

# Leadership LENS

## Dear Colleagues:

As NAEA nears the completion of our 2007 - 2008 fiscal year June 30th, we can take great pride in all that has been accomplished under the steady leadership of NAEA President, Dr. Bonnie Rushlow, and the NAEA Board of Directors. Guided by the ambitious focus of the first 100-Day Goals launched last June and the 2007-2010 Strategic Plan, NAEA has made significant progress toward organizational transformation as we address the unique challenges of the 21st century. And - we are able to address these challenges from a position of strength as all of us who are in leadership positions continue to serve as thoughtful stewards of NAEA's sixty year legacy. As we seek nominations for the offices of President and Division Directors, I encourage each of you to identify one or two emerging leaders who you can champion and nurture as future NAEA leaders.

Ten months into our fiscal year, much has been achieved through the identification, development and implementation of Strategic Initiatives that advance NAEA's mission and ensure continued growth and prosperity. Your Board of Directors and the NAEA staff remain committed to effective communications and transparency toward creating an ever greater "member experience." To that end, I hope you will find this second issue of *Leadership Lens* informative and useful in your work as an NAEA leader.



Deborah B. Reeve, EdD  
Executive Director

## Spring into Summer

Following a productive spring meeting of the Board of Directors and a successful annual convention and exposition, staff have analyzed the more than 1,000 convention e-evaluations returned by our members and have used this data to inform planning for Minneapolis April 17-21, 2009. Last week, we were on-site in Minneapolis to meet with 2009 National Convention Coordinator, Kathy Grundei, and the local planning committee. Exciting plans are already underway as we strive to create an exemplary professional development experience for visual arts educators.



For the first time, the NAEA Executive Board/Finance Committee and NAEA sitting Board met prior to the start of the convention to conduct Association business including a comprehensive review of financial/investment reports and overall association operations. NAEA staff leaders Lynn Ezell and Margi Worrest made presentations to the Board on their respective areas of responsibility. Additionally, Dean Johns, National Convention Coordinator, and Carolee Miller, Local Arrangements Chair, briefed the Board on the many new elements introduced during the New Orleans Convention including the Artisan's Gallery, the Leadership Thread, the Cyber Café, and the Badge Enhancement Station. Board members also had the opportunity to participate in the Museum Division PreConference held at The Contemporary Arts Center. The Board resumed their meeting on Sunday morning to debrief on the convention including the timely work of the 2008 Delegates Assembly and complete other business. Kudos to the Vice Presidents who reoriented the work of the 2008 Delegates to the Assembly and to the Delegates whose work will lead to the development and adoption of NAEA Resolutions and Position Statements on issues pertinent to the field and the profession. Through the work of the Delegates, the voices and opinions of NAEA members are represented and being heard.

## Organizational Readiness and Execution

The following update on Strategic Initiatives represents tremendous efforts on the part of NAEA volunteer leaders and the entire NAEA staff in achieving organizational readiness:



### **Comprehensive Marketing and Communications Plan**

Strategic conversations continue at multiple levels beginning and ending with the NAEA Board of Directors. The plan will be informed by a member/potential member needs assessment, a white paper resulting from an NAEA sponsored "Thought Leaders" retreat, surveys with NAEA state associations and Issues Groups, NAEA Special Committees including but not limited to Advocacy, Research and Policy, and focus groups with other stakeholder groups. The "collective voice" will provide context for a proactive research and policy agenda; core messages will be used to inform public relations, marketing and organizational positioning.

**Thought Leaders Retreat:** This effort to convene and leverage discussions about pertinent issues for the profession and the field within the broader context of education in our nation will further advance NAEA's Strategic Plan and will be a highlight of the ongoing "Strategic Conversations" series that was launched summer 2007. The retreat will be held August 24 - 28, 2008 at the Aspen Institute in Colorado. The overarching objective, to provide an intense focus on the value of an education in visual arts, will be addressed through key inquiry themes by thought leaders inside and outside the field of visual arts education. These ongoing "strategic conversations" about the profession and the field of visual arts education will continue to loop and inform all levels of Association work.

**Leadership Lens:** Key NAEA leaders (including current Board members and elects, immediate past Board members, Chairs of Issues Groups, NAEA State Presidents, NAEA Fellows and NAEF Trustees) received the first issue of this electronic communiqué fall 2007. Its purpose is to keep NAEA leaders abreast of Board action and the activities of NAEA staff toward addressing the mission and goals outlined in the 2007 - 2010 NAEA Strategic Plan. Feedback has been exceptional and has helped advance goals toward greater transparency through regular communication.

**NAEA Policy Review Committee:** This committee, Co-Chaired by NAEA Past President, Susan Gabbard, and former Western Region Vice President, Bob Sabol, has created an action plan leading to a thorough review of all NAEA Policy. The review will lead to recommendations made to the NAEA Board that ensure consistency in NAEA policy and that current standards of practice are met within our 501(c)(3) nonprofit designation.

