



★ ★ ★ *New Community Visions* part of the
Transforming America's Communities Through the Arts Initiative

Arts, Prisons, & Rehabilitation

Excerpted from *Arts & America: Arts, Culture, and the Future
of America's Communities*

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An Introduction

Dear Reader,

For the last 30 years here at Americans for the Arts, I have had the privilege of visiting and learning about a different community almost every week.

In multiple places in every state, I have witnessed firsthand the magic and majesty of the arts themselves and also their transformative power in helping to tackle social and community issues. Whether in a small town or a major population center, the same breadth of value is present. Magnificent, awe-inspiring performances and museum exhibits exist side by side with arts programs designed to accelerate healing in hospitals; musical performances with the homeless to bring comfort and perhaps new inspiration; hands-on visual and performing arts programs in military facilities to aid returning wounded service men and women in coping with PTSD or recovering from physical injury; or the myriad of other ways that the arts are a part of people's lives.

During my travels, I usually have the honor of meeting hard working local leaders from the government, business, and

education sectors as well as from the arts. When a mayor or county commissioner proudly talks about her home-grown arts treasures—while in the same breath explaining the economic and employment benefits of the arts to her community or the attractiveness of the arts offerings there as a cultural tourism destination—it is clear that the arts are valued as a source of pride and identity and as a positive contributor to growth.

Although the arts have delivered this spectrum of entertainment, inspiration, and transformative value for as long as humankind has existed, they have faced a roller coaster of recognition and marginalization in our country since even before our founding. We are now, however, at a moment where there seems to be an increased recognition of the broad value of the arts. That provides us with an inflection point at which to explore, discuss, and recalibrate what it takes to advance the arts and arts education in America. This book of 10 essays provides an opportunity to look at ideas that might help a community invent or reinvent how the arts fit into it. Our guest authors take a look at the kinds of thinking and mechanisms decision-makers, leaders, and citizens need in order to make the arts more fully part of the quality of experience that every child and every community member gets from living in a particular place.

Americans for the Arts is in the business of helping leaders build capacity for the advancement of the arts and arts education. We work toward a vision that all of the arts and their power can be made available and accessible to every American. The leaders that we help are generating positive change for and through the arts at the local, state, or national levels and across all sectors. Since our founding 55 years ago, we have created materials, management tools, case-making research and data, along with professional and leadership development training to help leaders carry out this important work. About 25 years ago, our publication, *Community Vision*, along with a series of companion pieces, was created to guide the process of expanding capacity for community development through the arts. But a great

deal has changed since then, so we have embarked on the three-year journey to update those tools, look anew at what the arts are doing in communities, and create materials that will help community leaders advance that work today.

In this book, 10 authors focus on just a few of the issue areas that the arts are working in today. These essay topics do not illustrate the only way the arts are working in communities. We are continually looking at other topics in other publications, tools, and discussions to help communities customize their unique approach to involving the arts in addressing their particular needs and goals. Such additional issue areas include: the re-entry of active military service members, veterans, youth at risk, crime prevention, immigration, technology, disease, drug abuse, housing, aging, faith and religion, and perhaps most importantly cross-cultural understanding and equity. This is a partial list of the challenges and opportunities where the arts are playing an important role.

To set some context for the future, we have also included an essay that lays out some thoughts on the history of art in community. My friend, Maryo Gard Ewell, has done more to document the history and sea changes of the last century of arts-based community development than anyone else I can think of. She says that she does it because a field isn't a field if it doesn't know its history. I thank her for her extensive contributions to our database of field knowledge, which Clayton Lord has been able to draw upon for his comprehensive history piece in this book. Maryo is also fond of saying that a field isn't a field without a few heroes in the mix. I count both her and her father, Robert Gard, mentioned in that history, to be among those heroes.

