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Spring 2011

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Imagining America

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 The logo for 'ia news' features the letters 'ia' in a white, lowercase, sans-serif font, followed by 'news' in a larger, bold, red, lowercase, sans-serif font. The text is set against a black, irregular, brush-stroke-like background that extends to the left and top.
 

# ia news

STRENGTHENING THE DEMOCRATIC PURPOSES OF THE HUMANITIES, ARTS, AND DESIGN

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*Imagining*  
**America**  
*Artists and Scholars in Public Life*

## Imagining Sustainability: Twin Cities 2011

**Jamie Haft**

Each spring, the newsletter directs our attention to the member institutions located in the region where we will convene our next national conference. Imagining America is thrilled that Macalester College and the University of Minnesota will co-host the conference, September 22-24, 2011, in the Twin Cities of Minneapolis and St. Paul. To introduce the many regional contexts informing their public scholarship and to prepare the ground for the conference's trans-local discourse, I spoke with nine faculty members from five of the region's IA members: **Macalester College, University of Minnesota, Winona State University, Carleton College, and Augsburg College.** Our topic

was campus-community partnerships through the lens of the conference's theme, "What Sustains Us?"

### Sustainability and Civic Engagement

At Winona State University, the Center for Engaged Teaching and Scholarship advocates for sustainability as a central consideration in civically engaged courses, projects, and campus-wide initiatives. For example, with regard to sustainable food culture, students in the "Gender, Violence, and Society" course last year developed classes on cooking nutritious local food with women who shop at a food bank; "Agroecology" students built a hoophouse (greenhouse) for the Wapasha Community

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### FROM THE DIRECTOR

## Sustainability and the Commons

**Jan Cohen-Cruz**



*All that we make and do is shaped by the communities and traditions that contain us.*

—Lewis Hyde,  
*Common as Air*, p. 5

Henry David Thoreau, that symbol of self-sufficiency, was actually a beneficiary of what

Lewis Hyde, in *Common as Air*, calls the commons. Thoreau depended on everything from the public library to his Walden neighbors to carry out his sustainability plans. Hyde quotes Thoreau from *Walden*: "Near the end of March, 1845, I borrowed an axe and went down to the woods by Walden Pond.... It is difficult to begin without borrowing" (p. 187). Similarly, Hyde

writes that Benjamin Franklin, also heralded as a self-made man, "took instruction widely... and as unique as he might have been, his work in science was a highly collaborative and social affair" (p. 113).

The commons, though not a formal part of our institutional vocabulary, is an animating vision of Imagining America. Diana Taylor's keynote in Seattle focused on a digital commons as exemplified by her own work on the Hemispheric Institute: Politics and Performance website. Jack Tchen, a member of IA's national advisory board and one of the founders of the Museum of the Chinese in America, defines the commons as "a shared, inclusive space not privileging private wealth and power over basic human rights and values." He asks, "If the Midas touch of neoliberalism creates hollow selves, hollow cities and hollow cultures, we must ask: What can we do about this!?" He calls for us to

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## Imagining Sustainability: Twin Cities 2011

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Gardens; and students in the “Geoscience” course collected and analyzed soil samples from organic and non-organic farms to provide farm owners with data on the health and quality of their soil. Campus-wide themes—such as last year’s “Sustainable Foods” and this year’s “The Big Sky”—provide co-curricular opportunities to explore sustainability issues and the idea of global citizenship through lecture and film series, fairs, workshops, and a program through which all incoming students read the same book. Based on the success of these programs, Winona State is now planning an interdisciplinary, civically engaged curriculum on sustainability.

Campus Kitchen, Augsburg College’s hallmark sustainable food initiative, uses campus dining facilities to prepare meals in collaboration with community gardeners, local farmers, and community-supported agriculture programs. Coordinated by Augsburg’s Sabo Center for Citizenship and Learning, and run by a team of student leaders, 2,000 meals are prepared each month—and this summer 200-300 meals will be prepared each day. Meals are distributed to public schools across the district, to community centers, homeless shelters, and to other non-profit organizations in the Cedar-Riverside and Phillips neighborhoods of Minneapolis.

Macalester College’s Department of Environmental Studies fosters interdisciplinary opportunities for students to understand the causes and consequences of environmental issues and to propose solutions. Project EcoHouse, developed by Assistant Professor Chris Wells, is a 1950s-era house renovated with a solar hot water system, a recyclable steel roof, wall insulation, and high-efficiency energy appliances. Each semester, students live in the EcoHouse exploring practical green lifestyles and testing the effectiveness of new green technologies. The students and their community sustainability



Photo: Khant Khant Kyaw

Carleton College welcomes Northfield Middle School students for a creative day involving outdoor activities and the design and construction of motors and robots.

partners serve as an information clearing-house that facilitates discussion and connects homeowners with efficiency resources. Plus, as Wells points out, “The department’s programs holistically join environmental concerns with issues of social equity, social justice, and economic fairness.”

*“The sustainability of our civic engagement programs is intimately linked to the sustainability of our community partners.”*

Among the five institutions, various approaches to campus-wide efforts are underway. For example, the University of Minnesota’s Morris campus integrates renewable, sustainable principles into its liberal arts curriculum, and has made significant innovations in its campus-wide operations, focusing on buildings and grounds energy use, local foods, and recycling. To strengthen institutional efforts, Augsburg and Macalester are members of the regional consortium, the Associated Colleges of the Twin Cities, which has an initiative on urban sustainability. Faculty from all five institutions spoke of the effect of participating in the national

American College & University Presidents’ Climate Commitment. The Commitment requires institutions to implement a comprehensive plan to eliminate net greenhouse gas emissions from campus operations and to promote research and education on environmental sustainability. Many Twin Cities institutions have hired a coordinator to bring cohesion to their sustainability initiatives and have found ways to integrate their institution’s commitment into the curriculum. For example, an economics class at Carleton College performed a cost-benefit analysis of the school’s green efforts.

### Community Partnerships and Sustainability

A sociologist by training, Adrienne Falcón, director of Academic Civic Engagement at Carleton College, resonates with the idea of community sustainability: “The sustainability of our civic engagement programs is intimately linked to the sustainability of our community partners. If one enters into genuinely reciprocal partnerships, which is what we attempt to do, we are only as strong as our community partners. Social sustainability means asking organizations to partner in ways that don’t drain them of their resources. In Carleton’s rural location, with its limited

number of community organizations, partnerships typically span years with the same group of people. Our projects develop over time, and students appreciate contributing to a larger whole.”

