

Council on Culture & Arts FY24 Board of Directors

Executive Committee

Dan Taylor

Chair, Seat: Practicing Artist (County)

Current Term: 2022 - 2026

Dan Taylor is a Tallahassee artist best known for his abstract oil paintings featuring bold, striking color palettes. His paintings have become highly sought-after and have been featured regionally at the Tampa Museum of Art and locally with the Council on Culture & Arts, LeMoyne Center for Visual Arts, Venvi Art Gallery, Gadsden Art Center, Hotel Duval and FSU's Oglesby Art Gallery. He has volunteered countless hours of his time and been generous with his talents to raise funds for organizations and causes he cares about including Tallahassee's Big Bend Cares, where he serves on the board, and 621 Gallery. Taylor also works in precious metal clay to create unique jewelry designs and he produces large scale garden sculpture in steel, wood, and various other materials.

Dan Taylor has served on the COCA Board of Directors since 2018.

Katherine Maiorana

Vice Chair, Seat: At-Large (City)

Current Term: 2020 - 2024

Katherine Maiorana is the SVP of Strategy and Business Development at Sachs Media. As a communications professional with more than 25 years of experience, she is skilled in B2B and corporate marketing communications, strategy, public relations, employee communications, thought leadership, reputation management, and production. Additional corporate and agency experience includes DeVry Education Group; Alinea Group; Ogilvy; Boston Consulting Group; Schwarzkopf USA; NYNEX; and the Florida State Lottery. Katherine received her bachelor's degree in marketing from Florida State University and her MBA from the University of Chicago Booth School of Business. In her free time, Katherine enjoys spending time with family and friends, outdoor activities, reading, cooking, and the arts. An amateur artist, Katherine enjoys sketching and acrylic and oil painting.

Katherine Maiorana has served on the COCA Board of Directors since 2020.

Beth Keating

At-Large, Seat: Volunteer (County)

Current Term Ends: 2019 - 2023

Beth Keating is a shareholder in the Gunster Law Firm's Tallahassee office. Beth's practice is focused on federal and state regulatory law, particularly as such regulation is applied to utility companies. Beth's experience includes the legal representation of and policy consultation for competitive telecommunications, cable and technology companies, as well as electric and natural gas utilities before state and federal agencies and the Florida Legislature.

A native of Mississippi, Beth came to Tallahassee for law school and decided to make the Capital City home. A long-time board member of the Foundation for Leon County Schools and a member of Leadership Tallahassee Class #37, she firmly believes in the importance of community engagement. As a music lover (and former radio DJ), she's also a firm believer in the beneficial impact the creative arts can have on individuals and the community as a whole.

Beth Keating has served on the COCA Board of Directors since 2021.

Rachelle McClure

Treasurer, Seat: At-Large (County)

Current Term: 2022 - 2026

Rachelle has both a business and design background - and believes that art, culture, and good design - have the power to transform communities, power economic development, and shape hearts and minds. She currently works as a designer + strategist at DAG Architects.

Rachelle McClure has served on the COCA Board of Directors since 2019.

Aynalem Markos

At-Large, Seat: Finance (City)

Current Term: 2020 - 2024

Over the past two decades, Aynalem has served at Florida State University (FSU) in various capabilities. As part of a technical support team, she is a contact person to the oversight of budgetary and financial activities of a complex administrative unit. She is responsible for budget formulation, presentation and enactment. She applies regulations, policies, methods, and techniques to manage the unit's budget and financial activities. She also provides analysis of operating performance, reviews funding requests and offers recommendations for approval of funding requests. Additionally, she serves as a liaison with internal and external partners to develop and administer the FSU License Plate Marketing. Aynalem is committed to community service and is a member of a variety of different groups including Golden Key International Honor Society and the National Scholars Honor Society. She is also a volunteer with the Guardian ad Litem program and Junior Achievement Big Bend and is a Board member of Catholic Charities of North Florida and the FSU Black Faculty and Staff Network. She serves as Faculty Advisor for Alpha Kappa Delta Phi FSU Chapter and as the FSU United Way Campaign Coordinator.

Aynalem Markos has served on the COCA Board of Directors since 2021.

Haiqiong Deng

At-Large, History & Heritage (City)

Current Term: 2021 - 2025

Haiqiong Deng is a master player of the 21-string Chinese zheng. She has performed throughout North America and premiered dozens of new compositions by American composers. Haiqiong has also explored diverse world music traditions, including her decade-long learning with master Indian sitarist, Nalini Vinayak.

