 2014 Americans for the Arts National Emerging Leader Award Winner, 2015 Georgia Trend Magazine 50 Notable Georgians, a 2015 Honoree by Outstanding Atlanta, and 2011 Emory Center for Creativity & the Arts Community Impact Award. He is a graduate of LEAD Atlanta and former Fellow with New Leaders Council and the World Economic Forum's Global Shapers Program and was a delegate at the 2014 White House Youth Summit. Chris' work, at WonderRoot and elsewhere, is based on the belief that lasting change happens when people come together across lines of social difference to build consensus around values.

Wende Ballew is the Executive Director of Reforming Arts, an organization that provides top quality arts and humanities higher education classes in State Prisons to over forty students each quarter. She has extensive experience as a freelance theatre professional and arts manager as well as being an educator. As a theatre professional she has worked for Georgia Ensemble Theatre, Aurora Theatre, the Neighborhood Playhouse, and the Atlanta Arts Festival. As an arts manager

Wende worked for the University of West Georgia and Cobb County. Wende holds a Bachelor of Arts in Theatre Arts, a Master of Business Administration, a Master of Arts in American Studies, and she is currently working on her PhD in Qualitative Research and Evaluation Methodologies at the University of Georgia. Wende has taught at Kennesaw State University and continues to teach and direct Reforming Arts classes inside Lee Arrendale State prison.

Dr. Beth Bienvenu is the Director of the Office of Accessibility at the National Endowment for the Arts, where she manages the NEA's technical assistance and advocacy work devoted to making the arts accessible for people with disabilities, older adults, veterans, and people in institutional settings. She provides guidance and support to state arts agency staff and professionals working the fields of arts access, creativity and aging, arts and health, universal design, and arts in corrections. She oversees a long-term partnership with the Federal Bureau of Prisons to fund artist-in-residence programs in six federal prisons.

Chaplain Susan Bishop received her Masters of Divinity from The Candler School of Theology, Emory University in 1975. She graduated from Georgia State University in 1976 with a Masters of Music Education. Her undergraduate degrees are from Anderson University and Columbia College in South Carolina. Chaplain Bishop has served as a Clinical Chaplain with the Georgia Department of Corrections for over 30 years. Her special area of expertise is the use music as a tool of rehabilitation and restoration within the prison setting. Chaplain Bishop has been the Director of the Voices of Hope Choir since 1992 and they have been traveling and singing in church and community settings since 2004. In 2009, Chaplain Bishop was selected as the Georgia Department of Corrections Employee of the Year. She was also the recipient of the Emory University Unsung Heroine Award in 2008. In 2014 she was awarded the Centennial Medal from the Candler School of Theology. Chaplain Bishop has worked at both male and female prisons. She has served at four different prisons and is currently the Clinical Chaplain at Lee Arrendale State Prison in Alto, Georgia.

Dr. Heather Corbett is the Director of Career and Technical Education for the Georgia Department of Corrections. Prior to joining the department, Dr. Corbett held various positions across the state. She served as a teacher in Henry County, a Science Specialist for the Georgia Department of Education and Director of Public Relations and Communications as well as an Assistant

Principal in the Lowndes County School System. Heather led schools to perform in the top 5% of the state while earning state and national recognitions as a School of Excellence and Lighthouse School to Watch. Dr. Corbett holds a Doctorate in Leadership from Valdosta State University, a Master's degree in Middle Grades Science and Language Arts from Brenau University, a Specialist degree in Middle Grades Science from University of West Georgia, and a Bachelor's degree in Middle Grades Science and Language Arts from Valdosta State University. She holds several state teaching certificates, is a Farm Bureau Grant and Henry Education Foundation Grant recipient, a National Dean's List Scholar, and received the National Collegian Education Award.

