

# Talbot Arts Biographical Roster of Board of Directors and Executive Director

FISCAL Year 2023

## **AMELIA (AMY) BLADES STEWART, PRESIDENT**

Amy is an Easton native with a BA in English/Communications from Hood College in Frederick. In 1999, after returning from working on the western shore in historic preservation, she began work in health care marketing at MGW School of Nursing and eventually Shore Health System. She founded Steward Writing & Communications, a boutique freelance writing firm in Easton, providing marketing, writing, and editing services for non-profit and for-profit companies and local governments. Her non-fiction articles--covering the arts, the environment, tourism, health care, and social services--have appeared in national, regional, and local publications for over 30 years. She has helped numerous clients tell stories of help, hope, and compassion for those less fortunate across the region. She graduated from the Shore Leadership Program, Class of 2005, and received the Alfred Knight Award in 2001 for media placement and a 1996 Telly Award for a nursing school video. She is active in St. Mark's United Methodist Church and has served on the boards of Character Counts Mid Shore, *Maryland Life Magazine*, Talbot Partnership, and Channel Marker. She is the past president of Talbot Community Connections, having served on the board since 2011. She currently serves on the marketing committees of For All Seasons and Talbot Hospice.

Amy resides in Easton with her husband, Eric. Her two grown sons both benefited from Arts Council Summer Scholarships to study what turned out to be their chosen professional fields.

## **ANN E. DeMART, VICE PRESIDENT**

Ann DeMart is the manager of the Bay Hundred Senior Center at the St. Michaels YMCA. She is also a freelance writer and marketing consultant. Ann was born and raised in the Buffalo area, and earned a BA in art history from the State University of New York at Albany. She then moved to Washington, D.C., did graduate studies in art history at The George Washington University, and later worked in the education department at the National Gallery of Art. While attending GWU, she worked in the University's public relations department and medical center, where she developed an interest in both healthcare and communications. After working at Georgetown University Medical Center, she began a long career in healthcare information technology, eventually serving as the marketing director for companies in Chicago and San Francisco. She

returned to the East Coast in 2002 and began a new career as a writer and creative director for an advertising agency. Ann has lived in St. Michaels since 2009. She is a current board member and Marketing Chair for Chesapeake Forum (formerly the Academy for Lifelong Learning at the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum), and is a member of the St. Michaels Art League. She is also a painter who regularly exhibits with Barbara Jablin's Chestnut Street Studio artists and the Art League. She joined the board in 2018 and became secretary in 2019.

#### **JAMES T. (TED) MUELLER, TREASURER**

James T. (Ted) Mueller of Easton was born and raised in Baltimore City. He has a BS in mechanical engineering and an MS in technical management from The Johns Hopkins University. He was employed by the JHU Applied Physics Laboratory as an engineer, system engineer, project manager, and chief programs manager in the Space Department. He also was vice program chair and adjunct professor at JHU's Whiting School of Engineering. After retirement he studied photographic art through workshops, books, and the internet, and he is a graduate of the New York Institute of Photography. He has been a photographer for the Eastern Shore Land Conservancy, Eventful Giving, Talbot County Office of Tourism, the Avalon Foundation's Plein Air Festival, Discover Easton, TruPlace, and *What's Up* magazine. He is a member of the Maryland Federation of Art, Photographic Society of America, Tidewater Camera Club, St. Michaels Art League, and the Friday Morning Artists. He currently serves on the boards of Discover Easton and Historic Easton, Inc. He joined the board in 2019.

#### **JANET J. ADAMS, SECRETARY**

Janet Adams was born in Queen Anne's County and graduated from Kennard High School in Centreville. She earned a BS degree from Bowie State College and taught for 34 years as a first and second grade classroom teacher, a reading teacher, and a teaching specialist in the schools of Queen Anne's and Charles Counties. Afterward she was director of the Even Start Program in Queen Anne's County and later of the Judy Center in Kent County. She was married to the late Charles E. Adams, and they made their home in Centreville for their daughter and other family members. From childhood she was exposed to literature, music, museums, and theater. She took piano lessons and played the clarinet in the high school and college bands. After retiring in 2002 she started quilting and loves the process of creating with fabric--putting the small pieces together and making something entirely new and beautiful. Since moving to Easton in 2013, she has taken art classes from local visual artist Jane Bollman. Always active in church and community, she is member of the trustee board and communications chairman of the New Life Community United Methodist Church. She is also past president of the Cambridge Alumnae Chapter of the Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, the Queen Anne's County Quilt Guild, and the Queen Anne's County Homemakers, and a present member of the Bayside Quilters of the Eastern Shore. Her volunteer experience includes the Hospice of Queen Anne's County and Brookletts Place, the Talbot County Senior Center. She enjoys traveling, jewelry making, flower arranging, and collecting children's literature that is illustrated or written by African Americans. She also