As a cultural bearer and ambassador, Haiqiong has received many awards including: the 2021 - 2022 Florida Specific Cultural Project Grant, 2017 Florida Cultural Heritage Award, 2012 the Master Artist of the Florida Folklife Apprenticeship Award, and the Outstanding Performance Prize at the 1995 Chinese National Zheng Competition in Shanghai.

Haiqiong received her Bachelor of Music in guzheng Performance from the Shanghai Conservatory of Music, Master of Arts in Arts Administration and Ethnomusicology, and Ph.D. in Musicology from the Florida State University. Haiqiong taught at Florida State University, University of South Florida, and Tallahassee Community College. She also directed the FSU Chinese Music Ensemble for seventeen years. In 2020, Haiqiong founded the Mindful Plucking Music Academy to provide a live and virtual platform to cultivate mindful listening, nurture cultural understanding, and contribute to human wellbeing to people from all over the world.

Haiqiong Deng has served on the COCA Board of Directors since 2021.

Board of Directors Members

Kimberly Bryant

Seat: Tourism (County)

Current Term: 2023 – 2027

A seasoned marketing professional, Kim Bryant is currently a Director at the Moore agency in Tallahassee. Kim earned a bachelor's degree in public relations from Florida A&M University and a master's degree in integrated marketing communications from West Virginia University. Kim was in the KCCI Community Catalyst class of 2009 and has long served the Tallahassee community by volunteering with organizations such as the Capital Area Healthy Start Coalition, Girl Scouts (Troop# 11214) and Griffin Middle School.

Kim believes that the arts are essential to human development as they provide immeasurable enrichment to the lives of anyone exposed and leave intangible experiences and skills for anyone who engages. Art gives meaning to our lives and helps us understand our world.

A product of the School of the Greensboro (N.C.) Ballet and North Carolina School of the Arts, Kim describes ballet as her first love and continues to hold a passion for the arts that she hopes to pass down to her biggest loves, her two daughters Harper and Kailey.

Kimberly Bryant has served on the COCA Board of Directors since 2023.

Amanda Clements

Seat: Tourism (County)

Current Term: 2021 – 2025

Amanda Clements is a native Tallahasseean and graduate of Florida State University. She currently serves as the Director of Strategic Communications at Tallahassee Community College where she is responsible for College-wide communications, media relations, and community relations. Her career has included positions at Cumulus Broadcasting, VISIT FLORIDA, United Way of the Big Bend, and Cotton Colors. She is a graduate of Leadership Tallahassee and a past president of the Junior League of Tallahassee. Amanda and her husband, Bruce McCullough, live in Waverly Hills with their two children.

Amanda Clements has served on the COCA Board of Directors since 2021.

Carol Hill

Seat: Business (City)

Current Term: 2022 - 2026

Carol Hill (she/her) has been a member of the Tallahassee community for 29 years. Carol is an alumna of Florida A&M University where she earned her bachelor's degree in Theatre Performance and a Master's Degree in Business Administration. Carol has served as a volunteer with many organizations in the community. She has served as a member of the Tallahassee Junior League, and the United Way of the Big Bend. Carol has also served as a board member for Lighthouse of the Big Bend, the Meek Eaton Black Archives, the Oasis Center for Women and Girls, and the Southern Shakespeare Company. Carol is one of the founding members of Essential Theatrical Associates (ETA), an emerging theater company which focuses on the enrichment of the community through positive activism, bold inclusive choices, and deliberate diversity. Carol still performs, focusing on film, voiceovers, and commercials. Carol is thrilled to be a part of COCA and serve in the capacity of Board member.

Carol Hill has served on the COCA Board of Directors since 2022.

Neil Mooney

Seat: History & Heritage (County)

Current Term: 2023 – 2027

Neil has been a Leon County resident since 1996 and a Floridian since 1980. He earned degrees in History and Political Science at Binghamton University in New York, and a Law degree at Florida State University. He has been a committed lifelong student of history and culture. This includes active participation in Leon County preservation as a member of The Tallahassee Historical Society, The Grove Museum, The Florida Historical Capital Museum, The Florida Trail Association, The Tallahassee Trust for Historic Preservation, the LeMoyne Art Center, and The Mission San Luis, among other organizations. He has conducted extensive on-site ethnic visits across the United States and Europe and has a Spanish language background.