Our field of nonprofit arts organizations and individuals working to advance the arts and to create better communities through the arts is constantly evolving, constantly reinventing an understanding of itself and its role in this great American experiment. But the field

should never waver on the deeply rooted belief in its essential necessity to the world. We are in a period of evolving understanding right now. The broad transformative power of the arts as a means to help create solutions to a broad array of social and economic issues is a big part of the value of the arts in today's American Community.

The rising demand for deeper accountability for what the arts bring to the table in terms of social welfare along with the advent of new sources of data, technology, and processing power to make previously invisible connections visible brings us to a pivotal moment. The arts are poised to be fully integrated into a nuanced, deep, and powerful conversation about who and what is needed to create healthy, equitable communities for everyone.

The arts are valuable. Artists are essential. Arts education is critical to keeping America creative and competitive in order to meet the challenges of the 21st century. The arts are a strong partner in the solution to these challenges and can be even stronger in the future. The arts help transform American communities and the result can be a better child, a better town, a better nation, and perhaps a better world. My hope is that this book of ideas can help in that transformative journey.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Bob Lynch". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Bob" and last name "Lynch" clearly legible.

Robert L. Lynch
President and CEO
Americans for the Arts



Arts, Prisons, & Rehabilitation

— by *Judith Tannenbaum* —

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This essay looks at changes in the American prison system and the role that the arts may play in positively impacting those changes over the next 10–15 years. In particular, this essay proposes the following trends and associated arts interventions:

- The next 10–15 years will see a continued rise in the number of children who have been impacted by the incarceration of a family member, and the psychological implications of experiencing such trauma threaten to perpetuate cycles of incarceration into a new generation. Innovative arts interventions and partnerships hold the possibility of both easing the trauma of having a parent incarcerated through expressive activity, highlighting the unique issues of children of those

incarcerated to a larger audience, and providing an alternative, less destructive path that may help break the cycle.

- Shifts from mass, mostly short-term, incarcerations to fewer, mostly longer-term sentences, including Life without Possibility of Parole, will correspond with a decline in the already minimal interest from the public in interventions that help rehabilitate prisoners who may re-enter society. The importance of prison-based arts programs, of which there are a handful today, will only grow in that new era, as long-term prisoners seek opportunities to maintain humanized, varied lives. Arts-based interventions may be able to increase prisoners' connection to others, improve psychological health, and enable prisoners to tell their stories.
- As attention and care shifts away from an increasingly permanent prison population serving long or terminal sentences, political and public will to address core issues—who we lock up; the correlation of childhood conditions with future crime; capability of change—will wane. The role of the arts, particularly as vessels through which prisoners can communicate their stories to the world at large, will become paramount.

— *C. Lord*

Beginning in the late 1970s, the U.S. approach to crime and punishment—at both state and federal levels—led to the incarceration of enormous numbers of men and women. In 1978, 307,276 people were in U.S. state and federal prisons. This figure ballooned to 1,615,487 in 2009,¹ a figure that rises even higher when counting people imprisoned in local jails and skyrockets when including people on probation or parole.

The Bureau of Justice Statistics estimates that 6,899,000 people were under the supervision of adult correctional systems of all kinds at year-end 2013.²

Sources agree that the United States has 25 percent of the world's prison population and only 5 percent of the world's population.³ As author Luis J. Rodriguez notes, "In the past three decades, an estimated \$60 billion a year has been spent to keep people behind bars for longer and longer periods of time, with little to no resources to help prisoners come out balanced, healthy, and crime free."⁴

This era of mass incarceration was a consequence of high crime rates (and, often, of politicians' use of public fear to win elections) and was dependent on the war on drugs, "zero tolerance" policing, sentencing guidelines (such as mandatory minimums), and Three Strikes laws. All these impacted people of color most dramatically.⁵ Additionally, decades of "deinstitutionalizing" mentally ill people and moving them into prison resulted in a dramatic increase in the number of mentally ill people in prison.⁶