**Standards for the Profession:** A Standards Review Committee, Chaired by Carole Henry, is making significant progress in reviewing and updating NAEA Professional Standards for Teachers. The revised Standards, to be released fall 2008, will provide benchmarks for professional practice for all visual arts teachers wherever he or she may be on the professional teaching continuum. Watch the NAEA Web Site in early June for a link to the DRAFT Revised Standards Document along with interactive tools for your comments. The Committee welcomes and encourages member comments and suggested uses for the Standards.

**Advisory Committees:** The following appointed committees are ensuring that pertinent issues are brought to the forefront and interfaced with planning and development activities.

- **Research Advisory Committee** - Chaired by Higher Education Division Director, Melody Milbrandt
- **Advocacy Advisory Committee** - Chaired by Eastern Region Vice President-elect, Kim Defibaugh
- **Website Advisory Committee** - Chaired by Cris Guenter



#### **Member Needs Assessment**

Several preliminary surveys are underway with state organizations toward better understanding their needs from an organizational perspective and how NAEA might enhance service to state associations. As results are studied, a particular focus will be toward identifying value and advantages for contracted states toward advancing mutual goals and growing membership. A comprehensive member/nonmember needs assessment will be implemented during the 08-09 fiscal year and will guide planning for membership development, recruitment and retention as well as inform the work of the research, advocacy and web advisory committees.

**Development and Outreach** Through the office of the Executive Director, meetings have been regularly convened with MENC, Americans for the Arts, NASAD, NASSP, NAESP, AASA, ASCD, NSBA, the Learning First Alliance and the Arts Education Partnership Steering Committee. NAEA has successfully established primary relationships with the goal of identifying and pursuing collaborative relationships and opportunities that will advance NAEA's mission and goals. We will also be exploring collaborative opportunities with the College Art Association and the Alliance for Young Writers and Artists as their respective new Executive Directors settle into position.



#### **Information Technology Assessment**

CELT completed a thorough assessment of the NAEA IT infrastructure resulting in recommendations for securing a new association management system to meet NAEA criteria for an integrated IT system. The new integrated IT system will be Web-based and support all functions for member services, e-commerce, website, finance and administration. The 20 year-old 'Down to Earth' system was successfully phased out in February 2008, and an interim membership management system has been implemented as we fine-tune necessary features and components and acclimate to a Web-based system. We have selected the new association management system, Harris Connect, and planned for its implementation late summer and/or early fall to coincide with the design, development and launch of the new NAEA website. Staff have participated in all phases and continue to offer feedback and receive training. Additionally, the IT assessment resulted in a thorough understanding of comprehensive IT needs leading to other progress that includes upgrading obsolete hardware and software; complete migration of all finance/administrative functions for both the Association and the Foundation to QuickBooks; upgrading data security through password encryptions on all financial transactions, email and server files; securing a new telephone provider service that enhances services and significantly reduces monthly costs; and designating new email addresses to enable better responsiveness to inquiries.



### Website

While the design phase of the new NAEA website is being completed and readied for its fall debut, our current site continues to be refreshed regularly by providing updates to the home page and news sections and highlighting the NAEA National Convention and publications. In preparation for the new site, a new domain name has been secured, [arteducators.org](http://arteducators.org), that directs search engines to [www.naea-reston.org](http://www.naea-reston.org) and will become the official NAEA domain name upon the fall launch. The 2008 convention website was a successful pilot effort that considerably enhanced information available to registrants as well as the actual registration process. Online evaluations 'pushed' to attendees resulted in more than 1,000 responses and a wealth of data to guide our planning efforts.

The concept and design of the new NAEA website and global footprint has been informed by the ongoing strategic conversations, the IT assessment, and guidance from the Website Advisory Group and member web surveys as we strive to create an ever-evolving, dynamic virtual community of practice. The research, discovery and design processes have paralleled with the IT assessment project and interfaced with Harris Connect to maximize all efforts. Wireframes have been completed that meet the design requirements and research is underway leading to recommendations for Phase I, II and III component parts. Currently agreements are under review by legal counsel in cooperation with IT partners Artsonia and Digication who will provide select resources and tools that enhance web-based member values. Phase I of the new site will be launched early fall 2008. A sneak preview of the new site was presented during the convention and well received.



### Building Refurbishment

Built in 1977, the NAEA Headquarters building has a trapezoidal footprint constructed into the side of a hill. Based on the need for more space, additions were added to either end of the building in 1990 maximizing available space. As NAEA has continued to grow, off-site storage space has been leased and over the past three to four years, our thirty-year-old building has required much needed and costly attention. Based upon an environmental assessment, a preliminary architectural review and identification of structural damages, options are being explored to ensure a cost-effective headquarters building that provides a healthy, modern, flexible workspace that lends itself to independent and interdependent work among staff as well as accommodating meeting space.