Dr. Sheila T. Cavanagh is a professor of English at Emory University. She is actively involved with a number of Shakespeare in Prison programs and is working on a book focusing on Shakespeare with specialized populations. Dr. Cavanagh is the author of *Cherished Torment: The Emotional Geography of Lady Mary Wroth's Urania* (Duquesne, 2001) and *Wanton Eyes and Chaste Desires: Female Sexuality in The Faerie Queene* (Indiana, 1994) and numerous articles on Renaissance literature and pedagogy. She is the Director of the Emory Women Writers Resource Project, which was awarded a major grant from the NEH. Cavanagh received her Ph.D. from Brown University and is currently completing a Master of Science in College Teaching at the University of New Hampshire. She is also Editor of *The Spenser Review*.

Shanti Das is an accomplished entertainment industry veteran, entrepreneur, speaker, author, and Philanthropist. She has worked in the entertainment business for over 25 years. Her music industry career (from intern to Executive Vice President) includes positions at Capitol Records, LaFace Records, Columbia Records, Sony Urban Music and Universal Motown where she worked directly with some of music's top talent like Outkast, Usher, Prince, TLC, Toni Braxton, Erykah Badu, and more. Because of Shanti's community service work for the past 8 years, she decided to establish her very own nonprofit, The Hip-Hop Professional Foundation, Inc. The mental health initiative of this foundation is called Silence the Shame® and is leading the way for the foundation. The movement has received global awareness and is becoming a commonly used hashtag to normalize the conversation in the US. Shanti's foundation curates panel discussions, creates content and broadens awareness around mental health and wellness.

Laterra Davis serves as the Director of Planning and Preparedness (Office of Victim and Volunteer Services, Emergency Management, Training, American Correctional Association) for the Georgia Department of Juvenile Justice. She received a B.S. in Criminal Justice at Georgia State University and holds a Master's Degree in Social Work and Public Administration. Mrs. Davis is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker holding several other specialties in Child Forensic Interviewing, Victim Advocacy, Victim Offender-Dialogue, Registered Mediator and Grant Writing. In her current capacity, she represents DJJ on multiple committees and boards to include: Georgia Child Abuse Prevention Treatment Act, FBI Human Trafficking Taskforce, Statewide Human Trafficking Taskforce, CHOA-Institute of Health and Human Trafficking Taskforce, along with Project Intersect Advisory Council. Mrs. Davis has an extensive background in juvenile justice, dating back to 1998. She serves as an Adjunct Facilitator for the University of Phoenix and over nine years of consultation and clinical experience with youth in the foster care system. Her expertise includes providing subject matter training in the area of juvenile and victim related services for a variety of public and private entities.

Gail Deschamps is Founder/Artistic Director of Rome Shakespeare Festival (RSF) and is an actor, stage director, playwright and teaching artist. Under her direction, RSF produces a free, outdoor Shakespeare Festival in downtown Rome, Georgia each year, and arts-education programs for students, artists and the community. Gail is a professional vocal coach for verse plays and has directed both the comedies and tragedies of Shakespeare. For twelve years, she served as Founder/Artistic Director of Florida Shakespeare Festival and The Minorca Playhouse where her theatres garnered rave reviews from the Florida Press and the Shakespeare Quarterly. As a playwright, her work has been performed at the Spoleto Festival in Charleston, South Carolina and toured the southeastern United States. Gail studied writing under Nobel Laureate, Isaac Bashevis Singer and is a recipient of an individual artist grant from The Georgia Council for the Arts. Currently, Gail is collaborating with RSF teaching artists, Curt Tofteland and the Warden of Floyd County Prison to implement a Shakespeare in Prison Program which is scheduled to take place during April, May and June 2019.

Marissa McCall Dodson is the Public Policy Director of the Southern Center for Human Rights. Before joining SCHR, Marissa worked on the American Civil Liberties Union's (ACLU) Campaign for Smart Justice assisting advocacy efforts to significantly reduce prison populations and improve the quality, scope, availability, and accessibility of services that address the needs of impacted

communities in the South. In 2008, Marissa was awarded an Equal Justice Works Fellowship to develop the first program in Georgia to address individual and systemic barriers facing people with a criminal history through direct service, education and legislative advocacy at the Georgia Justice Project. Marissa received her B.A. in Political Science from Spelman College in 2005 and her J.D. and Bachelors in Civil Law from the Paul M. Hebert Law Center at Louisiana State University in 2008. She is a member of the Georgia bar.