Carleton’s faculty and students are collaborating with community leaders in nearby mobile home parks with a significant Latino/a population. Community-identified issues, such as safety, have emerged through storytelling and organizing efforts, and each semester several courses and student groups identify ways to address the issues. Currently, in an “Introduction to Latino/a Studies” course, discussions include local implications of the census data with the mobile home parks’ residents. The Wellstone House of Organization and Activism’s student group is planning a “Know Your Rights” workshop on immigration. As the semester progresses, additional community gatherings will identify new issues and new avenues for future campus involvement. Falcón notes: “We have had a volunteer center for more than 25 years, but in terms of academically based campus-community partnerships, we are growing and learning, and I’m amazed at the level of interest among faculty and students.”

Augsburg’s Joseph Underhill, Batalden Faculty Scholar in Applied Ethics, and Mary Laurel True, director of the Sabo Center’s

*“With 40% of our students from communities of color and 40% first-generation college students, we are committed to engaging our world as it is right now, in this neighborhood with so many people from other parts of the world.”*

Service-Learning and Community Engagement, echo the importance of community partnerships. “Sustainability means building strong relationships with our community partners in order to foster joint ventures and conversations that are vital to thinking about our collective future and the common good,” Underhill says. “Sustainability requires close attention to the world and the specific realities around us.”

True adds, “With 40% of our students from communities of color and 40% first-generation college students, we are committed to engaging our world as it is right now, in this neighborhood with so many people from other parts of the world.” She considers Augsburg’s campus-community partnership with the East African Women’s Center, which supports refugee mothers’ journeys into American life, as a long-term proposition. Augsburg has been involved with the

Women’s Center since its inception, and, in addition to providing material support, has helped elevate the culture of the women involved. One example was the co-curation of an exhibit of traditional Somali weaving. True is enthusiastic: “I’ve watched Augsburg—this small Lutheran college in the inner city here—change over twenty years, and I think we’re at an exciting threshold to be able to respond more fully to community needs.”

Sonja Kuflinec, associate professor, Department of Theatre Arts and Dance, points to a partnership between University of Minnesota and Juxtaposition Arts, which is located on the north side of Minneapolis in a neighborhood with a large African American population and with a reputation for being without resources and hope. For years, Juxtaposition Arts has countered that narrative by providing opportunities for youth to create public art projects with professional artists, community business owners, and university students, such as the creation of 13 large-scale murals that emphasize neighborhood pride and ownership, and that teach youth the value of teamwork. “We must learn to think differently about the role of art,” Kuflinec asserts. “It is important that the arts are not codified as something that happens in a department, but can be an animation of a community through the revitalization of public spaces. Art is not something you go to do, not a class where you learn to produce or to create—it’s a whole way of allowing for a different kind of relational knowing and relational being to emerge.”

### **Sustaining Public Scholarship in Higher Education**

The University of Minnesota has taken a comprehensive approach to focusing its resources and efforts on the essential elements that advance the institutionalization of public engagement. The strategy is to infuse engagement in the research, teaching, and service activities of the five University of Minnesota campuses in a way that cuts across all aspects of the institu-



Photo: Caroline van Shaik

Winona Farmers Market on campus for Parents’ Weekend.

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tional mission. In June 2008, the Office for Public Engagement released the University's "Ten-Point Plan for Advancing and Institutionalizing Public Engagement," which can be downloaded from <http://engagement.umn.edu>. Associate Vice President for Public Engagement Andrew Furco emphasizes, "Revising the tenure and promotion guidelines to embrace public scholarship opened the door for us to work with departments and colleges to further institutionalize public engagement efforts."

Currently, efforts are underway at the University of Minnesota to advance curricular development, assessment, communications, and critical discourse. The Engaged Department Grant Program supports teams comprised of community partners, faculty, staff, and students, to plan and implement public engagement at the departmental level. To understand the scale and scope of the University's more than 200 public engagement units and centers, a survey was recently administered to all undergraduate students. The Metrics Task Force is charged with comprehensively measuring the impact of engagement on students, faculty, communities, and the institution itself. An online portal for resources about the University's engagement efforts is being developed for campus and community stakeholders, equipped with video testimonials. "One of the things we don't do very well is tell our story," Furco says. "I'm inspired by the efforts of students, faculty, and community partners, but they're under the radar. We're trying to bring visibility to these amazing stories."

In addition, the University-wide Public Engagement Council, versed in contextual aspects of public engagement, is being established to explore and address complicated ethical issues as they arise. Furco states, "To be a great research university, we can't just think about doing work in classrooms,



Photo: Elise Griffin

High school students from the Somali community intern at Macalester's Sustainability Office and participate in a sustainability training.

*"Revising the tenure and promotion guidelines to embrace public scholarship opened the door for us to work with departments and colleges to further institutionalize public engagement efforts."*

in isolation from the real world; we have to be engaged. This notion has transformed the way we do our work, not just *in* community, but *with* community. In the three years I've been at the University of Minnesota, the discourse about public scholarship has substantially evolved, and we're starting to turn the corner on understanding this work."

Similarly, David Lanegran, Macalester's John S. Holl Professor of Geography, notes, "Public scholarship is sustainable when the internal college reward system strongly encourages it." Last year at Macalester, more than 50 courses involved some component of community engagement, ranging from a service activity to a whole seminar focused on community-based participatory research.

Geography, American Studies, and Environmental Studies structure their curricula around civic engagement. Humanities and arts are integrated into several of Macalester's concentrations, which are designed to give coherence to students' general education requirements. Concentrations such as "Human Rights and Humanitarianism," "Global Health," "Urban Studies," and "Global Citizenship" have an important interdisciplinary focus and a local civic engagement component. Ongoing engaged arts and humanities courses, such as the community-based theatre course taught by Harry Waters, Jr., are part of this array of curricular opportunities.

Professional development programs, like the Urban Faculty Colloquium, encourage faculty to develop their civically engaged research interests and teaching abilities in the Twin Cities and beyond. A relatively stable faculty and network of alumni have fostered long-term partnerships with well-established community organizations over the years. Lanegran explains: "As a private institution that has the privilege of being tax exempt, we have tried to pay back the public to honor our not-for-profit mission. For the

last five decades, Macalester has maintained a genuine interest in its community; a piece of the endowment is earmarked for community projects. It is not only about sharing the energy and intellectual capital of faculty and students, it is also about an ethos that the institution owes something to its neighbors.” The Civic Engagement Center at Macalester College has for over 20 years supported academic community-based learning, cocurricular student leadership programs, college access, and institutional responsibility. The Institute for Global Citizenship at Macalester brings together the local, national, and international dimensions of the College’s commitments.