The pendulum now seems to be swinging in a less punitive direction. Since 2010, both federal and state prison populations have dropped nearly every year, and the rate of new prison admissions has declined for the last nine years.⁷ There is widespread agreement about the forces behind this pendulum swing—tightened state budgets, plummeting crime rates, changes in sentencing laws, and shifts in public opinion—and also agreement that there is a new bipartisan effort to reduce the nation's reliance on prisons. Natasha Frost, associate dean of Northeastern University's school of criminology and criminal justice, predicts, "This is the beginning of the end of mass incarceration."⁸

There has not yet been a wide and deep look at how prisons currently function as institutions for the mentally ill or how practices of mass incarceration, such as long periods of solitary

“Approximately 10 million children have experienced parental incarceration at some point in their lives.”

confinement, contribute to the mental illness of people in prison. The public, and the politicians who represent this public, however, have been increasingly willing to re-examine prison as a response to non-violent crime and have begun to recognize how

past approaches to incarceration have *disproportionately* affected African-Americans and other people of color. This re-examination and recognition has led to widespread changes to drug laws as well as to mandatory sentencing and zero tolerance policies.

In a somewhat related pendulum swing, as many exonerated have been released from various state death rows and as botched executions have been described on the news, there has also been substantial public and political reconsideration of capital punishment. Since 2007, six states have abolished the death penalty, and in 2005 the Supreme Court struck down the punishment for juveniles.⁹ Although there is still majority support for the death penalty, this support is falling, and when citizens are asked to choose between capital punishment and life imprisonment with no possibility of parole, support for the death penalty decreases further.¹⁰ This reality has increasingly led death penalty abolitionists to frame their message with a focus on Life without Possibility of Parole (LWOP) as an automatic and assured alternative in capital cases. Consequently, as support for the death penalty has decreased, support for LWOP has increased. As of late 2014, there were 3,049 people awaiting execution in the United States and 50,000 serving sentences of life without possibility of parole. This latter number has more than tripled since the early 1990s.¹¹ David R. Dow, the Cullen Professor at the University of Houston Law Center and the Rorschach Visiting Professor of History at Rice University, describes the emotional truth of this shift: “While

states are turning away from the death penalty, they are replacing it with a different kind of death sentence.”¹²

Although there have been these fairly dramatic changes in response to both punishment of non-violent crimes and in the use of the death penalty, there is no broad public or political call for change in penalties for most violent crime and no wide interest in exploring the causes and conditions that manifest in people seriously harming or murdering other people. Add to this the increased use of LWOP as a sentence, and it is clear that U.S. prisons in the near future will house large numbers of men and women, some of them mentally ill, convicted of violent crimes and serving very long (often life) sentences.

Many areas of attention and need arise out of this lengthy history of mass incarceration and its probable future: the impact of mass incarceration, crime, and policing practices on poor communities, especially those of color; barriers to employment in relation to both those at risk for incarceration and those exiting the justice system; alternatives to prison for the mentally ill, which include availability of substance abuse and mental health treatment programs in prison and out; and many other realms related to crime and incarceration.

Before focusing on three from this long list, some underlying values must be stated clearly. If we wish for a future approach that has more intentionality than simply being reactive to the pendulum as it swings, we as a nation must truly consider crime’s conditions and consequences. We need difficult debates that look not only at the choice between locking up or “fixing” people who commit crimes, but also at matters such as economic and social inequity, which children we support and which we are willing to discard, and who benefits—economically and otherwise—from punitive and restorative justice approaches. These conversations must be informed not only by researchers and policymakers, but also by people who have lived through the experiences being examined.

These experts include people in prison and their families, as well as victims of crime. Often, these are the same people. Art-making can be central to this process.