Dare Dukes is the executive director of Deep Center, Savannah's award-winning creative writing, leadership, and advocacy program for public school youth and adults in their village. Deep uses arts and cultural strategies to lift up marginalized youth and their families while working to change the harmful narratives and systems at odds with their well-being. Dare is a musician, writer, and a nonprofit leader with more than 25 years of experience working in arts, education, and social-justice nonprofit settings, both as an artist and leader. Dare has been the executive director of Deep Center since 2014, and in that short period of time Deep has gone from being a much-loved local after-school program to a national leader in the fields of arts education, youth development, and community development. In November 2015, Dare and a young creative writer, André Massey, traveled to the White House to accept from First Lady Michelle Obama a National Arts and Humanities Youth Program award for Deep Center, the nation's highest honor for creative youth programs. Dare earned an MFA in Creative Writing from The New School, an MFA in Theater from the University of Minnesota, and a BA in English Literature from the College of the Holy Cross.

Page Dukes was born and raised in Atlanta, where both her parents are musicians. She was attending Georgia State University, but ended up spending 10 years at Lee Arrendale Prison, where she participated in the choir. She was released last spring and is currently a journalism student at Piedmont College.

Fred Eason is the resident art instructor for HeartBound Ministries' Project A.R.T. ("Art to Rehabilitate and Teach") program at Atlanta Transitional Center. His work has been prominently featured in the annual "Art from the Inside" exhibit and at the Georgia Governor's Mansion where he works as part of the Mansion detail crew.

Lucy Fugate, co-founder and chairperson for ART FROM THE INSIDE, is a board member of Heartbound Ministries, which serves the Georgia state prison chaplains and inmate community. Lucy was inspired by her grandmother's

work on behalf of inmates in her native Mississippi to start a similar program in Georgia to provide an artistic outlet for Georgia's incarcerated. She has lived in Atlanta since 2000 and is married and a mother of two.

Cadeem Gibbs, currently based in New York City, is the founder of The ROUNDTABLE Project (Regaining Our Underserved Neighborhood Developments through Teaching And Building Leaders through Entrepreneurship), a social enterprise geared towards socio-economic awareness, civic engagement and entrepreneurship. They aim to raise public consciousness about issues impacting black communities and start businesses that serve as viable resources in those communities. He is a dedicated activist for youth, social, racial and economic justice issues. Cadeem employs the philosophy that the voices of those most impacted by an issue should be not only incorporated into the legislative and community healing and building processes, but leading the movements towards these changes, as they are the true experts. Cadeem has worked passionately in youth and leadership development, organizing advocacy, facilitation, for organizations such as The Children's Defense Fund, The New York City Administration of Children's Services, and The Center for Court Innovation, and Raise The Age-NY.

Omar Howard is a prison chaplain and founder of Freedom is A Choice, Inc., a nonprofit which encourages at-risk youth and adults to choose freedom over incarceration. Omar uses his own story of incarceration as a tool to counsel and mentor at-risk youth and troubled adults to avoid making bad choices that can negatively impact the rest of their lives. Omar served 14 years and 10 months in the Georgia prison system and was released on December 10, 2007. Omar encountered many legal and personal obstacles after incarceration, persevering through tough times that would cause most individuals to give up. In addition to running a nonprofit, Omar serves as a chaplain for HeartBound Ministries at the Atlanta Transitional Center, where he served the final two years of his sentence. He is certified in Anger Management and is a trained facilitator for The Integrity Project. His successful transition from prison to society serves as a viable, positive example for at-risk youth and incarcerated people. In 2018, Omar received a pardon from the State of Georgia.