**Sustainability and Student Interests**

Macalester’s Chris Wells believes the most significant issue students are working on is climate change: “Evidence suggests that climate change is going to be incredibly disruptive. Students sense that crisis, and they’re worried about their future and how to make their way in the world. At the same time, students are tremendously optimistic that they can make a difference. Students’ interest in sustainability is a combination of real concern about the problems climate change present and real enthusiasm for the opportunities that exist to make the world a better place.”

*“Students are attracted to environmental studies and to questions of sustainability because this particular topic can not be separated between what you study and how you live.”*

Paul Schadewald, associate director of the Civic Engagement Center, Macalester, appreciates how students tend to have well-developed concerns about and experiences working on environmental issues before they even reach college. “Students are products of their communities,” Schadewald says, “so the kind of distinction we make between community and campus is artificial. As much as the college experience changes

them, students come in as agents of change. They come to college and want to make the campus green in order to live their values. Students are attracted to environmental studies and to questions of sustainability because this particular topic can not be separated between what you study and how you live.”

According to Joan Francioni, director of the Center for Engaged Teaching and Scholarship at Winona State University, students are sometimes challenged when discussing sustainable practices: “We’re in a rural region of the state where there’s organic farming, but there are also big corn farms. We have students that grew up here, so when you’re trying to teach about different energy sources, sometimes students are being forced up against their own big farm culture. It’s a challenge, and you can’t engage them superficially. Still, each year we notice there are greater numbers of students open to environmentally sound practices.”

**Regional Contexts**

The natural environment, regional artistic traditions, civic life, cultural diversity, and issues of race and class are some of the many regional contexts informing public scholarship and engaged creative practice at the five institutions. Local conference organizers consider the Mississippi River a compelling metaphor for the upcoming national convening because it calls forth the relationship between natural and human ecologies—for example, the relationship between the quality of the air, water, and soil, and the flow of products, people, and ideas. Schadewald elaborates: “In our Midwest location with the waters that connect us, we have proximity to local food culture, nature reserves, community gardens, and urban and rural farms. The regional effort to consider the role of farmers and food cooperatives



Photo: Stephen Gelfre

Professor Michael Lansing and students in the “Environmental Connections” course working with Augsburg’s Campus Kitchen to prepare a meal using locally grown produce.

in local food production is a foundation upon which to link concerns about how to live, how to teach, and how to be activists.” Underhill notes that before he came to Augsburg, “I had not studied the river, but when I saw it was just four blocks away, I knew we needed to have courses that take students out on the Mississippi, to directly connect to the world around our campus.”

Underhill notes other important regional contexts for his work at Augsburg: “There’s an incredibly vibrant artistic community that enriches our work and is a source of long-time collaborative endeavors, such as In the Heart of the Beast Puppet and Mask Theatre, the Guthrie Theater, and the Walker Art Center. There’s also a healthy civic culture, to which we’re closely tied through Augsburg’s Center for Democracy and Citizenship.” University of Minnesota’s Kuftinec adds, “Both cities have reputable public artists. In St. Paul there is a public art wing of the municipal government concerned

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## Keyword: *Sustainability*

**Jamie Haft**

**DeAnna Cummings** is co-founder and executive director of Juxtaposition Arts, a community-minded, youth-oriented visual arts organization in North Minneapolis. Juxtaposition Arts' year-round activities include a community mural program, studio art and design classes, creative entrepreneurship workshops, exhibitions for community patrons, artist-in-residence programs at public schools, higher education campus-community collaborations, and arts-based opportunities for traditionally unengaged stakeholders to participate in community planning and urban development. Cummings is a 2009 recipient of the prestigious Bush Foundation Fellowship, which enabled her to complete a mid-career master's degree in public administration at Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government. IA Program Coordinator Jamie Haft spoke with Cummings by phone to discuss this edition of the IA newsletter's keyword, *sustainability*.

**Jamie Haft:** DeAnna, how do you define sustainability?

**DeAnna Cummings:** To say it simply, sustainability is vitality. Sustainability is to communities, institutions, and groups what vitality is to individuals. It is closely tied to capacity, which can be defined as one's ability to develop, withstand, recover, or produce, or others' perceptions of one's ability to do those things; capacity is both real and perceived. Sustainability is also tied to sustenance.

**JH:** What does sustainability mean in your own work?

**DC:** I resonate with seven core principles related to this idea of sustainability. First, the approach has to be assets-based: leveraging, developing, and uncovering assets are always the first and foremost components of doing engaged art and scholarship. Juxtaposition Arts' asset is the youth that comprise a huge concentration of our population here in North Minneapolis. Second, diversity is

essential. Commercialized society emphasizes one source, one solution, one answer. In the communities I work in, no single solution works. It's like having all our eggs in one basket, and it's one of the most dangerous tendencies in this work. Smallness, the third principle, relates to diversity. "Super-size" is such a thing of the last couple decades—and it doesn't work! To develop Juxtaposition Arts, we studied the successful entrepreneurial model of the Old Order Amish, which is about becoming only so large. If your organization grows too large, you start to put other people out of opportunity, you have to live out of balance in order to sustain the operation, you don't have time for your family, and you think you need more money than you actually do to live comfortably. The fourth: Silos don't work, collaboration is critical. I cringe when I hear others say, "We have to do more with less." Collaboration, when it's done well, enables us to do less with less—and with greater impact. Another principle is action. I think academic work is at its highest potential when it's focused on action. Higher education's knowledge and resources add value to our collective ability to act. We have to put study, research, and theory in action to improve lives and strengthen communities. The next principle is about investment, including funders, donors, and all the beneficiaries of engaged art and scholarship. At Juxtaposition, it is not

about passive receivers or benevolent givers. The giver model implies an attitude of saving people—and people are actually enriched by developing their own ability to save themselves. The last principle is sustenance, which at a basic level is nourishment: food, shelter, light, water, health, balance, joy, beauty, laughter, and family.

**JH:** How are those principles enacted at Juxtaposition Arts?

**DC:** They are the foundation for our work with young people, our community-university collaborations and other relationships across sectors, and even the culture of our organization and the way we work with artists and staff members. Take our cocurricular project Street Life, an ongoing collaboration with University of Minnesota's College of Design, including the Departments of Architecture and Landscape Architecture and the Center for Urban and Regional Affairs. The project involves a diverse group of participants including undergraduate and graduate students, university faculty, K-12 students from our afterschool program, community artists, and our staff. We strive to maintain small group settings with artist-to-student ratios of 1:5 or 1:10 at most. Participants focus attention on the built and natural environment along the West Broadway Corridor, a major commercial street in the typically high unemployment and high poverty community where Juxtaposition is located. The community near West Broadway is rich with the exuberance and risk taking



DeAnna Cummings with young artists Dan, Elijah, and DeRoyce, discussing a mural painted by the youth.