collects elephant figurines—symbolizing strength wisdom, and loyalty. She joined the board in 2018.

### **DAMIKA BAKER-WILSON**

Damika Baker-Wilson, CFRE is the Director of Development at the Community Foundation of Anne Arundel County. Prior to joining CFAAC, Damika was the Director of Development at HumanitiesDC in Washington, DC, the state affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities. Preceding this position, Damika was a member of the senior leadership team at the Reginald F. Lewis Museum in Baltimore as the Director of Engagement and Strategic Initiatives where she led the education and visitor services team in developing engaging experiences for museum audiences. As the Director of Development for the Academy Art Museum, Damika managed development operations and the museum's \$8.5M capital campaign. In 2018, Damika was selected as one of 36 museum professionals from around the world to participate in the Getty Leadership Institute's NextGen executive education program, a blended-learning experience for the museum field's emerging top talent.

Damika currently serves on the boards of Adkins Arboretum and the Association of African American Museums. She is a member the Association of Fundraising Professionals, African American Development Officers, Women of Color in Fundraising and Philanthropy, and Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Inc. She is also a former commissioner for the Maryland Lynching Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

Damika holds an undergraduate degree in Afro-American Studies from the University of Maryland-College Park and is currently a graduate student in The Johns Hopkins University's Museum Studies program. She joined the board in 2022.

### **PEGGY J. FORD**

Peggy Ford was born in Harford County, Maryland and graduated from Loyola University in Baltimore where she earned teaching certificates in elementary education, special education, and early childhood education. She began her teaching career at Southwestern High School in Baltimore City then moved to the Eastern Shore in 1977 to work at the Benedictine School in Ridgely. After the birth of her son Ben in 1983, she began working in the Talbot County School System and has taught in its high school, middle school, and elementary schools. In 2004, Peggy was awarded the Talbot County Public School's Unsung Hero Award. She was the cultural arts coordinator for the Chapel District Elementary School in Cordova where she had coordinated the arts enrichment assembly programs for almost 20 years. In addition, Peggy formerly instructed senior water exercise through Chesapeake College and the YMCA. Now retired after 37 years of teaching, she shows her interest in the Talbot County community by volunteering for Character Counts Mid-Shore, CarePacks, the Waterfowl Festival, St. Vincent De Paul, CASA of the Mid-Shore, Plein Air Easton, Talbot Hospice's Festival of Trees, First Night Talbot, Chesapeake Film Festival, membership chair of Talbot County Retired School Personnel Association. Peggy is

also a member of two book clubs and enjoys taking ballroom dance lessons with her husband, John. She joined the Arts Council board in 2011, was board secretary in 2012, treasurer in 2013 and President in 2014. Peggy rejoined the board in 2019.

### **FRED HUGHES**

Fred began studying keyboards and low brass at age eight and, by age 12, was a member of Local 294 of the American Federation of Musicians in his hometown of Lancaster, Pennsylvania. In 1979, Fred enlisted in the United States Army and, upon advancing out of the Armed Forces School of Music, was assigned as a tuba player in the First Army Band at Fort George G. Meade, Maryland. 1981 to 1985 was a period of tremendous opportunity for Fred as a member of the Eighth Army Band in Seoul, Korea. As a soldier-musician, he reached the rank of staff sergeant. He performed for sold-out houses and live, radio, and television audiences during his off-duty time. Returning to his native Lancaster in 1985, Fred began performing extensively in a piano trio setting.

In 1989, Fred reentered the military, joining the United States Army's premier touring jazz ensemble, the Jazz Ambassadors. As pianist and soloist for the Jazz Ambassadors, he performed in all fifty states and internationally, including prestigious jazz festivals in Newport, Montreux, Nice, and North Sea Jazz Festivals.

