Name: Patrick Brien

Title: Executive Director

Organization: Riverside Arts Council

City, State: Riverside, CA

Bio (500 words)

Patrick Brien is the Executive Director of the Riverside Arts Council. As a regional local arts agency, they are the state/local partner for the California Arts Council representing Riverside County. A private, non-profit corporation, the Riverside Arts Council’s mission is “to provide, develop, support and sustain the arts.” Its services include arts education both within the City of Riverside and throughout Riverside County, public art management (including at the Riverside County Administration Center in downtown Riverside) and grantmaking. Patrick conducts capacity building technical assistance workshops and provides private consultations for organizations and individuals throughout the region. He also serves on the board of directors for the Riverside Downtown Partnership, Californians for the Arts, California Arts Advocates, Inland Valley Repertory Theatre and Homespun Players. A large part of what Patrick does can be described as helping to develop a regional arts and cultural infrastructure that connects people and communities. He also works to build awareness of the economic impact of the arts, as well as the need for increased public funding of the arts. He has led the Riverside Arts Council’s participation in the past three Arts and Economic Prosperity studies through Americans for the Arts, using the resulting numbers as a tool in advocacy at the local, regional, state and federal levels. Patrick has recently developed an arts in corrections program, The Imagination Project, with funding from the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation and the California Arts Council. In addition, he developed a veterans program, Combat Camaraderie, as well as art in therapy programs for dementia patients and adults with developmental disabilities. As a director and producer for the theatre, he has established credits that span from Hawaii to Europe. Over the course of more than three decades, he has run theatre companies in various parts of the United States and Germany. In 1993 he was awarded Best Director for his production of “Terra Nova” at the National AACT Fest. He recently helped to found The Gestalt Theatre Project, which produces in The Box, located in the Fox Entertainment Plaza in downtown Riverside. He has directed West Coast premieres of “When We Were Young and Unafraid” and “The Library,” as well as regional premieres of such productions as “The Last Days of Judas Iscariot” and “The Shape of Things” with this new company. Patrick’s experience as an artist and executive in the performing arts was instrumental in the City of Riverside’s $32 million restoration of its historic Fox Theatre, in addition to the development of its adjacent black box space, as he served on city planning committees for both projects. He and the Riverside Arts Council also serve as fiscal sponsor for a number of organizations and events, including downtown Riverside’s Dia de los Muertos, which attracts more than 30,000 people each year. A graduate of Chapman University, Patrick has also served as an invited participant of the past two WESTAF Arts Leadership and Advocacy Seminars in Washington DC.

Why are you interested in serving on the USUAF Executive Committee?

Riverside, while a major urban city within the 11th most populous county in the United States, remains under-represented on many fronts. For instance, it is the only city of its size to not have a professional sports team. It is significant on so many other levels, however. The Festival of Lights is annually regarded as the top holiday lighting event of its kind in the nation. Riverside was recognized by the Intelligent Community Forum as the “Most Intelligent Community of the Year” in 2012. As home to Bourns Engineering it is a leader in global industry. With three universities and a major community college, Riverside’s educational community is very strong. But it also has a thriving arts and culture community. The Riverside Unified School District is in the final stages of completing a district-wide arts plan. A monthly arts walk attracts thousands of residents and visitors. Institutions such as the Riverside Art Museum, Riverside County Philharmonic, Riverside Lyric Opera, California Riverside Ballet, Performance Riverside and March Field Air Museum working alongside smaller organizations such as Riverside Community Arts Association, Riverside Community Players, Riverside Concert Band and Division 9 Gallery, there is a thriving network that represents and defines the community. For the past 11 years, I have had the honor of serving as the leader of the Riverside Arts Council, ranked annually as among the top local arts agencies in the State of California as part of the California Arts Council’s State Local Arts program. I know this community. I have helped to set policy at both the city and county levels. I have mobilized other arts leaders within the community to speak on behalf of restoring funding to the California Arts Council. I have mobilized these same leaders to speak on behalf of increasing funding to the National Endowment for the Arts; more recently to save it from decimation under the current administration. It would be an honor to represent this community as a member of the Executive Committee for the United States Urban Arts Federation. I believe that my experience and my passion provide me with something to offer in this role. I also believe that I stand to learn a great deal from the people that I would be working alongside. The tools I would bring back to Riverside would benefit us as we continue to grow. Riverside needs a voice at the national level. I would consider it a tremendous privilege to serve in that capacity.