CHILDREN WITH LOVED ONES IN PRISON

The past few decades of U.S. mass incarceration have resulted in more than 2.7 million children with a parent in prison. Approximately 10 million children have experienced parental incarceration at some point in their lives.¹³ Often, parents are handcuffed in front of their children; sometimes police draw weapons or there is a physical struggle. Usually, police also take away cell phones, and with that, the possibility of the parent communicating with the child. Often, there is no one to explain what's happening to the child, and sometimes children are even left alone with no adult to care for them.¹⁴ In the face of such trauma, of course children feel fear, sadness, anger, shame, and also the toxic stress that is common in such cases. Author Diane Lefer asks the crucial question: “Do we simply accept that these kids will be collateral damage in our culture of mass incarceration?”¹⁵

Almost every state has programs whose mission is to answer “No!” to Lefer’s question.¹⁶ Big Brothers and Sisters, church groups, Girl Scouts, Save Kids of Incarcerated Parents, and a variety of other programs either focus on, or include, children with parents in prison.

POPS (Pain of the Prison System) is a school-based club at Venice High School in Los Angeles. The club’s membership consists of students (and some school personnel) whose lives have been touched by prison.¹⁷ Begun in early 2013 by a Venice High teacher and his teaching artist wife, POPS is the first of a network of similar school-based clubs in California and Ohio. Writing, drawing, and composing songs are already part of POPS’ work. Participants have published a first anthology of their writing and been part of a variety of performances.¹⁸

In the future, programs such as POPS might be paired with other arts-based programs like the Poetic Justice Project and Each One Reach One. The Poetic Justice Project (based in San Luis Obispo, California) is composed of formerly incarcerated youth and adults who create and tour plays examining crime, punishment, and redemption.¹⁹ Each One Reach One (based in South San Francisco) offers two-week intensive playwriting workshops inside youth detention facilities.²⁰

POPS meets weekly for less than an hour at lunch time, but in that short window they manage to have many visiting presenters share experiences and expertise. Mentors from EORO and actors from PJP would similarly visit POPS to talk about their lives, work, and theater process. After these visits, a self-selected group of POPS youth could work (probably not primarily in person, given the geographical distances) with mentors from the other two organizations to write a play that examines having a parent in prison. Poetic Justice Project could then perform this play throughout California with POPS playwrights in attendance as often as possible to participate in talk-backs with audiences.

In such a collaboration, youth would learn and practice playwriting skills, shape personal and emotional experiences into crafted work, witness the effects of their efforts on audiences, and develop public speaking tools for the talk-backs. This could increase their capacity to be intimate with the realities of their lives and, at the same time, gain artistic skill and experience that helped them to shape these feelings while making a work of art. And, through witnessing the play and participating in the talk-backs, audiences could experience a slice of the life of many U.S. youth. Viewers could learn how crime and imprisonment affect many more than the two labeled “criminal” and “victim.” A play by POPS youth, mentored by adults in EORO and PJP and performed by PJP members could, therefore, impact both the youth and the audiences composed of people who may not have previously considered how crime and prison impacts the children of those locked behind bars.

SELF-REHABILITATION

Rehabilitation sounds like a sensible vision, but its practice has been complicated. The creation of the American prison in 18th century Philadelphia was informed by notions of rehabilitation that were, in fact, close to torture—not only solitary confinement for the apparent purpose of deep contemplation, but severe punishment if caught talking at all. “Moral regeneration” was the rehabilitative goal for decades. Even as late as the 1950s, with that era’s psychological treatment models, prisoners’ “rehabilitation” was something done *to* them. Success was judged through a lens of particular—often religious—values, by others who had the power to decide whether a prisoner remained locked up or went free.²¹

Spoon Jackson, who has served 36 years on a Life without Possibility of Parole sentence, points out:

*Rehabilitation is always self-rehabilitation. Prison had to offer the programs, and I had to make myself active in these programs and in my own self-directed studies. Self-rehabilitation works. I had to choose to change, which meant to get to know myself and find my niche, bliss, and myth in life. I had to till the endless gardens in my mind, heart, and soul. I had to become anew, despite being in prison.*²²

As Jackson indicates, it’s not possible to change anyone else, although it is possible—and highly valuable—to offer opportunities for men and women to fashion their own growth. During the era of mass incarceration, there was limited public support for providing such opportunities. Even in less punitive times, the primary argument for programs (educational, substance abuse, support groups of various kinds, arts opportunities and instruction) was that most people in prison will eventually get out, and it was in the collective best interest for them to return to society as better citizens than they were before. If, as is likely to be the case in the near future, a higher percentage of people inside *aren’t* going to get out, or at least won’t be getting out

for a long time, public support for self-rehabilitating programming will probably decline still further, even as the need for such activities on the part of those inside prisons will grow.

