

MEMORANDUM

TO: NCAPER Steering Committee members
FROM: Jan Newcomb, Executive Director
DATE: January 2, 2020
RE: Attached Report on NCAPER accomplishments

The following report of NCAPER's last two years' activities and accomplishments gives a cursory list of steps taken toward building NCAPER's capacity and sustainability, but it doesn't give the entire story. As a matter of fact, you could read the report and rightfully comment, "so what?". Therefore, I'm adding my reflections here for you to consider as we make a more qualitative assessment of our progress during the on-site meeting next week.

- **What have we learned?** – Although NCAPER was formed in 2006 and had developed and published meaningful documents, responded to disasters around the country, created governance rules and hired staff, are we a functional team that knows its purpose and mission and how to carry that out? Are we nimble enough to respond to issues hindering the resiliency of the arts sector and to help partners in their programming efforts, or are we bound to our protocols and rules and proposed timelines?
 - In direct contrast to my first six months which were almost exclusively tied to facilitating 60 phone calls during the hurricane season of 2017/2018, during this past year, there were none. However, I did communicate with state arts council staff and local arts groups during the times of limited crises/disasters or "blue skies" and participated with HENTF during its calls. But was this enough, did it further our mission?
 - The work with the California Arts Council provides us with a plethora of baseline information on what works with the Cultural Placekeeping Guide and what doesn't; it gives us a database of diverse user organizations that could be used to replicate network activity elsewhere. What do we do next?
 - Our work in Puerto Rico and the US Virgin Islands definitely identified the need for "mapping" where the artists and arts organizations of a region are located. We supported the publishing of bi-lingual tips and we helped readiness experts visit the islands and give training, and we talked with other organizations that collect data on the arts sector, but we need to define work that is more proactive and meaningful.
- **Are there ways to work smarter?** Yes, of course. I need to find better ways to garner your opinions and skill-sets to evaluate NCAPER's work critically and constructively.
 - Half my days are spent on doing NCAPER work and the other half on PAR. Sometimes the work, especially during presentations and workshops, such as the training that Tom Claerson and I did throughout California, overlaps;
 - It is important to remember and appreciate that NCAPER is greatly assisted financially on these activities because PAR pays most of the expenses.
 - Our working groups are not working, how can we become more functional?

Thank you for your responses and comments on the following information.



National Coalition for Arts' Preparedness & Emergency Response – Report on NCAPER Accomplishments: January 2018 – December 2019

Prepared by Janet Newcomb, NCAPER Executive Director, December 31, 2019

FIRST YEAR: January 1, 2018 – December 31, 2018

This was the first year of a 40-month grant from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, which began with an onsite meeting of the NCAPER Steering Committee in NYC in January to identify gaps, connect the dots and develop a pragmatic programmatic agenda that resulted in the following outcomes:

Making infrastructure improvements

- Solidify the Coalition's operating capacity with staff leadership
 - Hired Janet Newcomb, Executive Director (Feb.15, 2018) who has a thirty-plus performing arts, arts education and arts service management career.
 - Hired part-time Program Associate, Jordan Young in February 2018 who was replaced by Lynn Dates in August after Jordan was hired full-time by South Arts. Newcomb and Dates work on-site together in Corning, NY.
 - (Suzette Surkamer, South Arts executive director), escorted and introduced the NCAPER executive director to Mellon Foundation program officers and those of other funders during a two-day trip to NYC in September.
 - (NCAPER executive director) reported to the South Arts board of directors during an on-site meeting in Atlanta in December 2018.
- Establish administrative substructure and procedures
 - Adopted a monthly schedule of steering committee meetings including one annual on-site meeting in January and the rest via Zoom alternating between more formal business meetings and less formal discussion conference calls on pertinent issues or member organization updates.
 - Established a bi-weekly schedule of co-chair and executive director calls to track work progress.
 - Familiarized NCAPER staff with South Arts' management and financial policies and procedures.
- Develop a membership expansion structure
 - Reviewed an expanded NCAPER membership model which was approved by the steering committee and has been reviewed by other critical constituents including representatives from NASAA, other regional arts organizations, and Grantmakers in the Arts.