He believes that in addition to physical and historic preservation, acknowledging Ethnic Heritage requires celebrating our diverse local social and cultural elements such as ethnic dance, food, music, religion, holidays, art, and languages other than English. He is a Director of the Gadsden Art Center and Museum which emphasizes vernacular Southern art and serves on its Collection Committee.

He is the father of three children educated in the Leon County public schools. For hobbies he enjoys hiking, camping, international travel, reading, cooking, and sampling craft beers.

Neil Mooney has served on the COCA Board since 2023.

Brinda Pamulapati

Seat: Practicing Artist (City)

Current Term Ends: 2023 - 2027

As the owner and managing director of Venvi Art Gallery, Brinda has the pleasure of curating renowned artists for the gallery's shows. After earning her baccalaureate and master's degree in mathematics at Florida State University, Brinda works as a math faculty for online universities.

Unusual shapes and textures paired with pure, vibrant colors are key characteristics of Brinda's work. The values in color and the emotions they evoke inspire her to explore different hues. Not only are these shades inspirational, but so is the intentional selection. Brinda selects colors that aim to shock or surprise the viewer. She loves the excitement she experiences while thinking on new ideas, compositions, and creating art. Brinda finds there are infinite things to learn from art; one cannot master art in one lifetime. An artist's life is constantly learning and always realizing something new.

Brinda Pamulapati has served on the COCA Board of Directors since 2023.

Hadley Peterson

Seat: At-Large (City)

Current Term Ends: 2023 - 2027

Hadley is an experienced project manager and urban planner focused on projects that engage communities to create actionable goals for their built environment. An animated storyteller, Hadley is focused on creating sustainable places for future generations to thrive while elevating and leveraging the voices of community members who are often left out of the conversation. With over five years of local, regional, national, and international experience, Hadley develops innovative and thoughtful solutions for private and public partners. Hadley has her Master's in Urban and Regional Planning from Florida State University. She is a published author and speaker on historic preservation guidelines, public art, and community engagement. She has led large scale public art projects in Denver, CO ranging from the 303 ArtWay to Powered by Heritage to Moved by Metal. She has experience leveraging funds from national agencies and nonprofits like SmartGrowth America and Americans for the Arts. She has served for the past 3+ years as the public art and realm director for Colorado's first Art District - Denver's Art District on Santa Fe. In her time there she worked with several community groups to create a community-supported artist in residency program. In her spare time, Hadley is a mother, avid reader, amateur chef, explorer, and textile artist. Her multimedia art examines color and pattern as an approach to storytelling and memory making.

Hadley Peterson has served on the COCA Board of Directors since 2023.

E. Marie Sissle

Seat: At-Large (City)

Current Term: 2020 - 2024

E. Marie Sissle is a native of Tallahassee, FL. and has over 25 years in the entertainment field. She founded Midtown Entertainment Group, Midtown Enrichment Corp, SoMo PlayHouse and SoMo Coalition of the Arts in Tallahassee, Florida. Sissle is proud to be a graduate of Theatre TCC, Florida A&M University where she earned a B.A. in Performance Theatre, and Full Sail University where she earned an M.S. in Entertainment Business. Sissle has created two children's books, over 10 original plays, one television animated script, and recently completed her first screenplay.

E. Marie Sissle has served on the COCA Board of Directors since 2020.

Kristen Summers

Seat: At-Large (County)

Current Term: 2020 - 2024

Kristen Summers currently works as an attorney for the Florida Department of Health. When she's not practicing law, she manages her business as a watercolor artist where she combines her passions for art, birds, and Florida's unique natural systems.

Kristen graduated from the University of Florida School of Forest Resources and Conservation with a Bachelor of Science in Natural Resource Conservation in 2010 and from the Florida State University College of Law in 2014.

Kristen is passionate about the arts, the environment, and fostering community relationships. Kristen believes that art and cultural programs are essential parts of a strong, sustainable, and thriving community. She is excited to continue to support these programs throughout Leon County by serving on the COCA Board of Directors. Kristen also serves on the Board of Directors for Sustainable Tallahassee and volunteers as a big sister with Big Brothers, Big Sisters. In her free time, Kristen enjoys being in nature, working in her garden, and spending time with her cat and chickens.

Kristen Summers has served on the COCA Board of Directors since 2020.