“Despite relative apathy from the public, dozens of programs provide arts programming in prisons and jails.”

Even in the age of mass incarceration (which we seem to be exiting), and despite relative apathy from the public, dozens of programs provide arts programming in prisons and jails.²³ Unfortunately, however, the vast majority of people in prison don't have access to such programming.

In the future, one method of arts intervention would be an expansion of arts-based programming such as that provided by the PEN American Center's Prison Writing Project.²⁴ More organizations could adopt a model of working through organizations with established histories of providing prison arts programming. By reaching out to men and women serving long sentences, the programs could provide materials and a writer mentor to encourage and inform their artistic (and human) growth.

This material could include resources like PEN Prison Writing Program's existing handbooks (*Handbook for Writers in Prison* and *Words Over Walls: Starting a Writing Workshop in a Prison*) as well as excerpts of high quality (both in terms of the excellence of the writing and in terms of the honesty of self-reflection) writing by others serving long sentences.²⁵ The samples would allow recipients to learn from others writing about lives likely to be somewhat similar to their own and the handbook would give concrete and skill-based information to emerging writers. Everyone requesting packets of material could be invited to apply for participation in an expanded version of PEN's existing Prison Writing Project's Mentoring program. If accepted, this could allow the prison writers to work through the mail with a professional writer.

PRISONERS' VOICES IN COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS

If many people inside our prisons in the near future will have been convicted of violent crimes and will be serving long sentences, we run the risk of policymakers and the public at large feeling they can rest easy, secure in the knowledge that the “bad guys” are where they should be and that there’s no more to be said or done. Investigations that have never been easy—conversations that ask questions about who we lock up; whether childhood conditions such as poverty, inequity, and poor education correlate with future crime; whether human beings are capable of change; and what is required of us as citizens in relation to these matters—are likely to become even harder.

Such conversations, however, are necessary not only regarding the specific matter of whom we send to prison and what we do with them when there, but also related to broader social questions about education, work, community health, and economic policy.

These conversations often begin as battles between discussants with strongly different, static positions instead of sincere, open, inquiries. Sometimes, though, when rhetoric is set aside in favor of personal storytelling, it ends up being easier for people to see the humanity in the person on the other side. And from that new insight, we’re able to imagine and plan in fresh, unexpected ways.

Therefore, another art intervention would be to find ways to highlight the stories of people in prison, people who have been hurt by crime, affected families, and others who have been made experts by experience in order to carry forward important dialogues that might otherwise go unspoken. For 20 years, the University of Michigan’s Prison Creative Arts Project has held an annual juried art show of work by men and women housed in all the state’s prisons. Former prisoners, families of the incarcerated, state legislators, prison administrators, artists, and activists all give talks during the run of this show. The artwork itself exists within the larger conversation that results.²⁶

In the future, a small convening of representatives from successful prison arts programs from across the country would allow for the brainstorming of new opportunities to expand the dialogue around prisons and rehabilitation through art. Such work could then be consolidated onto the web, including through websites such as that of the Prison Arts Coalition (PAC).²⁷ The site, launched seven years ago, serves as a national resource on prison arts. As part of this initiative, PAC could expand its outreach to a wide range of groups—Rotary clubs, faith-based groups, classroom teachers—to add to and deepen the public conversations.