Fostering a programmatic agenda that raises awareness of the need for resiliency, fosters relationships with providers in the emergency services sector, and advocates for improved disaster service delivery to artists, arts/cultural organizations, and arts businesses:

- Raise the national visibility of NCAPER and the need for arts sector readiness
 - Attended the following ten (10) national conferences and assisted in focus group meetings and presented conference sessions with and supported by the Performing Arts Readiness

project: *Association of Performing Arts Professionals, Theatre Communications Group, Americans for the Arts, Association of California Symphony Orchestras, Arts Midwest, Performing Arts Exchange, Grantmakers in the Arts, National Assembly of State Arts Agencies, National Guild for Community Arts Education, and National Performance Network.*

- Designed and launched NCAPER's own website, www.ncaper.org, in October 2018.
- Organized and participated in a presentation at the Maine International Conference on the Arts in Portland with NEA and CERF+ representatives.
- Presented at the annual meeting of CultureAid in NYC.
- Respond to and convene arts and cultural leaders in localities/regions affected by disaster for information-sharing and listening
 - Facilitated and hosted 3 calls focusing on the needs of individual artists following natural disasters that involved 23 people following Hurricane Maria, NCAPER hosted 16 calls in Puerto Rico involving 204 people and 15 calls in the U.S. Virgin Islands involving 142 people.
 - Responded to and met with the staff and the executive committee of the board of ArtWorks in Trenton, NJ, following the shooting incident during the 24-hour festival I July.
 - Responded to executive directors of state arts agencies affected by Hurricane Michael and recorded an interview produced and aired by Arts Friendly in Wilmington, NC, about the resources available to the arts sector following post-hurricane flooding.
 - Supported financially the participation of a team of responders from the mainland to assist the arts sector on the U.S. Virgin Islands – the payment was made, but the work was postponed until 2019. NCAPER funding provided travel support from St. Croix and St. John for 13 individuals attending the AfR Forum. Residual funds will support ART Workshops rescheduled in May. From the one of the organizers, *"I have learned a lot and will be much better prepared for the next go around! Thanks to you and everyone for guiding us through all this. You don't know how much your influence has inspired us to create the necessary change to save our cultural organizations."*
 - Created Emergency Assessment Data intake forms for artists and arts organizations to record the loss of assets following a disaster. They are available on NCAPER.org.

Developing a Marketing/Promotions/Communications plan

- Expand the inventory of print and online collateral pieces on readiness for the arts sector where there were gaps
 - Contracted with CERF+ to create and translate into Spanish a preparedness tips flyer that was disseminated to individual visual artists in Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands.
 - Hired Amy Schwartzman to create a bi-lingual tips flyer to help performing and literary artists to become more aware of how to prepare for natural disasters.
- Develop print collateral to hand out at conference sessions and to promote NCAPER's online presence (web & social media)
 - Created a bi-fold informational piece on NCAPER as a "leave behind" at conferences and meetings.
- Define the scope of work/story boards for videos to capture stories of readiness and response following disasters to be used on NCAPER.org
- Hired Laura Asherman of Forage Film (Atlanta) to conduct interviews during the Grantmakers in the Arts Conference and in NYC during the on-site NCAPER meeting at The Actors Fund in January 2019 to begin to gather "stories" that can be used to promote the online tool, ArtsReady 2.0 that will be housed on NCAPER.org

YEAR TWO – January 1, 2019 – December 31, 2019 Growth & Change

The year began with an onsite meeting of the Steering Committee on January 3, 2019 hosted at The Actors Fund and was facilitated by Barbara Schaffer Bacon which resulted in a reaffirmation of NCAPER's mission and direction while incorporating a few structural changes to support the work plan.

Infrastructure:

- The Steering Committee sub-committee structure was re-created into the following working groups: Agenda/Programming; Fundraising; Governance; Marketing/Communications; Membership; and Transition. All working groups were assigned chairmen who were given the charge of convening the groups with assistance from staff.
- The monthly format of phone call meetings alternated between business meetings and member-determined issue discussions.
- Mollie Quinlan-Hayes stepped down as co-chair and was replaced by Barbara Davis. Earlier in December 2019, Ruby Lopez Harper stepped down as co-chair, but has agreed to remain on the steering committee
- Lynn Dates left her position as Program Associate but will continue to do contracted graphic design work; she was replaced by Meghan O'Toole at 15 hours per week.
- A written fiscal agent agreement between South Arts and NCAPER was developed and signed.
- During its March 28, 2019 meeting, the Steering Committee adopted the proposed membership and fee structure to attract associate and affiliate members such as state arts agencies, regional arts organizations, national arts service organizations, etc. including individuals.

