

NOTES: AFTA Emerging Leader Peer Group – Monday, June 5.

Web Exercise: approximately 25 people standing in a circle.

Through a series of questions the group was asked to identify different characteristics about themselves. A piece of string link way passed around the group to form a web ‘of connection’ in the center.

Questions included:

- Who deals with tourism as part of their arts initiatives?
- Who deals with immigration as a major factor to programming and service choices?
- Who is working with online communities?
- Who is working with multi-generational communities?
- Who is dealing with leadership succession as an immediate issue at their organization?
- Who met someone at the conference that they plan to keep connected to when they back?
- Who is working with arts as a youth development tool?
- Who is working with senior citizens?
- Who is dealing with leader succession issues?
- Who is developing an international network?
- Who is working to diversify their audiences?
- Who works in grants administration?
- Who works in or in close conjunction with a school?
- Who is working on research specifically?
- Who is in a new position where you are developing your own goals?
- Who here considers themselves to be an artist?
- Is this your first AFTA conference?

Notes from breakout circle:

Introductions

Questions to the group: What benefits have people gotten from attending the conference?

What stood out in your experience?

- Networks and community contacts
- Hearing new ideas and thinking of new ideas (in reaction to presentations).
- Artventures – seeing the Bucketworks model. The idea that things needs to be changed all at once (as a whole system).
- Seeing the emerging leader presence at the conference and helping to strengthen the network between emerging and established leaders.
- It was nice to see emerging leaders integrated into the whole conference.
- Everyone encouraging the intergenerational dialogue – Juan William’s remarks.
- Juan Williams – Great to recognize that it is always hard to see the time that you’re in until you’re past it.

- I have a much different sense of service organizations now (not just local). A new awareness of the national support available to meet the needs of the community.
- NAMP Preconference: A new appreciation how change sometimes needs to move at what seems like a glacial (example: AFTA/ABC merger and re-branding project).

Question: What about the Living Cultural Democracy piece of this conference – any takeaways?

- The cultural democracy work that we do in our organizations doesn't have to be heavy to be effective. A lot of what we do is subtle and that it is important to celebrate the smaller achievements.
- A recognition that the mid size organizations have work to do. Especially in bridging the gap in the funding game.
- The importance of looking at new strategies.

Question: What new strategies or aha moments were significant to you?

- Anthony Radich's comments, during the Hessinius plenary, about euthanasia for organizations.
- On the question of euthanasia – Seeing the multiple perspectives shared by the panelists.
- There isn't just one way to move forward as a field (euthanasia for example) and that a healthy approach will most likely employ multiple strategies.
- Recognizing that organizations and galleries are dealing with significant pressure from funders on how to present art and evolve.
- Funder's agenda on diversity. Sometimes only pushing diversity at the level of marketing and which doesn't speak to the core/mission of an organization.
- Organizational staff is evolving more quickly than the executive level and boards. Yet executives and boards are still holding the power to effect change.

General Comments:

- Seeing the trickle down funding block created by big organizations and projects (like the Callatrava Milwaukee Arts Museum building).
- Nice to attend the conference (break the bubble) and see that there are many people working across the country on similar goals and missions.
- Attendance can also be a sacrifice financial and time. Which can be hard for small organizations.
- The large institutions are learning (taking cues) from the smaller organizations.

Another round of introductions. Including once area of expertise or thing to remember about them.