Leaving the Jazz Ambassadors in 1996, Fred began as a conductor and guest conductor with various orchestras throughout the US while continuing to perform and produce recordings.

As Assistant Director of Jazz Studies at Shepherd College (1989-2002), he presented workshops and clinics at conferences for the International Association of Jazz Educators (IAJE), Music Educators National Conference (MENC), Maryland Music Educators Association (MMEA), Texas Bandmasters Association (TBA) and the Midwest Band and Orchestra Clinic. He has conducted numerous county, state, and regional honors groups, including Maryland All-State Jazz Band and the MENC All-Eastern Honors Jazz Ensemble. Alfred Publications published his book, *The Jazz Pianist: Left Hand Voicings and Chord Theory*.

In 2019, Fred founded Jazz Alive, a 501 (c)(3) charitable foundation based in Talbot County on Maryland's Eastern Shore. Jazz Alive is dedicated to continuing and preserving jazz, America's Indigenous art form, and to bringing this great music to audiences and students with little to no opportunity to hear and learn from the genre's great practitioners. Jazz Alive is committed to presenting concerts, school assemblies, master classes, and school residencies in underserved communities that may be off jazz touring routes, lack jazz presenters or have little funding for jazz events. He joined the board in 2022.

### **CHRIS NOYES**

Chris Noyes grew up in Baltimore County, moved to the eastern shore village of Claiborne in 1985, and raised her three children here. Since then, she has taught in several venues, starting

at St. Luke's Nursery School, then teaching for 19 years in Talbot County Public Schools - at Chapel District Elementary, St. Michaels Middle/High, Tilghman Elementary, Easton High, and Easton Elementary Schools. She has also been a church musician since moving here and has been the soprano section leader with Christ Church St. Michaels Chancel Choir. Most recently, she has become a cantor for Sts. Peter and Paul, Church in Easton, singing at Masses, weddings, and funerals. She has been a featured soloist with the Tidewater Singers, Easton Choral Arts Society, Mid-shore Community Band, and Easton High School Choir under the direction of William Thomas, as well as in many of the local churches. She performs at festivals, house concerts, outdoor concerts, clubs, school programs, coffeehouses, and the Brookletts Senior Center. Many of these events were partially funded by the Talbot County Arts Council.

Since moving to the area, Chris has also maintained a voice/recorder/guitar studio. Chris earned a BS (1982) and MS (2001) from Towson University, where she studied with Ruth Drucker and then Leneida Crawford. She has been an instructor of Voice Class at Chesapeake College, resuming the position in Spring 2023. During her teaching career, she has continued to sing professionally, mainly as a folksinger, but also classical, jazz, pop, and rock. She began singing and playing guitar for Irish groups in the Baltimore/DC area and became a founding member of the folk group Crab Alley after moving to the eastern shore. Crab Alley performed original Chesapeake Bay music, and the group produced two albums- "Back Creek Crab" and "Sail Away." Chris's singing is featured on countless recordings, including her 1994 solo CD, *Mirrorstones*, for which she received a Maryland Arts Council grant and a Governor's Citation for Excellence. She is a past and now a current member of the award-winning, touring Celtic chamber group 'Jennifer Cutting's Ocean Quartet', contributing guitar, vocals, recorder, and penny whistle

#### **PETE LESHER, TALBOT COUNTY COUNCIL**

A native of Pennsylvania, Pete graduated from Lafayette College and holds a Master's degree in history from Columbia University. He has served on the staff of the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum since 1991. As chief curator, he leads a team that creates new exhibitions, and he has authored, edited, or contributed to exhibition catalogs, monographs, and periodical articles. He does frequent public speaking on a variety of maritime history topics. His civic engagements include serving as chairman of the St. Michaels Historic District Commission, on the board of Maryland Humanities, on the Maryland Heritage Areas Authority, on the Council of American Maritime Museums board, and as an accreditation peer reviewer for the American Alliance of Museums. Past service includes curatorial chairman of the Talbot Historical Society, president of the Museum Small Craft Association, president of the Eastern Shore Association of Municipalities, and member of the Easton Historic District Commission. He is past council president of Grace Lutheran Church in Easton and a current member of the choir and worship leadership team. He has performed as a vocalist with the Baltimore Symphony Chorus, Concert Artists of Baltimore, and the ensemble now known as Tidewater Singers, where he was also a board member. An Eagle Scout, he is a den leader with Cub Scout Pack 190 in Easton and a member of the Talbot County Public Schools' Gifted and Talented Advisory Committee. He is a

graduate of the Maryland Municipal League's Academy for Excellence in Local Government and was a member of the Easton Town Council from 2009 to 2018. He is now serving his first term on the Talbot County Council. Pete lives in Easton with his wife, Mariana, and two children who attend Talbot County Public Schools. He joined the board in 2018.

