

# NORTHWEST ART ALLIANCE

*Northwest Art Alliance is dedicated to connecting the power of art, fine crafts, and community.*

So much is happening in the coming year that Northwest Art Alliance is in search of several new members of the Board of Directors who will bring energy, ideas, and skills to a group that is focused on the future. We are a 501(c)3 non-profit organization with a volunteer Board of Directors and one paid employee, to manage events. Northwest Art Alliance has been promoting arts and fine crafts by putting on crafts fairs for more than 30 years. The pandemic of 2020 and 2021 had a major impact on the organization, but with careful financial planning, and creative new directions the pandemic has shifted the focus but not put a stop to progress.

You may want to know the answer to several key questions:

- Where are we now and where are we going?
- What are the priorities?
- How might a new Board member contribute?

2021 was focused on flexible approaches to connecting artists and patrons with a combination of live and virtual events.

Looking back, in July 2020, we rolled out a new website that provided more information about the organization, its events, and history. Please check it out at <https://nwartalliance.org/>. We operated our first virtual show to try to sort out the process and prepare for a larger virtual show in November.

In 2019 NWAA restructured the organization which included eliminating the Executive Director position and focusing on new actions. In 2020, we saw a clear need to improve diversity in ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender, and age... and began to take intentional steps toward achieving that complex goal. We are focusing on the future.

A few of our specific recent intentional actions related to diversity are:

1. **Celebrate Diversity:** The focus has been African American Artists in the Pacific Northwest and gradually shifting to Native American art as we begin to build relationships. This strength of this project relies on a live show, so full rollout may be in 2023. Grant funding is being pursued.
2. **Introducing Small Communities:** Celebrating the art and artists in small communities across the region. The four-month focus runs for four months began with Guemes Island followed by Langley and La Connor.
3. **Focus on the Board of Directors:** Building on the changes from 2020 when four new board members added strength with age and ethnic diversity. Intentional efforts in the year ahead to expand the diversity and seek specific skill sets.

4. **Featuring Artists:** It is still ahead but we intend to pursue grants to develop a series of videos on artists and their work from a specific ethnic group (Asian American), geographic region (West Africa), or subject matter (such as Ravens that have a significance in many cultures).
5. **Focus on Artists:** Once the live shows were canceled, we began to work to shift the public focus toward the need to support artists. Those early efforts continue as we return to live shows.
6. **Younger Artist Showcase:** The webpage has featured National Scholastic award winning youth artists from the region. We plan to build more youth diversity partnerships in the year ahead.
7. **Focus on Patrons:** Revised advertising focus aimed at a different demographic with print media, billboards, and social media. The art and artists reflect the community served and we want that same profile in patrons.

All these actions come from our planning which was thoughtful and intentional. This is an active board that works well as a team. Together, the group continues to move forward with energy and commitment. Board members live in various parts of Washington State but stay connected with the help of technology. The group meets regularly with Zoom, utilizes Email, and phone. Each person brings expertise to the group and contributes time on various projects.

The Board is like a puzzle in need of a few more pieces. We are looking for expertise to compliment the talents that now exist. We want a person with a positive attitude and a readiness to be part of a solution. Some examples of skills needed for potential members of the Board of Directors:

- Assuming a role with the “Spectrum Newsletter Production Team” with writing, interviews, features, editing and/or proofreading.
- A person with some financial knowledge to be part of the “Finance Team”
- Knowledge of marketing as a special skill.
- Keeping the organization efficient and current through utilization of technology.
- Building community partnerships.
- Video production planning and coordination to document art and artists.
- Cultural, gender, age, and/or ethnic diversity.

Thank you in advance for considering the contribution of your time, your ideas, and your energy in support of art and artists in the Pacific Northwest.

From the Northwest Art Alliance Board of Directors

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