Name: Dave Lawrence

Title: President & CEO

Organization: Arts Council of Indianapolis

City, State: Indianapolis, IN

Bio (500 words)

Dave Lawrence is the President & CEO of the Arts Council of Indianapolis. He serves as the chief arts advocate for the arts and cultural community of Indianapolis, leads the professional staff of the Arts Council, and represents the arts community in local, regional, and national matters. His work includes the development of grants and initiatives for arts and cultural organizations as well as fellowship programs for professional artists including the nationally recognized Creative Renewal Arts Fellowship program that has awarded nearly $4 million in direct support to artists since its inception in 1999. Dave's arts management background includes work with Indianapolis Opera, Indianapolis Symphonic Choir, Clowes Memorial Hall, Indiana Repertory Theatre, and the Indiana University Auditorium. Dave’s 27 years of experience has focused on grantmaking, cultural tourism, organizational development, marketing, advocacy and arts policy development, strategic planning, and public art. Dave has created innovative arts infusion strategies for major events such as the 2001 World Police & Fire Games, the 2005 US World Swimming Trials, Super Bowl XLVI, the 2015 NCAA Men’s Final Four, the 2015 Gymnastics Championships, and the 100th Running of the Indianapolis 500. Dave was a member of the Host Committee for Super Bowl XLVI. Dave is a member of the Stanley K. Lacy Executive Leadership Series Class XXIX, Indianapolis Cultural Advisory Council, Indiana Nonprofit Sector Advisory Board for the Center of Philanthropy, Music Crossroads Steering Committee, Velocity Steering Committee, and a frequent national grant panelist including service as a grant panelist for the National Endowment for the Arts. Dave serves on the boards of the Greater Indianapolis Progress Committee and Visit Indy. He served on Host Committee for the 100th running of the Indianapolis 500 and the local organizing committee for the 2016 US Conference of Mayors. Dave was a founding member of Americans for the Arts Emerging Leaders initiative and served on the national Emerging Leaders Council for several years. He was recently named a 2017 Honored Alumnus of Lawrence North High School. He is the recipient of a 2012 NUVO Cultural Vision Award and was named to Indianapolis Business Journal’s Who’s Who in Hospitality.

Why are you interested in serving on the USUAF Executive Committee?

I believe that the arts are for everyone. I have a passion for building the arts in Indianapolis and, indeed, nationwide. USUAF is such an important organization. I have relied on members of USUAF to assist me in organizational challenges I have faced and I want to return that favor. My belief in servant leadership compels me to assist where I can.

Name: Felicia W Shaw

Title: Executive Director

Organization: Regional Arts Commission of St Louis

City, State: St Louis, Missouri

Bio (500 words)

Felicia W. Shaw joined the Regional Arts Commission of St. Louis as its Executive Director in 2015. A native St. Louisan, Felicia brings more than 25 years of leadership experience in the public and nonprofit arts and culture sector. Previously, Felicia served for eight years as Director of Arts and Culture Strategy and Analysis at the San Diego Foundation, where she directed a portfolio of community and civic engagement programs including a fellowship program for creative entrepreneurs, a grant program supporting neighborhood revitalization efforts, an arts-based placemaking and community building initiative, and a leadership training program for early career arts administrators. Prior to joining the San Diego Foundation, Felicia was Program Manager at the City of San Diego Commission for Arts and Culture, responsible for implementing a multi-million dollar annual grants program and a number initiatives designed to promote San Diego as a leading cultural tourism destination. She currently serves on the boards of Grantmakers in the Arts (GIA), the only national association of both public and private arts and culture funders in the United States and Craft Emergency Relief Fund (CERF+), a national artists’ service organization. She is also a member of the United States Urban Arts Federation – an alliance of the country’s 60 largest local arts agencies. Locally, she serves on the boards of the Greater St Louis Community Foundation and the Foundation’s Invest STL Leadership Board as well as FOCUS St. Louis, a leadership organization. Felicia is an alum of the 2015 Amherst Wilder Foundation Shannon Leadership Institute, and has been recognized for her leadership from various organizations, including San Diego Magazine “Women who Mean Business” Award (2012). A graduate of Northwestern University with a B.S. degree in Communications, Felicia completed post-graduate studies at the University of California, San Diego in Art History, Theory, and Criticism.

Why are you interested in serving on the USUAF Executive Committee?

Thank you for considering my nomination to the USUAF Executive Committee: I am proud of my nearly 30 years of experience in arts administration including work as a grantmaker in the public and private sectors of philanthropy. I believe that now, is an extremely exciting time for local arts agencies as we reimagine the role that arts and culture can play in making our communities better places to live. I've been a member of Americans for the Arts throughout my professional career and joined USUAF when I took over the reins at the Regional Arts Commission because I know that connecting with my peers, sharing best practices, and advocating for continued public investment in the arts is critical to the growth and sustainability of my organization and the field. I have held leadership positions within leading professional organizations including Grantmakers in the Arts and CERF+, and as a result have strong connections with national leaders in our field and a broad perspective on how the arts are becoming more relevant contributors to our quality of life. And, as a resident of a mid-western urban center of arts and culture and as a person of color, I offer a unique and under-represented perspective that is informed by years of experience in cultural planning, cultural tourism, arts education and strategic philanthropy. I know this business and consider myself a respected leader and passionate advocate for the work that we do. And, at this stage of my career, I want to do more. For all these reasons, I am interested and motivated to serve on the USUAF Executive Committee. My organization is able to financially support my participation, which is important; I am rotating off two national boards which would free up my time significantly; and, I am mentally ready to invest energy and resources necessary to fulfill the requirements for the job, furthering the mission of USUAF and of Americans for the Arts. I hope you will give my personal nomination your highest consideration.