Sarah Higinbotham founded and co-directs a college-in-prison program called "Common Good Atlanta," which is a consortium of over 50 college faculty teaching four days a week in three prisons throughout Georgia. Her PhD is

in early modern literature and her scholarship explores the intersections of literature and law. She's written about the violence of the law in early modern England, reform movements in justice, and human rights and literature. She currently teaches at Oxford College of Emory University. Her publications appear in *Law, Culture, and the Humanities*, *Columbia Human Rights Law Review*, *Contemporary Justice Review*, *The Social History of Crime and Punishment in the United States*, *Wake Forest Law Review*, and *Reading Milton*. As a way of exploring the constructive aspects of law, she co-authored *Human Rights and Children's Literature: Imagination and the Narrative of Law*.

Beverly McLeod Iseghohi, JD, is principal of BMI & Associates, an Atlanta-based government affairs consulting firm. Ms. Iseghohi is an experienced legislative and public policy strategist with expertise in criminal justice issues. She combines over 15 years of experience in the executive branch, at the Georgia State Capitol and in the private sector. As executive director of the Civil Pro Bono Family Law Project, Ms. Iseghohi led a prison program giving incarcerated mothers access to civil legal information and family law attorneys. Her articles and essays have appeared in national publications including: *Bar Leader*; *Cornerstone*; *Huffington Post* and *Women, Girls & Criminal Justice*. Ms. Iseghohi's educational credentials include a Juris Doctor degree and a Bachelor of Arts degree in English.

Nancy Flake Johnson became president and CEO of the Urban League of Greater Atlanta in 2008. She has served as Vice President of Programs for the Detroit Urban League, led Howard University's Small Business Development Center, and operated an accounting and tax practice. Nancy has a passion for empowering people and communities. She and her team have gained a reputation for developing, delivering impactful programs that support the economic mobility of youth, adults and families in black and urban communities and advocating for innovative economic policy, reentry, workforce and youth development, and partnerships and collaborations in the public and private sectors. A servant leader, Nancy's most recent honors include a 2019 Atlanta 500 Leader by Atlanta Magazine; 2018 Woman of Excellence, Atlanta Tribune Magazine; the National Urban League's Woman of Empowerment 2017; and Atlanta Business League's Most Influential Women of Atlanta for 2012-2017. Nancy earned a Bachelor of Business Administration degree in Accounting from Howard University and a Master Science in Taxation degree from DePaul University.

Tayari Jones is the New York Times best-selling author of the novels *Leaving Atlanta*, *The Untelling*, *Silver Sparrow*, and *An American Marriage*. Her writing has appeared in *Tin House*, *The Believer*, *The New York Times*, and *Callaloo*. A member of the Fellowship of Southern Writers, she has also been a recipient of the Hurston/Wright Legacy Award, Lifetime Achievement Award in Fine Arts from the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation, United States Artist Fellowship, NEA Fellowship and Radcliffe Institute Bunting Fellowship. *Silver Sparrow* was added to the NEA Big Read Library of classics in 2016. Jones is a graduate of Spelman College, University of Iowa, and Arizona State University. She is a Professor of Creative Writing at Emory University.

Jeanie Kasper is the Deputy Warden at Walker State Prison in Rock Spring, Georgia. She has worked for the Georgia Department of Corrections for more than 25 years.

Angela H. Marshall is Director for the Urban League of Greater Atlanta Adult Reentry Program. Angela retired from law enforcement after twenty-five years with supervision and case management experience in the fields of human services, criminal justice and community corrections combined (14 of those years specializing in the area of reentry). She has been an Adjunct Professor for Essex County Community College and provided first year course instruction for Rutgers University NJ STEP Program inside Edna Mahan Correction Facility for Women. Angela's most recent key accomplishments include being appointed to the Georgia Department of Corrections (GDC) Citizens Advisory Panel - September 2018, receiving the U.S. Attorney's Northern District of Georgia 2017 Award and being awarded by Georgia Micro Enterprise Network as 2017 Reentry Program of the Year.