Reenee Williams

Seat: Business/Economic Development (County)

Current Term: 2023 - 2025

Reenee “the P.L.U.G” Williams is an experienced Rapid Response Coordinator with a diverse background in Marketing, Public Relations, and Event Planning spanning over a decade. With a strong foundation as a Publicist, BET & Soul Train Awards Production Assistant, and Day of Event Coordinator in the music and entertainment industry, Reenee transitioned into the corporate world, serving as a Marketing Director for H&R Block. During this time, she traveled extensively, organizing events and sharing her expertise in Marketing & Business2Business techniques across multiple offices in three states.

Later, Reenee excelled as an Operations Manager, Sales Director, and General Manager for a national gym, where she focused on Leadership, Team Building, and Marketing Strategies for over three years. Driven by a passion to make a positive impact on people’s lives, she ventured into the Nonprofit space as a Business Employer Solutions Account Executive. In this role, she assisted various agencies, including IT, Professional Services, Government, and Education, with recruiting, training, and retaining local talent.

Currently, Reenee holds the position of Rapid Response Coordinator at CareerSource Capital Region. Here, she utilizes her extensive networking and relationship-building skills to provide businesses of all sizes across all industries with proactive strategies to minimize and prevent employee layoffs and minimize and prevent business closures. Most recently, Reenee has become a Certified Business Engagement Professional, and her motto is “I dot the I’s and cross the T’s and connect you to the resources you did and did not know that you need.”

Beyond her professional career, Reenee finds joy in traveling with her family, going out in the ministry, cooking, singing, white-water rafting and volunteering.

Reenee Williams has served on the COCA Board of Directors since 2023.

Ex Officio Members

Jeremy Matlow

City of Tallahassee

Raised on Tallahassee's south side with a passion for the public good, Mayor Pro Tem Jeremy Matlow believes that citizens and neighborhoods should drive the priorities of City Hall. By bringing more people into the political process and advocating for the concerns of everyday people, Jeremy is committed to building a city that works for everyone through dedicated public service.

Jeremy helped lead the revitalization of Gaines Street and the All Saints District as President of the Gaines Street Community Association. He is the co-founder of Gaines Street Pies, a successful business he and a partner built from the ground up into an enterprise with 85 employees right here in Tallahassee. Jeremy was also appointed by the Mayor's Office to serve on the Municipal Code Enforcement Board. Jeremy lives with his wife Sarah and two sons, Declan and Ethan. He was elected to the office of City Commissioner in 2018.

In addition to sitting on the CRA and Blueprint Intergovernmental Agency, Commissioner Matlow serves as Chair of the Capital Regional Transportation Planning Agency and a member of the Downtown Improvement Authority.

Jeremy Matlow's term on the COCA Board of Directors began in 2019.

Brian Welch

Leon County

Brian Welch was elected to the Leon County Commission in November of 2020 to represent the residents of Northeast Leon County in District 4.

Brian has also been a Social Studies teacher at Chiles High School since 2007. A diehard Timberwolf, Brian has served in many roles during his tenure at Chiles, including as the "Voice of the Timberwolves" football team, Key Club sponsor, Youth Leadership Tallahassee coordinator, Business Advisory Council coordinator and Vice President and Founding member of the Chiles High School Foundation.

Brian received an Associate's degree from Tallahassee Community College in 1999. He received a Bachelor's degree in Political Science from the Florida State University in 2001, followed by a Master's degree in the renowned Applied American Politics and Policy (MAPP) program at FSU in 2003. Brian subsequently received an additional Master's degree in Educational Leadership from the University of West Florida in 2016.

Brian Welch's term on the COCA Board of Directors began in 2023.

Liaisons (Non-Voting)

Donmetrie Clark

Tallahassee Community College

Born in Miami, Florida, Donmetrie Clark attended Florida A&M University, and earned both a Bachelor of Arts and Master of Education in English Education, with additional coursework in Educational Leadership. After graduating from FAMU, he taught high school English for two years, and later accepted adjunct positions at FAMU and TCC in what was Academic Support (now Transitional Studies). In 2001, he was hired full-time in the Communications and Humanities division, which houses courses in English, Speech, Foreign Language, Fine and Performing Arts (studio art, music, theatre), Humanities, Art History, Religion, and Philosophy. Also housed in the division are the state and national champion Forensics Speech and Debate Team and an outstanding theater program, Theatre TCC! that produces three major productions annually. The Division supports the Ralph Hurst Gallery, and the TCC Fine Art Gallery, which annually features nine different shows, including local artists, faculty, and student exhibits.