### Shared Purpose and Mobilized Action

As the work of organizational transformation continues, our focus remains purposeful and results-oriented, guided by NAEA's mission, the Strategic Plan and key Initiatives:

**Building staff capacity and aligning talents and skills with need:** To better serve our state associations and members, the NAEA staff has been reorganized into core teams with primary responsibilities around core areas of work: Executive, Member Services, Publications, and Administration/Human Resources. We continue to assess the talents, skills and experience of our staff toward achieving our goals. A new position has been created for a Web Manager who will have oversight and responsibility for the new web site. We celebrated NAEA staffer, Kay Foechterle, who recently retired after twelve years of serving NAEA members with great commitment to their needs.

**Working collaboratively in support of state associations toward recruiting and retaining members:** Active membership has remained steady at approximately 20,000 for the past 10-12 years. Contingent upon the completion of organizational readiness, the potential for membership growth is significant. Several targeted new member promotional efforts were piloted over this year and a fresh new promotional letter of invitation has been designed to help retain members who have lapsed.

**Developing cost centers for all major revenue sources with projected return on investments:** After membership, other primary revenue sources include publications and the annual convention. **Publications:** All print and electronic publications, subscriptions and advertising sales have been realigned under the Publications Team to maximize strategic opportunities for increased NAEA visibility and sales beyond our own membership. Additionally, we are working more closely with PMC and authors to ensure a smooth and comprehensive process from manuscript to production. Pilot efforts over this year are being assessed to streamline production and fulfillment of NAEA publications toward maximizing business efficiencies. **Convention:** As we go forward, all current systems and processes from proposal submission process to scheduling to exhibitor relationships are being examined toward maximizing business efficiencies while enhancing the convention experience.

**Fostering relationships with peer associations and developing corporate and foundation relationships:** Through representation by the NAEA President as official spokesperson, and the Executive Director as Chief Executive Officer, we are building an ever stronger NAEA presence at key conferences and meetings at the federal, state and national levels. We are actively cultivating strategic relationships that will advance NAEA's mission and goals with peer organization leaders and with select corporate officials to gain an understanding of potential opportunities for leveraging relationship value through organizational/business alliances. Most recently, NAEA Presidents and Executive Director participated in Arts Advocacy Day on Capitol Hill. This summer, one of the Officers and/or Executive Director will participate in each of the Regional Summer Leadership Retreats to underscore the important connection between work at the national, regional, state and local levels. Additionally, we are working more closely with the National Art Education Foundation Trustees to more prominently position NAEF's value among members. Dr. Jack Davis, Chair of the NAEF Trustees, will provide a briefing on the work of the Foundation during the Summer Board and Management Meeting in July.

### Other Highlights from the March 2008 Meeting of the NAEA Board of Directors



- Established the Reflective Practice Monetary Award in honor of Dr. Thomas A. Hatfield and presented annually to the National Art Educator of the Year
- Established the NAEA State/Province Association Website Award and Rubric developed by the Website Advisory Committee
- Appointed Kathy Grundei 2009 Minneapolis National Convention Coordinator
- Accepted the January/February 2008 Financial and Investment Reports
- Accepted the Executive/Finance Committee recommendation to retain AIG VALIC as NAEA's retirement plan provider
- Authorized staff to retain the services of Cocke, Szpanka and Taylor, CPAs, for the NAEA FY 2008 annual audit and secure proposals from additional accounting firms for the 2009 annual audit
- Accepted the PMC Report and new PMC Committee members: J Marshall Adams and Jessica Booth for the term of 5 years (2008-2012)
- Accepted the recommendation of the Delegates Assembly to establish the Independent School Art Education (ISAE) Issues Group
- Tabled for further inquiry and discussion (July meeting) the recommendation of

the Delegates Assembly to establish the Caucus on the Spiritual in Art Education (CSAE) Issues Group

- Authorized staff to explore options for relocating NAEA Headquarters due to the fact that space usage has reached maximum capacity and the costly and urgent need of structural and other building repairs continue to mount

I recently read *The Starfish and the Spider* and was intrigued with the notion of "Starfish" organizations and "...how they are changing the face of business and the world." As evidenced by the many activities taking place horizontally, vertically and diagonally throughout our professional community, we are growing ever more legs!

We all can be confident that through our "synergy of purpose" we are making significant contributions. I look forward to our work and to opportunities for interaction along the way. Thank you for your leadership and continued commitment. Have a wonderful summer!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Deborah B. Reeve', with a large, stylized initial 'D'.

Deborah B. Reeve, EdD