



FY2020 OPERATING SUPPORT GRANT &
FY2020 COMMUNITY IMPACT GRANT
PANELIST BIOGRAPHIES

Kellen Braddock: Managing Director, Black Mountain Institute – Las Vegas, NV

With a lifelong passion for poetry, Kellen Braddock achieves her greatest sense of fulfillment when pushing the needle forward for writers, literary organizations, and the publishing sector at large. Kellen is the publisher of *The Believer* and the managing director of the Black Mountain Institute. Before moving to Las Vegas with her wife, Leighan, the two lived in Seattle. There, Kellen worked for Hugo House, the city's literary art center, and APRIL, a small press and independent literature festival (Or, "Authors, Publishers, and Readers of Independent Literature"). Kellen holds an MFA in Arts Leadership from Seattle University. In her spare time, she pursues volunteer opportunities with arts and advocacy groups. She has served as commissioner for the Seattle Center, an ambassador for On the Boards, and an Arts Business Clinic volunteer consultant. While completing her BA in English at the University of Michigan, Kellen was the recipient of the Rapaport Prize, Cowden Fellowship, and the Hopwood Award for her poetry.

Ray Gargano*: Grants & Cultural Programs Coordinator (Sacramento Metropolitan Arts Commission) – Sacramento, CA

**Reviewing FY2020 Operating Support Grant applications only*

Ray Gargano currently manages grants and cultural programs at the Sacramento Metropolitan Arts Council (SMAC) in Sacramento, CA. With the approval of Sacramento's new Cultural Plan in September 2018, Gargano is working with the Metro Arts team to implement the citywide goals of improving arts education, building cultural diversity and a creative economy through innovative arts and cultural programs. He began his career as a high school and college instructor in English and theatre, technology integration and arts management and has served as a director of programming and education at performing arts centers in Madison, WI, Santa Rosa, CA and Cleveland, OH and as director of the Orange County Arts Education Center with Orange County Cultural Arts & Cultural Affairs in Orlando, Florida. He recently completed his term as President of the Board of Directors for the International Performing Arts for Youth (IPAY), the industry organization for performing arts for young audiences.

Alexis Hill: Arts, Culture, and Special Events Manager, City of Reno – Reno, NV

Alexis Hill manages the City of Reno Arts, Culture and Events Department in order to cultivate relationships and programs to enhance the City of Reno's image and quality of life. Hill's background as a past nonprofit leader (of Kids and Horses Therapeutic Riding Center, Lake Tahoe Shakespeare Festival and Reno Barque Ensemble) has helped her to support Reno's 92 arts and culture organizations which are the 4th largest employer in the region. Hill earned her Bachelor of Arts in Political Science from Texas A&M University and a Master of Public Administration from the University of Nevada.

Melvin Henley: Organizational Development Consultant, Nonprofit Enterprise at Work – Detroit, MI

Melvin Henley has a passion for communities and the inspiration they provide - both big and small. This passion has led him to supporting non-profit organizations and their leadership through capacity building efforts such as facilitation and training sessions with organizational leadership covering topics such as governance, collaboration and diversity, equity and inclusion amongst others. Currently, Henley is an organizational development consultant with NEW (Non-profit Enterprise at Work) working with nonprofits across southeastern Michigan. Other notable work includes, managing the visioning and engagement process of a UNESCO City of Design designation for the city of Detroit. Henley has attended and presented at various conferences and gatherings across the US and abroad focused on leadership, the creative economy, and strategic collaborations. In addition, Henley is also a strong advocate, supporter, and patron of the creative industries in all forms. His commitment to this sector and representation of diverse voices has led him to being a grant reviewer for several city and state art agencies, along with the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA). Hailing from Chicago, he holds a bachelor's degree in public relations from Drake University (Des Moines, IA) and a master's degree in arts and cultural management from Queen Margaret University (Edinburgh, UK). In his free time he enjoys biking, traveling and telling bad jokes.

Candace Kita: Cultural Work Manager (Asian Pacific American Network of Oregon/APANO) - Portland, OR

Candace Kita is a cultural worker committed to elevating the stories of people of color. Currently, she serves as Cultural Work Manager at the Asian Pacific American Network of Oregon (APANO). Her eclectic background in cultural change work spans visual art, writing, astrology, community organizing, and nonprofit arts administration. She co-founded Arts Workers for Equity, a grassroots collective that advocates for racial equity in Portland's arts sector and has worked for numerous arts organizations, including the Portland Art Museum, Heidi Duckler Dance Theatre, and grassroots public art space Tuesday Night Cafe. Candace received her BA in Studio Art from Scripps College. In her spare time, she dabbles in dance and consults as a radical astrologer at www.astroradicals.com.