Currently in his 20th year at TCC, he has taught composition, children's literature, American literature, African-American literature, college success, and developmental reading and writing. In 2016, he accepted the position of Associate Dean for the Communications and Humanities division, and he was appointed Dean of Communications and Humanities on July 1, 2021. For the last 16 years, he has also served as a reader, table leader, and question leader for the Advanced Placement English Literature and Composition examination.

Donmetrie Clark's term on the COCA Board of Directors began in 2021.

Kimberly K. Harding
Florida A&M University

Kimberly K Harding received her BA degree in drama from Spelman College and earned her MFA degree in the area of Performing Arts Management from Brooklyn College. For several years she toured professionally as a stage manager and has two Off-Broadway credits to date. In New York City she worked in administrative and production capacities for The Acting Company, Manhattan Theater Club, Negro Ensemble Company, and Crossroads Theatre in New Brunswick, New Jersey. Currently, Harding is employed at Florida A&M University where she is an Associate Professor of Theatre. Harding left New York to pursue a desire to work in theatre education at her alma mater, Spelman College.

In addition to her teaching load she serves the theatre program as the Ticket Sales & Services Manager, Educational ArtReach Coordinator, Director of Marketing and as the theatre's Sound Designer. Harding has two published articles to her credit on the lives and works of theatre artists Micki Grant and Vinnette Carroll, both which appear in *African American Playwrights: A Sourcebook* (2004). In 2008 she was the project manager and an editor for the National Black Arts Festival's 20th Anniversary commemorative book, a summer festival for which she stage managed events during its first twenty years.

As a leisure pursuit she enjoys creative writing and has written several family/youth theatrical works that have been produced by the Essential Theatre and the Irene C. Edmonds Youth Theatre. Currently she is working on her first full-length play, *Between Goodbye and Hello* which had its first public reading at the Black Theatre Network Conference in Atlanta, GA.

Kimberly K Harding's term on the COCA Board of Directors began in 2016.

Michelle Personette
Tourism Development Council

Michelle Personette is an executive and communications professional specializing in the education, entertainment, and tourism industries. She received her B.A. in English from Florida Gulf Coast University and her M.A. in communication with a concentration in advertising and public relations from the University of Central Florida. Michelle has worked on campaigns and promotions for the Florida Everblades, Florida Gulf Coast University, Universal Studios, Holiday Inn Family Suites, and the Challenger Learning Center of Tallahassee.

As the first marketing and communications manager at the Challenger Learning Center, Michelle was responsible for planning and executing the pre-opening promotions, marketing, group sales and fundraising efforts of the center. In 2005, Michelle was promoted to the Executive Director of the Challenger Learning Center and oversaw all aspects of the center's daily operations, budgeting, marketing, grant writing, personnel management, project management, contract negotiation, and fundraising. While in this role, she had the opportunity to work on communications campaigns for both documentary and commercial films with over a dozen film distributors.

For the last several years, Michelle has found great pleasure in sharing her business and communications experience with undergraduate students as an adjunct professor at Flagler College.

Michelle Personette's term on the COCA Board of Directors began in 2022.

Heather Thomas

Leon County Schools

Heather Thomas is a former high school English teacher, and was the Executive Editor at Tallahassee Woman Magazine for 14 years before becoming the Marketing Coordinator for Leon County Schools. Heather is a longtime board member and a past-Chair of the Foundation for Leon County Schools and a current Board member for 211 of the Big Bend. She is a former, founding board member for Girls on the Run of the Big Bend and is a Leadership Tallahassee Class 36 graduate. She is married to Gerry Thomas and they have two children—Grace (16) and Cooper (13).

Heather Thomas's term on the COCA Board of Directors began in 2020.

Jennifer Wright

Florida State University

As a Tallahassee native, Calla MacNamara is genuinely passionate about developing and supporting the arts throughout her community. In her role as the Education & Engagement Manager at Opening Nights at FSU, MacNamara focuses on community engagement, expanding arts education programming, and creating professional development opportunities for the community.

MacNamara also serves on the Board of Directors for Southern Shakespeare Company. As a Knight Creative Communities Institute Catalyst for the 2019 class, she helped turn the stormwater pond behind Railroad Square into a place where people of all ages can engage creatively with musical elements.

She graduated from the University of Central Florida with a BA in Theatre Studies but has finally become a proud Seminole during her employment at FSU.

Calla MacNamara's term on the COCA Board of Directors began in 2016.