Included, too, could be representatives of works like *Too Cruel, Not Unusual Enough*, a national anthology of poetry and prose written almost exclusively by people serving Life without Possibility of Parole sentences.²⁸ The example of *Too Cruel* is a strong one: it was sent to 400 policymakers, thought leaders, and the media, and the resulting efforts to include prisoner voices in a national conversation on what is sometimes termed “the other death penalty” would serve as a model for enlarging these public conversations.

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Our national shift away from decades of mass incarceration offers challenges and possibilities. For children of incarcerated parents, and for adults serving very long sentences, making and sharing art is one important opportunity. The art created can also serve an important role in bringing the voices of those most affected by prison into public conversations on the outside.

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Arts in Healthy Communities: Additional Discussion and Resources

The Transforming America’s Communities Through the Arts initiative, of which New Community Visions is a part, is an effort by Americans for the Arts and our partners to explore more deeply the important, symbiotic structure of America’s modern communities and to better understand the role that the arts can play in amplifying the positive impacts of the many sectors that exist inside every community.

This book has focused on 10 sectors, but Americans for the Arts generally has identified 30 sectors that we believe need to be considered when talking about creating and maintaining a healthy community, many of which can be aided by arts and culture.

In the efforts encompassed by Transforming America’s Communities Through the Arts, as well as in the day-to-day work of Americans for the Arts going back nearly 60 years, we continue to pursue an expanded, better appreciated, and better understood role for the arts in healthy community development and maintenance.

For more resources related to the varied role of arts in community development, we recommend exploring the following Americans for the Arts resources—as well as the Americans for the Arts website in general—and the many great resources outlined in the endnotes of each essay.

New Community Visions

Keep track of the progress of New Community Visions by visiting www.AmericansForTheArts.org/CommunityVisions

Arts and the Military

Americans for the Arts is a founding partner of the National Initiative for Arts & Health in the Military, and hosts the partnership’s website, www.ArtsAcrossTheMilitary.org, where you can

review full text of reports related to the role of arts in the lives of active military, veterans, and their families along with a list of upcoming events, a national network directory, and more.

Arts and the Economy

For more than 20 years, Americans for the Arts has been at the forefront of measuring the economic impact of the arts on American communities and the United States, most visibly through the Arts and Economic Prosperity reports (www.AmericansForTheArts.org/AEP). Americans for the Arts also generates bi-annual Creative Industries reports on all U.S. counties, and is working to launch a new program called the Institute for the Creative Economy as part of the Transforming America's Communities Through the Arts initiative. Find out more about both at www.AmericansForTheArts.org.

Arts and Business

Americans for the Arts has a robust set of programs and trainings around the role of the arts in the private sector, most notably the pARTnership Movement, which showcases the role that the arts can play in bettering businesses and other private sector organizations (www.pARTnershipmovement.org).

Arts and Civic Engagement

For more than a decade, the Animating Democracy Initiative of Americans for the Arts has been exploring and developing the academic literature, case studies, and general knowledge and vocabulary around arts and civic engagement, social justice, and community health (www.AnimatingDemocracy.org).

Arts and Education

Americans for the Arts' arts education programming is a cornerstone of our belief in the role of arts in developing the communities of the future (www.AmericansForTheArts.org/ArtsEd). We work with more than 30 other arts education organizations across the country on advocacy, research, policy, and capacity-building. We also implement large-scale programs and partnerships like the Arts Education State Public Policy Pilot Initiative (www.AmericansForTheArts.org/SPPP), which seeks to encourage innovation around the adoption or adaptation of core arts standards in education at a state level, and the Arts Education Navigator series (www.AmericansForTheArts.org/ArtsEdNavigator), which creates easy-to-use advocacy plans and tools for parents, students, and teachers, as well.

