The Arts for Incarcerated Youth Luncheon  
Tuesday, July 31, 2018 | 12:15 – 1:15 p.m.

Session Description: A budding coalition has formed to pursue policy reforms enabling youth involved in the criminal justice system to reach their full potential through the arts. Explore the intersection of the arts and the juvenile justice system as presenters share practical examples, significant research and policy implications for state decision-makers.

Sponsor: NCSL gratefully acknowledges the Americans for the Arts for its support of this luncheon.

Moderator: Senator Gerald Malloy, South Carolina

Biographies

Jay Dick  
Senior Director of State & Local Government Affairs  
Americans for the Arts  
100 Vermont Avenue, NW, 6th Floor  
Washington, D.C. 20005  
202-371-2830  
jay@artsusa.org

Jay Dick is the senior director of state and local government affairs at Americans for the Arts where he works to educate and inform elected officials about the value of the arts and culture. Having worked in the governmental affairs/advocacy arena for over 20 years, he is a nationally recognized expert and travels the country working with local and state arts leaders to establish strong and lasting arts advocacy programs. Jay was appointed by Virginia Governor Terry McAuliffe to serve a five-year term as a commissioner for the Virginia Commission for the Arts. He also serves on the Board of the Arts Council of Fairfax County where he chairs their advocacy committee. Advocacy for the arts is his job, but also his passion.

Jeff Poulin  
Arts Education Program Manager  
Americans for the Arts  
100 Vermont Avenue, NW, 6th Floor  
Washington, D.C. 20005  
202-371-2830  
jpoulin@artsusa.org

Jeff M. Poulin joined the arts education team at Americans for the Arts in 2013. He works to empower local, state and federal supporters of arts education to become effective advocates to advance policies supportive of equitable access to arts education for all students. In his role at Americans for the Arts, Jeff has trained over 10,000 advocates in all 50 states. He was also instrumental in the publication of the 2014 National Core Arts Standards, a leader in the creative youth development movement, and a founding board member of the Innovation Collaborative. Before arriving in D.C., Jeff worked for several nonprofit and commercial organizations in the US and abroad focused primarily in production and programming, audience development, research and policy. Notably, he was an advisor on the implementation of the first National Arts in Education Charter under the directions of the Ministers of Arts and Education in the Republic of Ireland. Jeff frequently speaks at a number of nonprofit organizations and universities.

Jeff hails from Portland, Maine and holds a Master of Arts degree in Arts Management and Cultural Policy from University College Dublin and a Bachelor of Science degree in Entertainment Business from Oklahoma City University.

Kaile Shilling  
Executive Director  
Arts for Incarcerated Youth Network  
830 Traction Ave. #3a  
Los Angeles, CA 90013  
310-962-6000  
kaile@artsusa.org

Kaile Shilling is the Executive Director of the Arts for Incarcerated Youth Network (AIYN), an interdisciplinary collaborative of 10 member organizations that provides arts programming to youth.
in detention facilities. AIYN works to build resiliency and wellness, eliminate recidivism, and transform the juvenile justice system. Prior to the AIYN, Kaile served as executive director for the Violence Prevention Coalition of Greater Los Angeles, an organization serving hundreds of nonprofits across Los Angeles County. Her expertise lies in promoting networking and collaboration among community- and faith-based organizations and promoting cross-field dialogue and partnership.

Ayanna Cole  
Assistant Director, Social Impact Programs  
Carnegie Hall  
New York, NY

Ayanna Cole is a leader in community outreach and anti-poverty advocacy in New York City and abroad. She has spent over 12 years committed to helping children living in conditions of poverty. In addition to her commitment to child advocacy, Ayanna has served various functions in small and large media production companies. Most recently, she was a producer at A&E Television Networks & the History Channel.

Since 2003 she has spent a part of every summer as an outreach worker to youth in the Zimpeto province of Mozambique. And in South Africa, she served as a Council of Women World Leaders Fellow in the Office of Former President F. W. de Klerk, working on issues related to women and education policy.

While her summers were spent in Africa, in New York she founded Life Light Street Productions, a street outreach organization that provides young adults in underserved communities with knowledge of and access to opportunities for higher education and career development programs. The program has a specific focus on teaching young people how to produce their own documentary films.

Even while working in television she found ways of encouraging advocacy, and raising awareness of the conditions of the world’s poorest and most oppressed people.

She has used her management, research and public speaking skills to lead global service projects such as lobbying the U.S. government to oppose the genocide in Darfur; to plan fundraisers for orphans in Mozambique and youth centers in New York City; and to coordinate and package health kits for those living with HIV/AIDS around the world through World Vision.

Ayanna holds a bachelor’s degree from Morgan State University, a masters of Business Administration from Fordham University and a masters of Social Work from Columbia University, in Policy and International Social Welfare. She co-produced an Emmy Award winning two-hour special for middle school and high school students illustrating the life-altering impact of drug addiction and the strength of recovery.

Dr. Amir Whitaker, Esq.  
Founder & Director  
Project KnuckleHead  
208 W. 14th Street #209  
Los Angeles, CA 90015  
786-571-6503  
amir@projectknucklehead.org

Whitaker is an educator, author, and civil rights lawyer. He is the founder and volunteer director of Project KnuckleHead, a nonprofit organization empowering youth through music, art, and educational programs since 2013.

Often referred to as “Dr. KnuckleHead,” he was introduced to the criminal justice system as a child when he visited both his mother and father in prison. At age 15, Amir himself was arrested and entered the juvenile justice system. Problems at school eventually led to him being expelled. Despite these hardships, Amir went on to complete five college degrees.

As a lawyer referred to as a “civil rights and education stalwart” by the Daytona Times, he has negotiated settlements and policy changes that have improved the lives of thousands of youth across the country. He is currently a staff attorney with the ACLU of Southern California and researcher with the UCLA Civil Rights Project. At the Southern Poverty Law Center, Amir worked on a class action lawsuit on behalf of incarcerated youth receiving inadequate education, mental health, and rehabilitation services. Within the Juvenile Division of the Miami-Dade County Public Defender’s Office, he represented incarcerated youth and developed training materials. He has taught various grade levels and in different educational settings for over a decade, and has held teaching certifications in Florida, California, and New Jersey. He has delivered keynote speeches to thousands, and written for leading publications across the country, including TIME Magazine. His autobiography, “The Knucklehead’s Guide to Escaping the Trap,” has been featured on ABC News and in The New Yorker. He is the current board chair for the Arts for Incarcerated Youth Network in Los Angeles, a collaborative of 12 organizations providing arts programming to incarcerated youth throughout the county. He received his doctorate in educational psychology from the University of Southern California, his law degree from the University of Miami, and his bachelors from Rutgers University.