Programming

- During its March 28, 2019 meeting, the Steering Committee accepted the NCAPER/NEDCC agreement parameters and responsibilities with regards to the ArtsReady 2.0 online planning tool. South Arts carries the legal and financial responsibility for the Coalition's work on this and NEDCC owns, maintains and markets the tool to dPlan users; NCAPER markets the tool to performing and visual arts organizations and after all subsidies are exhausted will receive income from all new subscriptions from performing and visual arts organizations.
- The LaRue Allen (Executive Director of the Martha Graham Company) video was released and published on the website as well as presented at the Dance/USA conference among others. Another longer video was contracted with Forage Films on *The Arts of the Mass Gatherings*. This is in production and should be available by January 2020. Other short video interviews of Steering Committee members have also been edited and published on ncaper.org and social media.
- After the first year of attending conferences, it was decided that PAR/NCAPER would re-evaluate the need for buying booths and begin developing workshop proposals for only a select number of conferences based on the ROI. Thirteen conference proposals submitted by PAR/NCAPER were developed and accepted; as Executive Director of NCAPER and Performing Arts Coordinator of PAR, I participated in only 7 of these conferences. However, as NCAPER Executive Director, I accepted speaking engagements from the following for which my travel, and housing expenses were supported by the presenter:
 - Virginia Commission on the Arts
 - Tom Tom Festival, Charlottesville, VA
 - Vermont – VacDarn – Vermont Arts & Culture Disaster and Resilience Network
 - Delaware Division on the Arts

- **NCAPER/PAR/California Arts Council State-Local emergency Preparedness Initiative** – August and September 2019. This was an opportunity that arose in April 2019 when I was contacted by the California Arts Council staff to train local arts agencies on forming emergency networks using NCAPER’s Cultural Placekeeping Guide as the text. I brought Tom Claeson into the conversation and together we created a webinar on May 23 to inform the CAC constituency of local arts agencies from 21 counties what to expect. After receiving much interest, we were asked to develop a five-hour curriculum using the CPG as a text and the worksheets, as the basis of a workshop to train participants how to form a cultural network in their communities. **CAC staff organized the logistics of the workshops; PAR paid for our travel, food and housing (Total:\$44,972 which included our time to prepare, travel and participate) and the local arts agencies received \$5,000 grants from CAC to participate.** The workshops were given at nine locations throughout the state and were attended by a total of 139 participants including individual artists, first responders, arts and cultural organization leaders, librarians, archivists, museum folk, government officials, tribal government representatives, community foundation personnel, and representatives from existing regional disaster preparedness networks. Each workshop included the following modules:
 - Emergency Management Basics
 - Overview of Existing Disaster Support Systems
 - Cultural Placekeeping as a Preparedness Strategy
 - Designing your Placekeeping agenda and timeline
 - Work session for participating teams

The work done by the CAC groups and the PAR network grantees including VacDarn has precipitated the addition of an assessment of the CPG as an activity in NCAPER’s 2020/2021 work plan.

- **ArtsReady 2.0** – After months of delays, mostly due to the back and forth of legal documents, the real work of developing content for the online tool began in earnest this past June. From September to the present, the team from Cuttlesoft has worked with our team: NCAPER (Jan Newcomb), South Arts (Mollie Quinlan-Hayes) and NEDCC (Ann Marie Willer) on a weekly basis. Although in the past six weeks, we have spent many more individual hours and on Zoom meetings. Tom Claeson has been involved throughout because the funding for the tool is part of the PAR Phase I grant. The Alpha Testing group gave vital feedback to the group and the timeline for involving the Beta Testing Group is mid-February.
- **Networking** – Since an initial conversation in Corning in 2018 and follow-up phone calls with Artspace’s Anna Growcott and Wendy Holmes, where we discussed exploring opportunities in Puerto Rico, ArtsSpace has received funding from the Mellon Foundation to conduct a feasibility study for creative space and mixed-use affordable artist housing in San Juan. Starting in January they will be traveling to Puerto Rico to connect with a core group of local arts and civic leaders who will guide their work. They have been following NCAPER’s work for the past year and want to reconnect and share notes to see where there may be any overlap.

Marketing/Communications

- Two postcards were developed and distributed to conference and workshop attendees: one to inform people on the launch of ArtsReady 2.0 and the other on the Cultural Placekeeping Guide.
- The second issue of *Spotlight* was published in March; it highlighted our national organizations/programs as partners in emergency preparedness; the service focus of each and type of support given. All of these materials were written and designed by NCAPER staff.
- Social media and website posts have increased but need to have formalized time schedules and queued messages.
- 275 names from workshops have been added to the NCAPER website, but the visibility of ncaper.org needs to be increased.