Photo: Barb Davis

spirit of young people; youth are inarguably the wellspring of culture, creativity, and artistry. Project participants use arts, culture, and design to leverage and improve West Broadway's livability, safety, and social and financial capital, in partnership with the people who live there. Recent projects include: developing plans for a land bridge over the freeway and for a market and gathering space in what is currently a suburban strip mall parking lot; building two small parks and hand-painting murals there; and designing bus stops based on the hopes and fears of community residents who ride the bus.

**JH:** Which artists and scholars have informed your conception of sustainability?

**DC:** There are so many, but some personal influences come to mind: Octavia Butler, science fiction author; Rosa Clemente, community organizer and hip-hop activist; Jeff Chang, hip-hop scholar; John Taylor Gatto, 1991 New York Teacher of the Year and author; Robert Putnam's work on social capital; Mark Stern's research on the social impact of the arts; Marshall Ganz, public policy, Harvard University; Rick Lowe, Project Row Houses; Lily Yeh, The Village of Arts and Humanities; and Lady Pink, graffiti artist.

**JH:** How do stakeholders sustain Juxtaposition's work, given diminished resources?

**DC:** From an organizational perspective, we resist the natural reaction to turn inward and protect our vital organs, and we extend outward. Every couple of years, we reinvent Juxtaposition to make it more relevant to our community. I think our smallness and nimbleness allows us to recreate and reexamine ourselves often, and we are continually being reflective. At the same time, diminished resources are nothing new. It's the same with poor people everywhere; the bottom can't drop much further. Our community has historically had inequitable access to opportunity, and as a result suffers from persistent disparities along all socioeconomic measures. For our community's sustainability, we need to come together to creatively solve these tough challenges and build our own solutions, using the unique tool of art. ■

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with issues of art and sustainability in a civic context." Schadewald notes that arts and humanities spaces on Macalester's campus are undergoing physical revitalization: "The College's leadership understands how those spaces can nurture public artists and scholars and engender all students with an appreciation for concerns beyond the campus."

Conference organizers point to the "flow" of people in the region, which shapes energies and concerns and raises the question of how to sustain a sense of place within a continuing swirl of changing peoples, ideas, and economies. The Twin Cities were developed on land ceded by the Dakota People in treaties, which in the 1800s were subsequently and repeatedly broken; today, the Twin Cities metropolis is home to one of the largest urban Native American communities in the nation. At Macalester, students in two advanced seminars in geography recently researched the dissolution of a nearby reservation for The Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis and for the Indian Land Tenure Foundation, which is leading the effort to regain the native land.

In the past two decades, the demographics of the Twin Cities have changed dramatically, and the two cities are now home to one of the largest Somali and Hmong populations, respectively, in the U.S., as well as a growing Latino/a population. In the "Global Religions in Minnesota" course, Carleton College students conduct site-specific research involving multimedia interviews and historical documentation to learn about these communities, such as the Somali Muslim identity in the nearby town of Faribault. "Understanding the changing nature of Minnesota is central to Carleton's work," Falcón avers. "With a college-wide focus on global engagement, we emphasize how you can engage from Northfield, Minnesota."

"There's discussion in the Twin Cities about why the environmental movement lacks diversity," University of Minnesota's Kuftinec says. "How can we make the green movement a multi-colored movement? How do we confront the realities of how race and class intersect with environmentalism as a movement, and ensure we're not missing both a way of analyzing what's happening and of transforming that analysis into different kinds of creative practices?"

*"If we're to sustain ourselves culturally, there has to be a way of thinking about education not as something that is separate from culture, but is integrated with community."*

IA's partners in the Twin Cities note that many questions about the relationship of sustainability, humanities, arts and culture, and higher education are part of conversations about the region's future. Linking this future to the past, Kuftinec observes, "The sustainability movement in higher education intersects the public scholarship movement metaphorically as much as materially. The Morrill Act of 1862 conceived of a land grant university with the idea of using education to help farmers create our food sources in the state—and to work with them and learn from them. From the University of Minnesota's founding as a land grant university, outreach centers have been linked to the idea of sustainable culture in terms of food production, how a population feeds itself, and the ways that a university can collaborate with the population growing the food. If we're to sustain ourselves culturally, there has to be a way of thinking about education not as something that is separate from culture, but is integrated with community." ■

## The 2011 Imagining America Conference: Minneapolis-St. Paul, Minnesota

Imagining America invites university affiliates and community partners to participate in our eleventh annual national conference, September 22-24, 2011, hosted by Macalester College and the University of Minnesota. This year's conference theme, "What Sustains Us?" asks participants to engage a broad range of questions about sustainability: environmental concerns; our existential and vocational condition; our social and institutional relations regarding humanities and arts practices; and concerns of globalization and the often-invisible labor that supports us. Minneapolis-St. Paul and the surrounding region offer a key vantage point for engaging issues related to public scholarship in humanities, arts, and design, and for considering the conference theme. The Mississippi River, which flows adjacent to the University of Minnesota's Minneapolis campus, provides a compelling metaphor for the conference and for engaging themes related to the natural environment, the flow of people, products, and ideas, and the connections among diverse groups.

### CONFERENCE KEYNOTE CONVERSATION

This year, the IA keynote address will be presented in the form of a conversation between visual artist and activist, Seitu Jones, and his "Black Environmental Thought" collaborator, Dr. Rose Brewer, University of Minnesota professor of African American & African Studies, and co-author of *The Color of Wealth* (New Press, 2006). The book won the 2006 Gustavus Meyer national book award. Jones was a Loeb Fellow in the Harvard Graduate School of Design as well as the artist-in-residence for the City of Minneapolis. He is currently a faculty advisor in the MFA in Interdisciplinary Arts program at Goddard College and a Senior Fellow in Agricultural Systems in the College of Food, Agriculture and Natural Resource Sciences at the University of Minnesota.

### CONFERENCE AT-A-GLANCE

On Wednesday, September 21, the 2011 Publicly Active Graduate Education (PAGE) Fellows will gather for a half-day pre-conference workshop during which they will discuss some of the challenges and implications of undertaking publicly engaged art and scholarship. They'll also talk about and receive feedback on their own work, and begin framing their year-long collaboration with Imagining America. Also meeting will be IA Collaboratory teams, to prepare an update on their seven research initiatives to be shared with the consortium over the next few days.

The general conference begins on Thursday, September 22. Conference attendees will make their way—by shuttle bus or by footbridge across the Mississippi—from the Holiday Inn Minneapolis Metrodome Hotel to the Coffman Student Union at the University

of Minnesota. Continuing IA's efforts to organize and activate member campuses and their communities by encouraging the creation of local IA steering committees, the traditional Campus Representatives' meeting will be open to all who wish to attend. Over breakfast, we will discuss campus organizing and communication strategies, and introduce the new, interactive Imagining America website. Breakout groups will focus on challenges particular to individual institutions and communities, and provide opportunities for brainstorming and sharing creative solutions together. (Those who don't wish to attend the meeting will be invited to eat breakfast in an adjoining dining room.)