In addition to these specific areas of work, Americans for the Arts also houses a trove of research, policy, and practice documents for arts organizations, local arts agencies, and others in the arts sector through our website, www.AmericansForTheArts.org

Arts and America: Arts, Culture, and the Future of America's Communities

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ABOUT THE NEW COMMUNITY VISIONS INITIATIVE,
PART OF TRANSFORMING AMERICA'S COMMUNITIES
THROUGH THE ARTS

The essays in *Arts and America* collectively form the first phase of an initiative called New Community Visions—a national visioning exercise for local arts agencies, arts organizations, artists, and those interested in better understanding the future role of arts and culture in helping American communities thrive.

New Community Visions is part of a sustained, three-year suite of large-scale initiatives from Americans for the Arts that are together called *Transforming America's Communities Through the Arts*. Through those initiatives, we hope to:

- generate dialogue on a national, state, and local level around the creation and sustainability of healthy communities;
- activate a diverse set of programming and partnerships spanning public, private, and nonprofit sectors;
- lay the groundwork for a collective movement forward over the next decade and beyond;
- and help leaders and the public better understand and celebrate arts and culture as mechanisms for creating and sustaining healthier, more vibrant, and more equitable communities in the United States.

www.AmericansForTheArts.org/CommunityVisions

This project is made possible through an ever-growing list of funders, partners, and advisors.

FORUMS CURATOR AND DOCUMENTARIAN

Michael Rohd and the Center for
Performance and Civic Practice
Margy Waller and the Topos Partnership

FUNDING PARTNERS

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 **Knight Foundation**



We would also like to thank The California Wellness Foundation,
The Saint Paul Foundation, and the Vermont Community Foundation
for their generous support of the New Community Visions Initiative.

Support as of April 30, 2015

NEW COMMUNITY VISIONS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The New Community Visions Advisory Committee, which has informed the nature and trajectory of the project, includes:

- Jennifer Cole, Metro Nashville Arts Commission
- Deborah Cullinan, Yerba Buena Center for the Arts
- Carla Dirlikov, opera singer
- Randy Engstrom, Seattle Office of Arts & Culture
- Tatiana Hernandez, Hemera Foundation
- Maria Rosario Jackson, The Kresge Foundation
- Michael Killoren, National Endowment for the Arts
- Ron Ragin, composer and artist
- Holly Sidford, Helicon Collaborative
- Nick Slie, performing artist, Mondo Bizzaro
- Regina R. Smith, The Kresge Foundation
- Katie Steger, The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation
- Carlton Turner, Alternate ROOTS
- Nella Vera, Serino/Coyne
- Laura Zabel, Springboard for the Arts

REGIONAL, STATE, AND LOCAL PARTNERS

The regional gatherings associated with New Community Visions would not have been possible without the participation of this growing list of regional, state, and local partners who have contributed thought leadership, proposed the names of participants, and assisted in crafting the regional events.

Special thanks to our national funding partners, the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation and the National Endowment for the Arts, for their significant support.

Regional

- Arts Midwest
- Mid Atlantic Arts Foundation
- Mid-America Arts Alliance
- New England Foundation for the Arts
- SouthArts
- WESTAF

State

- California Arts Council
- Georgia Council for the Arts
- Minnesota State Arts Board
- New Mexico Arts
- Oklahoma Arts Council
- Oklahomans for the Arts
- Pennsylvania Council on the Arts
- Vermont Arts Council
- West Virginia Division of Culture and History

Local

- Allied Arts
- Arts & Business Council of Greater Philadelphia
- Arts Council of Oklahoma City
- Burlington City Arts
- Philadelphia Office of Arts, Culture and the Creative Economy
- City of San Jose Office of Cultural Affairs
- City of Santa Fe Arts Commission
- Clay Center for the Arts & Sciences of West Virginia
- Creative Santa Fe
- Cultural Development Corporation
- Flynn Center for the Performing Arts
- Greater Philadelphia Cultural Alliance
- Macon Arts Alliance
- Metropolitan Regional Arts Council
- Minneapolis Office of Arts, Culture, and the Creative Economy
- Norman Arts Council
- Oklahoma City Office of Arts & Cultural Affairs