### **ERINNE LEWIS**

A native of Easton MD, Erinne Lewis is a graduate of Bowie State University where she earned her Bachelor of Science degree in Theatre Arts with a Concentration in Musical Theatre and a Minor in Dance. A current resident on the Eastern Shore of Maryland, Erinne has choreographed and performed with various companies and troupes across D.C., Maryland and Virginia including Crashbox Theatre, Pure Gold Dance Team, Harriet Tubman Performing Arts Center and "Capital Kids", a youth performing arts group that spreads the message of anti-bullying, health/fitness and self-confidence through television and touring to name a few. Passionately involved in the success of our next generation, Erinne has fulfilled the role of Arts Coordinator for Dorchester County Public School System's "Summer S.T.E.A.M." Program and worked as a Substitute Teacher at both Mace's Lane Middle School and Cambridge South Dorchester High School. Choreographer for multiple Talbot County Public School musical theatre productions, Erinne's passion for dance compels her to share her gifts and unique style to her community. She has done so by providing original, personalized choreography for auditioning students entering the strict and competitive dance and musical theatre programs at various universities including NYU, Boston Conservatory and The New School.

Erinne has performed and choreographed "Heart and Music" an annual fundraiser for All Seasons Behavioral Health and Rape Crisis Center on the Eastern Shore of Maryland. A proud member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority Inc., Erinne has creatively co-directed and choreographed "Pearls of the Eastern Shore," a Debutante Cotillion held biannual by the Kappa Theta Omega Chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority Inc. in Easton Maryland. As former President of Continuum Dance Company (Easton, MD) and current inaugural member of Allegra! Women's Choir (Easton, MD), Erinne continuously strives to create original and intriguing opportunities of song, dance, and performance along the Eastern Shore. An award-winning competition choreographer for C and N Dance Studio (Charles County, MD) and Eastern Shore Dance Academy (Dorchester County, MD) Erinne shared her time and expertise at To The Pointe Dance Studio (Ridgely, MD) and Mid Shore Dance Academy (Easton, MD) where she taught a weekly schedule of Jazz, Tap, HipHop, Musical Theatre, Ballet, Dance Fusion and African to children elementary age to adults from 2014-2020. She looks forward to expanding her craft and a promising future of spreading her passion for the arts. She joined the board in 2021.

### **MARY ANN SCHINDLER**

Mary Ann Schindler was raised in Louisville and graduated *cum laude* with a BA from Trinity College in Washington, D.C. She first pursued a career in commercial art, editing, and writing. She moved to Alexandria, Virginia, in the late 70's, where she added specialties in art direction

and free-lance illustration and eventually went into business for herself serving both national and regional clients. She is married to Martin Hughes, one of the original tenants of the Torpedo Factory Art Center. Upon moving to the Eastern Shore in 1999, she retired from commercial work and now devotes herself to non-commercial art on a full time basis--pursuing painting, sculpture, mixed media, and installation. Her work has appeared in regional galleries and in the D.C. Metro area. A solo show, "Totems and Touchstones," was exhibited at the Academy Art Museum in 2014. Her work can be seen at Davis Art Center in Easton, Opal Gallery in Leonardtown, and Main Street Gallery in Cambridge. She has been involved in volunteer work for a number of local organizations, including Chesapeake Music, the Cinema Society, Academy Art Museum, Rehoboth Art League, Festival of Trees, and the Cambridge Main Street Arts District initiative. She is a member of the AAM Collectors' Society, a sponsor of the new AAM Artist-in-Residence program, co-chaired the ArtWorks for Freedom/Easton exhibit at the Waterfowl Building in 2017, and is on the boards of Artistic Insights Fund of the Mid-Shore Community Foundation and the Academy Art Museum. She joined the board in 2018.