After breakfast, concurrent sessions will engage participants around various aspects of art and scholarship undertaken within campus-community partnerships. Questions about sustainability—in the many ways the word can be conceived—will be central. For the first time at our conference Imagining America will convene "thrash groups." These facilitated sessions will invite participants to engage in a series of focused dialogues over the course of the conference on topics of mutual interest. For example, one thrash group might explore how to sustain interdisciplinary and/or intersectoral partnerships; another may look at how to ensure collaborations that benefit all stakeholders.

After lunch and another series of concurrent sessions, we will gather in the Coffman Theater, where Director Jan Cohen-Cruz will welcome conference participants and introduce Executive Dean David Scobey (The New School), longtime champion, leader, and innovator of civic engagement initiatives in higher education. He will present a plenary address on the current landscape of engagement, prospects for the future, and IA's role within the broader movement. The day will end with a wine and hors d'oeuvre reception overlooking the Mississippi River.

We will begin Friday back at UMN's Coffman Student Union, where attendees will enjoy a continental breakfast and mingle with colleagues while exploring the wide array of poster presentations on display. And while books will be sold each day of the conference, Friday morning offers an extended opportunity to peruse and purchase new and classic texts on public art and scholarship. After breakfast, we will attend the keynote conversation between Seitu Jones and Dr. Rose Brewer in the Coffman Theater.

Immediately following the keynote, we will eat lunch before traveling to one of the dozen or so sites of campus-community partnership. Each site will host an all-afternoon workshop or discussion around a topic that aligns the activities of the site with the mutual interests of the participants. Conference attendees will preregister for

these events and will be encouraged to take advantage of preparatory materials posted to IA's website over the summer. The hope is both to deepen the conversations that occur during the conference and to catalyze active networks that will extend beyond the conference itself. Our local hosts have organized a diverse range of site visits where topics will include, among others: community cultural development in urban and rural contexts, K-12 Achievement Zones, public history, environmental sustainability, urban Native American communities, and engagement between campuses and immigrant communities.

On Saturday, we travel just a few miles east to Macalester College where, at breakfast, we'll invite participants to discuss with their tablemates the previous day's experiences in and around the Twin Cities. The rest of the day—interrupted only by lunch—will consist of three sets of concurrent sessions, including closing discussion among participants of the thrash groups. The entire event will end with a facilitated plenary discussion where we'll share reflections and emerging insights, and begin articulating the ways the conference helped to advance the civic engagement movement.

Of course, Minneapolis and St. Paul are beautiful, fun, and culturally rich cities. Each day of formal events will end early enough to allow everyone to get out to experience them! Please join us for what promises to be a particularly exciting IA event.

Conference information is available online at [www.imaginingamerica.org](http://www.imaginingamerica.org).

### 2010 Critical Exchange Grant Recipient

Before completing the transition to the Collaboratory program, IA was proud to award the final Critical Exchange Grant to Oklahoma State University (OSU), University of Kansas, and Hampshire College. Led by OSU Associate Professor Carol Mason, scholars and students from the three schools organized a regional workshop in Stillwater, OK, entitled "Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Reproductive and Sexual Health," in response to what Mason describes as "the paltry education students receive as the result of mandated abstinence only programs regarding sex, sexuality, and reproductive health." Through a combination of personal narratives and quantitative data, student, faculty, and public sphere presenters promoted a fact-based education around these issues as "a matter of human rights and democracy." Approximately 100 people from five states participated in the workshop.

## 2011 IA Collaboratories

We are pleased to announce principal investigators (PIs) and research fellows for the 2011 IA Collaboratories. For more information, visit <http://imaginingamerica.org/collab.html>.

**TTI Impact:** PIs Julie Ellison, University of Michigan; Timothy K. Eatman, Syracuse University (SU), & Genevieve Carpio, University of Southern California; Marc Cooper, Missouri State University; Carolyn de la Peña, University of California, Davis; Ellen Kraly, Colgate University; Lynnette Overby, Michigan State University; Julie Plaut, Minnesota Campus Compact; David Scobey, The New School; Sidonie Smith, University of Michigan; Harvey Teres, SU

**Integrated Assessment:** PIs Sylvia Gale, University of Richmond, & Pam Korza, Animating Democracy, Americans for the Arts; Miriam Bartha (ex-officio) & Keith Nitta, University of Washington; John Saltmarsh (advisor), New England Resource Center for Higher Education; Stephani Etheridge Woodson, Arizona State University

**Culture and Community Revitalization:** PIs Ron Bechet, Xavier University of Louisiana, & Kendall Phillips, SU, with Micah Salkind, Brown University; Cheryl Ajitrotutu, University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee; Myrna M. Breitbart, Hampshire College; Jeri L. Childers & Bob Leonard, Virginia Tech; Ruth Janisch Lake, Macalester College; Heather Lewis, Pratt Institute; Mark Naison, Fordham University; Marion Wilson, SU

**Public Humanities Centers and Institutes:** PIs Gregg Lambert, SU, & Anne M. Valk, Brown University; Barb Bondy & Jay Lamar, Auburn University; Bonnie Effros, University of Florida; Michael Goodman & Sara Guyer, University of Wisconsin, Madison; Carla Kaplan, Northeastern University; Inmaculada Lara-Bonilla, SU; Teresa Mangum, University of Iowa; Jane McNamara, New York Council for the Humanities; Leerom Medovoi, Portland State University

**Engaged Undergraduate Education:** PIs Amy Koritz, Drew University, & Paul Schadewald, Macalester College; Robin Bachin, University of Miami; Jeannine Hill Fletcher, Fordham University; Brigitta R. Brunner & Giovanna Summerfield, Auburn University; Catherine Gerard, SU, on behalf of Anne Beffel, Susan Dischiave, Tiffany Steinwert, and Murali Venkatesh; Darby K. Ray, Millsaps College

**Online IA Journal:** PIs Kathleen Brandt & Brian Lonsway, SU; Lynne Elizabeth & Stefania DePetris, New Village Press; Jill Dolan (advisor), Princeton University; Sari Biklen, SU

**Community Knowledge:** PIs Randy Martin, New York University (NYU), & Kim Yasuda, University of California, Santa Barbara; Alison Mountz, SU; Jack Tchen, NYU

## From the Director

Continued from page 1

“work together, in all our diversity, to build a shared cross-cultural commons” ([http://www.communityarts.net/readingroom/archivefiles/2007/11/30\\_years\\_and\\_co.php](http://www.communityarts.net/readingroom/archivefiles/2007/11/30_years_and_co.php)).

