

2020 Diversity in Arts Leadership Fellows



Akilah Hartgrove (she/her) is a recent graduate of Earlham College, where she earned a B.A. in Women, Gender & Sexuality Studies. She was born and raised in Washington, D.C, where she was exposed to the city's enriching arts community at an early age. One of her fondest childhood memories includes dates with her grandmother to see art in a museum or watch a performance at the Kennedy Center. Whether it was playing the role of the yellow brick road in her school's second grade production of *The Wiz* or creating a collection of ceramic figures illustrating the racialized sexism and misogyny experienced by Black women, creativity has always been part of her identity. While in high school and college, Akilah consistently aligned her passion for both

the visual and performing arts with a motivation for social justice advocacy and inclusivity. For several years she volunteered with a nonprofit that catered to individuals with learning disabilities and individuals on the autism spectrum. There she assisted with producing original musicals and served as a mentor to the program clients. Additionally, Akilah has interned at a nonprofit that provides assistance to women in need who are entering or reentering the workforce as well as served as a lead volunteer and service coordinator for an elementary afterschool. Akilah used her interest in the arts to help both the women and students find beauty in their daily lives and express their hopes and dreams for the future. While at Earlham College, Akilah was a Corella & Bertram F. Bonner Scholar, the events coordinator for her school's Black Student Union, and a member of one of the school's dance groups. She hopes to bring new ideas to the team and build strong relationships that go beyond the summer and help further her career.



Ashley Betances is a Music major studying Jazz Bass at Mercer County Community College, and will transfer to Drew University in the Fall of 2020. Aside from music, her interests include drawing, origami, and philanthropy. In her free time, Ashley volunteers with sound engineers to set up, run, and close events ranging from concerts to commencements. This summer Ashley is also working on a special project to help the homeless get a college education. Ashley runs a blog and podcast called "Depression Grove" in order to teach others about mental health in the hopes that she will inspire others to learn and do the same.

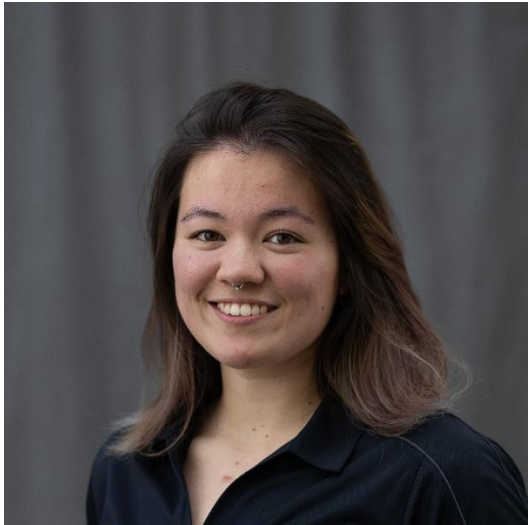


Faith Lynn Diccion (she/her) is a rising junior that dual majors in Theatre with concentrations in Musical Theatre & Acting/Directing and in Radio, Television & Film Production with a minor in dance at Rowan University. Hailing from Egg Harbor Township in South Jersey, Faith Lynn is very involved with the arts in her community. At Rowan, she is a part of various mainstage productions for the Department of Theatre and Dance, a general member of both Rowan Campus Players and Rowan Lab Theatre, and a core member of the department's Social Media Team. Faith Lynn also participates in cultural activities such as the Rowan University Philippine American Coalition and performs at many Filipino Cultural Festivals. For the University as a whole, she works as a Digital Content Contributor for Enrollment Marketing and

Management at Student Affairs, creating content to entice potential students. Faith Lynn is so honored and excited to participate in the DIAL Fellowship and cannot wait to share her love for the arts with everyone around her.



Faith Brianna Duncombe (she/her;they/them) is a rising junior at Rutgers University and is currently studying to receive her BFA in Acting. A native of Miami, FL, Faith is most passionate about cultivating creative liberation for disadvantaged youths of color. In high school, she organized an initiative for elementary students that would introduce them to the healing wonders of the arts. She also enjoys snuggling up with a book by the author Toni Morrison. Like Morrison, Faith wants her language to be seen as movement, inspiring generations after her own to speak with a purpose that will inevitably move others as well. Faith has a goal of one day opening an interdisciplinary school for the arts that uplifts communities of color.