Rachel May is one of the co-founders of Synchronicity Theatre – a professional theatre company in Atlanta with a focus on uplifting the voices of women and girls. She has directed more than 20 productions for Synchronicity, including *Ripe Frenzy*, *Strait of Gibraltar*, *In the Next Room or the Vibrator Play*, *Exit Pursued by a Bear*, *Women + War*, *1:23*, *Language of Angels*, *Three Sisters* and *Marisol*. Her directing work has been seen in and around Atlanta at Actor's Express, Aurora Theatre, Theatre Gael, Dad's Garage and the University of Georgia. Creative Loafing named her best director of 2002 for her work on *One Flea Spare* and *Kia Corthron's Breath*, *Boom*, the production that led to the creation of Synchronicity's award-winning *Playmaking for Girls* program with girls in the juvenile justice and refugee communities. In June 2004 May was chosen for the highly competitive

NEA/TCG Career Development Program for Directors and was named a Bank of America “Local Hero.” In addition to her executive role at Synchronicity, she actively teaches and leads workshops across Atlanta, and spent eight summers as director of the Ferst Center’s Drama Camp at Georgia Tech. www.synchrotheatre.com

Kate McLeod is the Head of School and Teacher Services at the High Museum of Art. She manages all school programming, which serves 60,000 students and 6,000 teachers annually through tours, workshops, and professional learning seminars. Kate was named Georgia Museum Educator of the Year in 2012 and serves on the board for the Georgia Art Education Association. Kate serves on the Arts Education Council for Americans for the Arts. She is also the co-founder of the Atlanta Cultural Educators group, which is a professional learning community for educators who work in cultural institutions in the metro Atlanta area. She received her BFA in Art Education from the University of Georgia and her MA in Art Education from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago.

Gina Moore is director and co-founder of Crosswalk USA and has directed the ARTreach 180 program since its inception in January 2010. Gina taught high school English, music, and theatre in various combinations for 23 years before stepping into full-time non-profit work in 2007. She earned Bachelor’s degrees in Music Education and Communicative Arts from Lubbock Christian University in Lubbock, Texas, in 1980, and still holds current Georgia teaching certification in English, drama, and school social work. In 2009, she was certified in Juvenile Justice Ministry from Gordon-Conwell Seminary in Boston, and in May 2012, she received her Master’s in Social Work from Georgia State University. She is a Licensed Master Social Worker with the state of Georgia and is also an ordained minister. Gina has implemented all of Crosswalk’s programs inside DJJ facilities, and she conceptualized and developed the ARTreach 180 program and its curriculum which is to be published soon. She has been married 41 years and has two children, both working artists themselves.

Andrea Pack is a Graduate Student in Neuroscience at Emory University. Andrea graduated from the University of Vermont in 2011 with a B.S. in Neuroscience and minors in Applied Mathematics and Dance. Before joining the Emory Neuroscience Graduate Program, she worked in Dr. Randy Nudo’s lab at University of Kansas Medical Center studying neural mechanisms underpinning plasticity following stroke and traumatic brain injury. Andrea’s current research focuses on how patterns of coordinated activity across multiple neurons and muscles emerge during the learning of a skilled behavior.

Karen L. Paty is the Executive Director of Georgia Council for the Arts and brings more than 15 years of leadership experience in arts and culture and community development. She has been with Georgia Council for the Arts for fourteen years, serving as the agency's first hired, rather than appointed, executive director for seven years. Ms. Paty leads the state's strategic efforts to support the arts industry and bring more awareness and visibility to the role of the arts in supporting economic development opportunities, creating vibrant communities, enhancing the state's quality of life, and contributing to a strong educational curriculum. In 2011, Paty managed GCA's seamless integration into the Georgia Department of Economic Development (GDEcD), restructured the agency's advisory board and implemented a new five-year strategic plan that redefined the agency's mission, vision and goals to better provide an opportunity for the arts to become an integral part of the lives of all Georgians. Under her leadership, the agency fulfills its strategic plan by continually cultivating innovative collaborations and building long-term, statewide partnerships that result in both policy and programming to support Georgia's vital arts industry. In recognition of her valuable contributions to the arts and to the state of Georgia, in 2018 Ms. Paty was again named one of the "100 Most Influential Georgians" by Georgia Trend magazine. She is a graduate of New York University, where she was also a recipient of the university's President's Award for Service.