The commons is characterized by a free exchange of ideas and other resources among people positioned in a range of social locations, recognizing those resources as emerging from, belonging to, or affecting the whole of a community. The commons suggests cultural inheritances quite apart from our economic standing in life, the legacies of multiple rivers that flow together into who we are. The commons links the individual dimensions of our work (our own desires and commitments) with external collective structures and supports that enable us to situate ourselves in the world. Our inner commitment sustains us as we try to manifest meaningful work in public, and vice versa. Public scholarship and creative practice provide an intellectual and creative commons, an ecological balance between our inner sense of being right with the world and our external activities.

The relationship between sustainability and the commons bespeaks a spirit of generosity: my well-being intertwined with yours. We see this relationship on the organizational level as well. Just as sustainability is the theme of the next conference, the ongoing work of our gatherings is to build and strengthen a commons connecting people committed to public scholarship and practice from wherever they do such work, and at whatever stage in their development. And the purpose of such work is to sustain ourselves and our multiple communities, be they geographic, intellectual, or otherwise defined.

In September, we will come together in Minneapolis-St. Paul to talk about what sustains us and, together, look at how to manifest the ramifications of such inquiries in the public sphere. It is striking how organically the

theme “What sustains us?” emerged out of conversations that the planners for this conference held with Twin Cities campus and community partners. Now the IA staff and board are in the midst of identifying how the conference itself is a commons that sustains us as an organization.

*The relationship between sustainability and the commons bespeaks a spirit of generosity: my well-being intertwined with yours.*

One effort to which our conversations have led is to increase the capacity for more people’s participation in the conference. A component of such accessibility is economic. In Seattle, we stopped holding sessions in hotels—which typically charge high prices for meals—and will pass these savings on to attendees. Broader participation will facilitate greater evidence of community knowledge and its central role in solving real-world problems. We look to the conference to demonstrate what those of us based in higher education are able to achieve when our work extends beyond campuses to include people who contribute from other spheres. We increasingly envision the national conference as a commons where we do work together as well as report on, present, and examine work done elsewhere.

For IA as an organization to sustain itself, it must become ever more participatory, generating knowledge and creative practice across hierarchical boundaries. As we increasingly function as a meaningful and dynamic commons, IA can then contribute more to the public scholarship and practice movement.



Jan Cohen-Cruz

Director, Imagining America

## Princeton Team Assessing Student Benefits of Community-Based Research

A research team based at Princeton has developed a survey instrument to assess student learning outcomes of community-based research (CBR). The survey, whose reliability and validity have been tested, captures five dimensions of student learning, including academic skills, educational experience, civic engagement, professional skills, and personal growth. Development of the instrument was funded by a *Learn and Serve America* grant to Princeton University (in partnership with the Bonner Foundation). This study has the potential to assess learning outcomes at the student, course, and institutional levels and is approved by Princeton University’s Institutional Research Board for Human Subjects.

Any student who has participated in CBR at any college or university is encouraged to take the survey, which is available online until spring 2012. For further information or to request a web link to the survey, please contact Trisha Thorne at [tthorne@princeton.edu](mailto:tthorne@princeton.edu).

## IA Nuptials

Congratulations to Assistant Director Robin Higgins, formerly Goettel, for her marriage to Eric Higgins.

## Mentorship, Sustainability, and Graduate Education And a Call for Fellows

**Adam Bush**

On January 7, 2011, George Sanchez, Vice Dean for Diversity and Strategic Initiatives, and professor of American Studies & Ethnicity and History at the University of Southern California, and chair of Imagining America's National Advisory Board, was honored with the first Equity Award by the American Historical Association for his work "in recruiting and retaining underrepresented racial and ethnic groups in the historical profession and... [on] new initiatives and sustained efforts in this direction." As he walked to the podium to accept the award, the audience's cheers rang out with a different quality of enthusiasm than had been present throughout the ceremony—a quality that prompted AHA president-elect William Cronon to exclaim, "Now that's more like it!" What the AHA recognized that night is what all of George's students and colleagues (many of whom were in attendance) knew, and what IA has felt since he joined this organization: that his work and mentorship had opened the Academy to the next generation of scholars and, as Emory Provost Earl Lewis said in a toast earlier that evening, that he had "created a pathway so [that] the next generation of questions get asked."

Too often, graduate students enter their discipline with the notion that they have to break with their commitments and their communities in order to conform to the tenets of their field or those of their mentors. In *Beyond Affirmative Action* (2001), Roberto Ibarra writes about how "graduate students soon learn that being changed means they must bend to the faculty's definitions of what constitutes hard work and success." IA's 2008 Tenure Team Initiative (TTI) report, *Scholarship in Public: Knowledge Creation and Tenure Policy in the Engaged University*, addresses this tension at length, both in reflections by senior scholars and in its

analysis of academic mentorship. But as the TTI report discusses, mentorship, as practiced in higher education, is frequently thought of as a one-way street—a passing down of lived experience, knowledge, and wisdom, "the language [of which] often assumes lack, dependency, or neediness." For an organization such as IA, which foregrounds "reciprocity," "pluralism," and "equity," in its Vision, Mission, Values, and Goals statement, this clearly doesn't pass muster. The TTI report strongly encourages the Academy to "move toward a strength-based, or asset-based, model of mentoring."

The report looks toward the development of collaborative support structures for advising publicly engaged scholars—structures of alliance and influence that mirror the collaboration imbued within the methods and methodologies of engaged artistic and scholarly work itself. In fact, the founding of PAGE is cited as an exemplary model of "how networking and self-organizing by graduate students leads to growing agency." PAGE leadership continues to ask how our network can influence graduate mentorship and graduate training that leads to "new questions being asked" about professionalization, mentorship, and the role of institutions of higher education creating models of lasting community engagement.

With such lasting engagement in mind, this year's cohort of PAGE Fellows will participate in a full academic year of robust reflection on the theme, "What Sustains Us?"—both inside and outside academe. The current Call for Fellows (accessible at [www.imaginingamerica.org](http://www.imaginingamerica.org)) asks applicants to consider the "Us" that needs sustaining, to question what counts as a scholarly or artistic artifact, and to critique the institutional supports offered to graduate students committed to publicly engaged art and scholarship. The 2011 PAGE Fellows will enter



Photo: Margie Salazar

George Sanchez addressing friends and colleagues before receiving the first American Historical Association Equity Award in January.

into a two-semester workshop with Imagining America through which they will **receive funds** to travel to and participate in the IA national conference in Minnesota's Twin Cities; **collaborate** on a writing project about defining graduate success, mentorship, and civic engagement; and **present** work before the close of the academic year at either an IA regional meeting, a campus workshop of their own design, or another appropriate professional convening.