Neaco Fox (she/her) is a recent graduate from Arizona State University (ASU) with a BA in Theatre (Design and Production) and minor in Business and has a passion for equity, diversity, and inclusion work. During her third year of college, Neaco created a racial affinity group on her campus and began her thesis on the lack of diversity in design and technical theatre. While at ASU, Neaco was the Vice President of the Dragon Boat sports team, Marketing and Recruitment Coordinator for the Barrett, the Honors College service organization Talent Match, the Marketing Director for the ASU USITT student chapter, the Lead Peer Mentor for professional and academic programming within the Vista Residential community, and a student technical director, sound designer, and live sound mixer in the theatre program.

She loves the arts and wishes to create everlasting change in the theatre industry by increasing diversity and participating in the educational growth of young artists as a mentor in her community. As an artist, she thrives in a collaborative setting and aims to create pieces that inspire others or spurs a conversation amongst viewers.



KeShawn Mellon (he/him) is a rising senior at Ohio University majoring in Acting with a certificate in Diversity Studies. KeShawn currently collaborates with high school faculty to teach students about racism, oppression, and diversity while performing in Ohio University's School of Theater productions, such as *She Kill Monsters*. KeShawn is passionate about using the performing arts, such as dance, spoken word, dance, etc, to begin addressing oppression in various communities. In the future he wants to work as an actor within a theater company while working with the company on community outreach through art programs.



Elena Sofía Sánchez (they/them) is a rising senior at Appalachian State University, pursuing a Bachelor of Arts in Art and Visual Culture, with a concentration in Art Management and a minor in Nonprofit Management. Currently, they serve as a board member for the Turchin Center of Visual Arts and a docent for the Western North Carolina Sculpture Center. Elena has most recently served as the Events Coordinator for the Peel Literature and Arts Magazine, to help promote on campus student involvement in the arts. With a particular interest in funding, Elena has previously served as the Donor Stewardship and Arts Management summer intern at Penland School of Craft. As a visual maker themselves, they are most passionate about working to carve out the

needed space for queer and trans people of color (QTPOC), by focusing on equity and access in traditionally marginalized spaces. Elena hopes to use their DIAL internship experience to advance this interest for their community and the arts world at large.



Cristal Seda Santiago (she/her) is a recent graduate of University of Puerto Rico Mayaguez (UPRM), where she earned a B.A. in Fine Arts. She's often involved with the artistic and cultural areas within the campus and student body. Cristal worked as a volunteer and intern in the Museum of Art of UPRM (MUSA) collaborating in different exhibitions and educational projects. She has also worked as a graphic artist in the two of the UPRM's investigation groups, Nano-Games who uses video games as an educational tool, and Start up for Burnflex a first aid product for burns. Cristal is someone who is passionate about the arts, its history, and culture, also enjoys every way of visual story telling. She dreams of one day be able

to promote the education of the arts and its cultural impact to communities and Puerto Rico, since she believes that education leads to appreciation. She hopes that with the DIAL Fellowship Program she'll develop the necessary leadership skills to be able to one day achieve this dream.



Charis Shin (she/her) is a rising sophomore double majoring in Economics and English at Rutgers University, in New Brunswick, NJ. She is a firm believer in education as a great equalizer, actively volunteering as a teacher's assistant through Rutgers' Big Buddy program, and as a tutor through the Petey Greene Foundation, which provides educational resources in correctional facilities across the Northeast. Born and raised in northern New Jersey, Charis is also passionate about writing short stories and poetry, with her creative works primarily centering around her experiences growing up in a Korean-American immigrant household. She is excited to be a part of DIAL and looks forward to exploring the intersection between education and the arts, as well as being mentored through her first undergraduate

internship experience.



Theresa-Xuan Thanh Bui (they/them), is pursuing a Bachelor in Fine Arts in Fiber, a minor in Art History, and a concentration in Curatorial Studies and Experimental Fashion from the Maryland Institute College of Art. A first-generation Vietnamese-American, they admire the beauty in making and equally prioritize the visceral love and empowerment in listening and valuing others. Thus, they turn to curation as a challenge to better critique themselves and their community. They aspire to tastefully dismantle the binding constructs of the art institution in order to establish space for the liminal, the radical, the exquisite, the unseen, the more.

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