Meredith Ragains has served as the Executive Director of Georgia Lawyers for the Arts since 2013. Meredith oversees legal services, education programs, and community relations for the statewide organization. Her duties also include long-range planning, budgetary controls, fundraising, and personnel supervision. Prior to her work at GLA, Meredith was a litigator for 12 years at Robins Kaplan where she was in the Commercial Litigation practice group. In 2009, the State Bar of Georgia awarded Meredith its Pro Bono Project Award for her outstanding work with pro bono clients. Meredith graduated from Emory University and Mercer Law School. After law school, Meredith clerked for the Honorable G. Ernest Tidwell of the United States District Court for the Northern District of Georgia. In addition to her work at GLA, Meredith is an adjunct professor at Emory Law School where she teaches contract drafting, and she regularly guest lectures at the Georgia State University College of Law on intellectual property-related topics.

Dantes Rameau, bassoonist born in Ottawa, Canada, is Co-Founder and Executive Director of the Atlanta Music Project. Founded in 2010, the Atlanta

Music Project provides intensive, tuition-free music education to underserved youth right in their neighborhood. Dantes holds a Bachelor of Music in Bassoon Performance from McGill University and a Master of Music in Bassoon Performance from the Yale University School of Music. He also completed a Performance Certificate at Carnegie Mellon University. In 2010 he graduated from the Sistema Fellows Program at the New England Conservatory, where he studied non-profit management and music education. He is a graduate of the 2012 class of LEAD Atlanta, a leadership development program for Atlanta's outstanding young professionals, and the 2015 class of the Atlanta Regional Commission's Regional Leadership Institute. Dantes is also Founder of Empowered Artists Consulting, a Canada-based consulting firm that provides artists and arts organizations with strategies for social good. His clients have included the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra and Share the Warmth, a Montreal-based youth and community center.

Alma Robinson, a graduate of Middlebury College and Stanford Law School, has served as the Executive Director of California Lawyers for the Arts since 1981. In 1987 she expanded the organization into a statewide agency that now provides staffed programs in San Francisco, Berkeley, Sacramento, Los Angeles and San Diego. IN 2011, she started CLA's successful Arts in Corrections Initiative to restore funding for California's arts programs in prisons, which had been defunded in 2003. With support from the NEA and others, she collaborated with the William James Association and Dr. Larry Brewster of the University of San Francisco to produce new evidence-based research documenting how arts programs benefit incarcerated persons. With grants from the Art for Justice Fund, the Warhol Foundation and the Quentin Hancock Fund, Alma is currently producing Art for Justice Forums with co-conveners in Michigan, Texas, Alabama, Georgia, California and New York.

Eric Schumacher is an Associate Professor in the School of Psychology at the Georgia Institute of Technology and the Director of the GSU/GT Center for Advanced Brain Imaging. Dr. Schumacher received his Ph.D. in Psychology in 1998 from the University of Michigan. He spent four years as a post-doctoral fellow in neurology and neuroscience at the University of Pennsylvania and UC Berkeley. He joined Georgia Tech in 2004.

Andrea Shelton is a President and founder of HeartBound Ministries, a non-profit prison ministry that seeks to support and equip Georgia prison chaplains and meet the needs of the prison community – correctional staff, inmates, and

their families – changing the culture from one of crime and incarceration to hope and restoration. Andrea graduated from Oglethorpe University in Atlanta and after a brief marketing career at Lockheed Aeronautics, she obtained a law degree from the University of Tennessee. Following law school, she served as a Special Assistant Administrative Law Judge with the Office of State Administrative Hearings. Andrea is a member of the 2006 class of Leadership Georgia and served as a 2007 Leadership Georgia Program Chair. She received the first-ever “Spirit of Oglethorpe Award” given by Oglethorpe University and the E. Dale Threadgill Community Service Award from Leadership Georgia for her work on behalf of the Georgia prison system. In 2014, she was appointed to the Georgia Board of Corrections by Governor Nathan Deal.