These are the very types of graduate professionalization opportunities George Sanchez has been instrumental in instituting at USC during my tenure as a doctoral candidate. They have provided me and countless others the opportunities to succeed in and to challenge existing structures within higher education. In framing the PAGE program as an extended workshop, Imagining America is looking to change the paradigm of scholarship so that we can see, as Earl Lewis encouraged us to during his toast, that "scholarship in itself is not an individual pursuit...[but] really, when we move to the next stage of development, scholarship is part of this collaborative we've created." ■

## Review of *Gravyland: Writing beyond the curriculum in the city of brotherly love*, Stephen Parks

(Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2010)

**Alison LaLond Wyatt**

University of Pennsylvania

Through a detailed account of a Temple University community writing program's evolution, Stephen Parks's *Gravyland: Writing beyond the curriculum in the city of brotherly love* offers salient lessons for educators interested in university-based community engagement. In addition to his position as an Associate Professor of Writing and Rhetoric at Syracuse University, Parks is the Executive Director of the New City Community Press, a publishing house dedicated to providing opportunities for community members to tell their stories in their own words. New City Community Press sprang from the work of the New City Writing Program (first called the Institute for the Study of Literature, Literacy, and Culture). New City Writing was a campus-community program at Temple University "premised on progressive social values and committed to expanding literacy rights within local communities" (p. 35). *Gravyland* chronicles the work of New City Writing from 1995 to 2004, as it grew from a single service-learning writing course working with a local public high school to a complex and dynamic writing organization, complete with the Press, and boasting a diverse group of stakeholders comprised of Philadelphia communities, faculty and students from Temple University, and various foundations and corporate sponsors.

Parks situates the work of New City Writing in a context of "the struggle to maintain the possibility of progressive education during a period of conservative dominance" (p. xiv), and of debate among academics around what it means to be an intellectual, the value of non-canonical literature, the value the Academy places on faculty engagement with the communities surrounding their campuses, and the proper place(s) for political action. Rather than simply making a theoretical

case for "working against conservative politics and working toward progressive social and political goals" (p. 36), Parks also illustrates how post-secondary educators can help to amplify the voices of marginalized or disenfranchised groups, and overcome challenges as they arise. Although *Gravyland's* primary target audience is likely rhetoric and composition teachers and scholars, Temple University's role as both setting and stakeholder offers lessons for any partner on the campus side of campus-community relationships.

Parks describes "writing beyond the curriculum" as standing for "an alliance of university and community activists focused on expanding literacy options for both students and community members" (p. 101), an idea aimed at including the voices of marginalized individuals in intellectual arenas through work with a university's rhetoric/composition/writing/English program. New City Writing was a product of that idea; and Temple University was a setting where entrepreneurial faculty members with an interest in progressive pedagogy and community engagement were free to pursue those endeavors—with support, but limited structure. In its earliest iteration, New City Writing was agile and adapted quickly as its leaders learned more about local communities' strengths and needs.

Questions of voice, ownership, and power are common in all relationships, but are particularly acute in campus-community partnerships designed across lines of race, class, and privilege. *Gravyland* provides honest assessment and description of four New City Writing projects: a service-learning course based in a local school; writing centers in seven local schools; an oral history project in an urban neighborhood proud of its intercultural makeup; and an anthology about disability culture in Philadelphia. Challenges described for New City Writing programs

range from the logistics of working with the community on an academic calendar to the developmental stages of undergraduate writers serving as interviewers. The clash between university and community cultures also presented obstacles. For example, New City Writing stumbled when the project to document the history of a diverse North Philadelphia neighborhood without any apparent racial strife fell short of many community members' expectations, when they "stopped being potential producers and readers of the book and had become the new subject for an academic study by students" (p. 80). One resident described her portrayal as resembling that of "the village idiot" (p. 76). A community protest of the published oral histories followed. Parks reports that in that situation the racial harmony of the neighborhood did not translate into automatic acceptance of the partners from Temple, and readers learn that the community members' interests did not align neatly with those of the New City Writing leadership. However, in the wake of community protest, New City Writing reexamined their work with that community and negotiated an action plan which included using the book in the Temple writing curriculum and the story of its creation as a framework for discussing campus-community partnership work with university students. Furthermore, a portion of the book's profits were redirected to the neighborhood association, and a second edition of the book was published, this one with more input from community members.

Even when the challenges within the partnership are minor, the example of New City Writing demonstrates how cumbersome campus-community partnerships can be for faculty members with full teaching and research agendas. Parks's description of Temple's shift over time—from an incubator for any number of community engagement projects having little formal oversight, to a structured support system of administrators and designated resources—underscores both the benefits and drawbacks of this particular institutionalization. While the less structured formation allowed New City Writing

to take shape as a nimble institution with significant faculty attention and effort, community members were unconvinced that the efforts were sincere, since they seemed to duplicate the pattern of disjointed interaction familiar from other university interventions. Similarly, the value/productivity of the community engagement work went without institutional evaluation. On the other hand, Parks describes how institutional campus resources and structures, including administrative positions to oversee the work, which were established to promote community engagement efforts and to ensure mutual benefit for Temple and the community, seem to have marginalized campus-community work by moving the locus of control away from the faculty and their mission-central work of teaching and research: “The move to regularize community partnerships... was soon recognized as a broader attempt to redefine student and faculty identity... The purpose of such a new management structure was to return the professoriate to playing the role of ‘traditional intellectuals’” (pp. 194-195). The New City Writing program eventually became a community-based, rather than university-based, operation, and that location offered opportunities for continued innovation, although it meant less institutional support for engaged faculty members. Parks does not offer answers about ideal organizational structures for campus-community partnership, so those questions remain.

The fifth chapter offers excerpts of the work produced through New City Writing. In many ways, both the diversity of the voices included, and the attention given to each individual and their social context, tell the story of New City Writing’s success. However, it would be disingenuous to say that having these powerful stories, struggles, triumphs, and ideas in print suggests that New City Writing evolved into a perfect model. Parks never suggests as much. In the final chapter Parks does assess the work of New City Writing as successful, using the marker of a variety of participants from varied backgrounds taking action for change. Parks reflects that, “behind each partnership, each

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University of California Santa Barbara

moment of institutional success and failure, countless individuals experienced the power that can be achieved by collectively disrupting the *norm* for the *possible*” (p. 207). Parks details the successes and challenges of New City Writing as an example and implicitly beckons educators interested in progressive

change to engage in strategic work, including providing platforms for everyday intellectuals to participate in local and global dialogues, and celebrating those intellectuals’ perspectives. Included in this call to action is an invitation for our institutions to pave the way for that work. ■

## Call for Applications to the 2011-2012 Imagining America PAGE Summit and Working Group

PAGE (Publicly Active Graduate Education) is Imagining America's network for publicly engaged graduate students in humanities, arts, and design. PAGE enhances the theoretical and practical tools for public engagement; fosters a national, interdisciplinary community of peers and veteran scholars; and creates opportunities for collaborative knowledge production.