### **KARLA WIELAND-CHERRY**

Karla was born and raised in Easton--a "TRUE" local! She graduated from Chesapeake College with an Associate's Degree in business and also Wor-Wic Community College with a degree in nursing. Currently she is employed as a realtor with Meredith Fine Properties. In 2017, she won the Mid Shore Board of Realtors Community Service Award. She is also mother to two fabulous teenage kids who keep her and husband David busy and broke! Karla thoroughly enjoys volunteering for Boy and Girl Scouts, Talbot County 4-H, Talbot County Fair Board, Festival of Trees, Waterfowl Festival, St. Marks Church, and Talbot Humane. She works to bring new music programs to the community through the Talbot County Fair every year. She is especially involved in the arts through the activities of their daughter Katelynn who is studying to be an opera singer and has been a recipient of Talbot Arts Council Summer Arts Scholarships. Karla has sat through many a voice lesson, piano lesson, play rehearsal and performance. She has a passion for keeping the arts alive in schools and the community. When she gets down time, you can find her somewhere with her beloved horses and cats on their farm in Trappe. She joined the board in 2019.

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### **President Emeritus**

#### **ANDREW H. ANDERSON**

Andy Anderson was born and raised in New York City. He completed a military career covering four decades, from enlistment in the State Guard at age 15 during World War II, to commissioning as a National Guard officer in 1951 and beginning active duty during the Korean Conflict, to being severely wounded in action as an infantry battalion commander during the Vietnam War, to retiring as a major general of the regular Army in 1986. His final assignments were as Deputy Inspector General of the U.S. Army, Deputy Commanding General of VII Corps in Europe, and Commanding General of the U.S. Army Test and Evaluation Command and Aberdeen Proving Ground, Maryland. He earned a BA degree from Park University in Missouri, an MS degree from George Washington University, and is a graduate of the U.S. Army War College. He is listed in *Who's Who in America* and has been awarded the George Washington Honor Medal for individual achievement by the Freedom Foundation of Valley Forge, Pennsylvania. In 2002, the Secretary of the Army named him Honorary Colonel of the 5th Infantry Regiment, and in 2004 he was elected to a two-year term as President of the 25th Infantry Division Association. He was a member of the Talbot County Council from 1990 to 1998, ending this period as its vice president, during which time he was also on the board of the Talbot County Arts Council. He was again member of the board of the Arts Council during 2001-2007, culminating this service as president. His third period of service on the Arts Council was from 2008-2014, during which he was chairman of the Mini-Grant Committee and the Nominating and Bylaws Committee. His other civic activities include service as a director of the Talbot County Paramedic Foundation, member of the Maryland Veterans Home Commission,



president emeritus of the Upper Eastern Shore Chapter of the Military Officers Association of America, photography chairman of the Waterfowl Festival, and election judge (Republican).

### **Executive Director**

#### **JOAN LEVY**

Joan Levy grew up in the suburbs of Baltimore, attended the University of Maryland and began her career working as a research assistant in psychiatric epidemiology at the Johns Hopkins School of Public Health. Shifting focus, she completed additional coursework in non-profit management, public relations, marketing and customer relationship management. Joan has been involved in health care communications and local non-profits for more than three decades.

While at Johns Hopkins Medicine, she held numerous positions including Director of Marketing Communications, Advertising and Special Projects, Director of Administration, Operations and Customer Relationship Management, earning a reputation for delivering high-quality programs while instituting cost-effective business practices. She launched Johns Hopkins *Healthy Living*, the first health and wellness consumer affinity initiative for Johns Hopkins Medicine targeting Baby Boomers. In 2014, she established JM Levy and Associates, offering a full range of business support and fundraising services to Maryland Mid-Shore community non-profits, as both a working professional and volunteer.

She and her husband decided to make the Eastern Shore their permanent home, rehabbing an 1883 waterman's cottage in the historic district of Oxford.

Joan has worked professionally in the community with Dock Street Foundation, as the project manager for the Ruth Star Rose Easton exhibition and the Talbot Historical Society as executive director. Her volunteer work includes the Oxford Museum oral history video program director/producer, the Johns Wesley Preservation Society board member, Frederick Douglass Honor Society, special event manager, Shore Explorations, Land/Water and Life project manager and Artworks for Freedom marketing/outreach coordinator.