Senator Brian Strickland, a Republican, was elected to serve in the State Senate in a special election in January 2018. In the State Senate, Sen. Strickland serves as a Governor’s Administration Floor Leader and sits on the Judiciary, State and Local Governmental Operations, State Institutions and Property and Higher Education committees. During Sen. Strickland’s time as a State Representative, he served as Chairman of the Industry and Labor Committee and was appointed to the Georgia Film, Music and Digital Entertainment Commission, as well as the Uniform Law Commission. In addition, Sen. Strickland was also chosen as the 2016 Legislator of the Year by the Georgia Solicitor General’s Association and the 2016 Champions of Cities Award by the Georgia Municipal Association. Sen. Strickland was also appointed to serve on the HOPE Scholarship Preservation Committee for the Georgia House and Senate. Sen. Strickland is a 2006 graduate of Valdosta State University with a B.B.A in Economics. He received his Juris Doctor in 2009 from the Florida Coastal School of Law where he currently serves on the alumni board. Sen. Strickland practices law in McDonough at Smith, Welch, Webb & White.

Bill Taft co-directs Common Good Atlanta, a college-in-prison program which offers classes at three prisons throughout Georgia. Bill teaches college composition, creative writing, and book art. He is also a musician whose work has appeared in film, video, and on stage.

John Turner served 15 years in the Georgia Dept. of Corrections. While incarcerated, John was instrumental in developing Georgia’s first Faith and Character-Based Prison program and the arts and crafts department within Walker Faith and Character-Based Prison. Upon his release in 2015, John became a much sought-after speaker for the Department of Corrections and

currently serves on the Georgia Corrections' Community Review Board. He is a head mechanic for Mohawk Industries and is currently pursuing his engineering degree at North Georgia Western Technical College on a scholarship from Mohawk. He is the father of two and is married to Mary Turner.

The Voices of Hope is a women's choir composed of inmates from the Lee Arrendale State Prison located in Alto, Georgia. The women chosen for this choir are chosen based on their behavior, conduct, positive attitude, and their ability to work together as a team. They are also chosen based on a vocal audition which evaluates their tone quality, ability to sing harmony, and their ability to learn music quickly. The Voices of Hope have been singing in churches and at community events since 2004. In 2008 with the assistance of Emily Saliers of the Indigo Girls, the Voices of Hope recorded a CD. In November of 2013 they released a Christmas CD. The proceeds of these CDs support the work of the Lee Arrendale Children's Center and other ministries at the prison. The women who sing in this choir know that God has called them to share this music ministry to encourage others who might be experiencing difficult times. They know that no matter where you are and what your circumstance, all of God's children have a work to do. Chaplain Susan F. Bishop, Clinical Chaplain at Lee Arrendale State Prison, directs the choir. Warden Brooks L. Benton is the Warden at Lee Arrendale State Prison. Mr. Gregory C. Dozier is the Commissioner of the Georgia Department of Corrections.

Fabian Williams is a visual and performance artist best known for his work depicting the seemingly state sanctioned violence perpetrated against black men. Born in Fayetteville, North Carolina, Williams studied fine art at East Carolina University. After working for 13 years in the advertising industry with a long list of clients from Nike, Warner Bros to HBO, he decided to move to a purely expressive practice, outside of the commercial space, where he had the freedom to express more political and socially relevant contemporary themes. In his entire body of work, Williams employs a broad scope of source material from commercial illustration, classic portraiture, and hip-hop iconography, to confront issues of race and the larger public's oft uninterrogated consumption of black cultural icons and products. In 2008, Williams began his ongoing art battles through the World-Wide Art Federation (WWAF) in Atlanta, Georgia. These exhibitions, in which artists paint against each other in timed bouts, distinguish themselves from others of their ilk as they are deemed by the artist an extension of public art, hip-hop and 80's wrestling.

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Igniting the Impact of the Arts in
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