IA invites graduate students with a demonstrated interest in public scholarship and/or artistic practice to apply for a 2011-2012 PAGE Fellowship. Awardees receive \$600 to attend a half-day Fellows Summit on September 21 and the 2011 Imagining America national conference, September 22-24. Both events take place in the Twin Cities of Minneapolis and St. Paul. The PAGE director will partner fellows with senior scholar mentors as well as help promote opportunities for peer mentorship and support from IA's network. Upon acceptance of a fellowship, participants also commit to participating in a yearlong working group to promote collaborative art-making, teaching, writing, and research projects. Through this model, PAGE is looking to foster a cohort of fellows interested in pursuing collective and innovative scholarly practices. Fellows are asked to present such publicly engaged scholarship/art before the close of the academic year at either an IA regional meeting, a campus workshop of their own design, or another appropriate professional convening.

Within the frame of our 2011 national conference, themed around "What Sustains Us?" the PAGE Summit will take up questions similar to the gathering as a whole (see below), but through the lens of graduate education. This is an urgent moment in higher education, not the least in graduate programs, requiring us to think through sustaining public engagement through the intersections of mentorship, diversity, real-world interaction, student success, and

scholarship. Fellows will be asked throughout the year to reflect upon their own public practice in the cultural disciplines, its place in making higher education a more democratic space, and the ramifications of the changing economic climate.

Graduate students at all stages of their MA/MFA/PhD programs, including previous fellows, may apply to be PAGE Fellows. Applicants must be graduate students during the 2011-2012 academic year, but do not have to be planning a career within higher education. *Note: Only students who are affiliated with Imagining America member institutions are eligible for this award.* For a list of member institutions, and more information about Imagining America, visit [www.imaginingamerica.org](http://www.imaginingamerica.org).

Applicants must submit a CV and a short reflective essay (up to 500 words) on past, current, or future work in the context of one of the following issues, posed in the IA National Conference CFP:

- How can the increasing efforts to realize the democratic, public, and civic purposes of American higher education be sustained and forwarded? What sustains our engaged practices within a context of diminished resources and rapidly shifting cultures within higher education?
- How can engagement efforts contribute to sustained economic and cultural viability in urban and rural communities?
- What sustains stakeholders confronting challenges around power, race, class, and privilege?

To apply, go to [www.imaginingamerica.org](http://www.imaginingamerica.org).

**Submission Deadline is June 1, 2011.**

Questions? Please contact National Director of PAGE, Adam Bush, at [asbush@gmail.com](mailto:asbush@gmail.com).

### Awards

IA Board Chair **George Sanchez** received the Equity Award from the American Historical Association for "excellence in recruiting and retaining underrepresented racial and ethnic groups into the historic profession."

IA PAGE Director **Adam Bush** received the K. Patricia Cross Future Leaders Award for "commitment to academic and civic responsibility."

IA Research Director **Tim Eatman** received the International Association for Research on Service-learning and Community Engagement (IARSLCE) Early Career Award.

### Coming Soon: Enhanced IA Communications

The IA office is upgrading its communications technology in order to share innovative campus-community partnerships being undertaken by IA members, provide platforms for intra-consortium collaboration and organizing, and powerfully communicate the value of public scholarship and engaged creative practice. Upcoming improvements include a new website with a dynamic map of IA members and a new listserv for receiving and sharing field-wide news. We anticipate that these new tools will create a more effective local-national feedback loop, which will in turn help IA members take full advantage of the collective intellectual capital that is this consortium's greatest asset. In addition, we hope IA's new virtual presence will better reflect our shared humanities, arts, and design experiences, and appeal to various publics including college presidents, faculty and students, nonprofit leaders, artists and designers, and more. To share your thoughts on enhancing IA communications, contact us at [ia@syr.edu](mailto:ia@syr.edu).

## NEH and NEA in Danger

As we face the news of drastic cuts to humanities and arts departments in higher education, we also witness the proposed slashing of the NEH and NEA. If you have not already contacted your representatives in Congress, wait no longer. Here is how the National Humanities Alliance describes proposed NEH cuts:

### **FY 2011 Continuing Resolution**

The CR provides \$145 million for the National Endowment for the Humanities in FY 2011. This marks a deep \$22 million, or 13%, cut over the FY 2010 enacted level.

### **Action Needed**

Send a message to your representatives to support the NEH and vote against any proposals to cut, or eliminate, funding for the agency.

### **FY 2012—President Obama’s Budget Request**

The president requested \$146 million for NEH, a \$21 million cut to the agency. Please watch the NHA website for further updates and analysis of humanities funding within the president’s FY 2012 budget.

### **NEH Annual Appropriations, FY 2008 to Present (in millions of dollars)**

Fiscal Year	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Budget Request	141.4	144.4	171.3*	161.3	146.3
Appropriation	144.7	155.0	167.5	pending	n/a

*\*The FY 2010 Budget Request included \$10 million to transfer administration of the National Capitol Arts and Cultural Affairs Program to NEH (not approved by Congress).*

### Here is how Americans for the Arts is reaching out to people regarding the proposed arts cuts:

Both the U.S. House of Representatives and the U.S. Senate passed a stop-gap funding measure for FY 2011 to keep the government operational while they work on a final appropriations bill for the rest of FY 2011. This legislation makes \$4 billion in domestic spending cuts, including a number of federal education programs. Among the programs terminated in this legislation is the \$40 million Arts in Education program (AIE) through the U.S. Department of Education, which supports model arts education programs and funds VSA and the Kennedy Center arts education program as well.

This termination of the Arts in Education program is alarming, and all the more so because of the drastic cuts the National Endowment for the Arts underwent a few weeks earlier that would reduce its budget by 26%, the largest cut in 16 years!

We need to let Congress know that these cuts and terminations are unacceptable, and they should restore the funds. Visit [www.AmericansForTheArts.org](http://www.AmericansForTheArts.org) and access the customizable E-Advocacy Center message to contact your members of Congress now, and let them know that the arts and arts education funding is a priority for you! You may also consider becoming an official member of the Arts Action Fund [www.ArtsActionFund.org](http://www.ArtsActionFund.org). Membership is free and it’s simple to register.



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