

**Sarasota/Manatee DIAL Program
Mentors
Summer 2022**



Clara Reynardus de Villanueva

Clara was born in New York, grew up in Puerto Rico and graduated from Harvard with a degree in Psychology and Social Relations. She is a child of Cuban immigrants. She and her husband, Roberto, moved to Sarasota in 2014 and live with their two rescue pups, Bonham and Bowie.

Clara is a lifelong fine artist and has owned her own art business and supported herself through art for many years. She is employed full time by the University of South Florida where she is a fundraiser, aligning donors' philanthropic priorities with the needs of the university, ultimately in support of the students. This work allows her to mentor brilliant students and to learn about many fascinating disciplines and people.

Within the university and community, Clara is an advocate for underrepresented and underserved populations. DEI is her passion, which she lives and breathes. She serves on various elected and appointed positions which allow her to magnify the voices of those who don't have the privilege of the access.

She looks forward to helping her mentee along their journey, and they along her's, with kindness, compassion and zero judgment.



Yoleidy Rosario-Hernandez

Yoleidy Rosario-Hernandez is an Afro-Dominican & Tainx trans social justice educator, higher education administrator, diversity consultant, and performing artist who utilizes the pronouns Ze, Zir, Zirs.

Ze holds a Bachelor of Arts in Theater from Dickinson College and a Masters of Arts in Higher Education with a concentration in Student Affairs and Multicultural Education from Messiah College.

Ze's career includes leadership positions such as:

- Founder and President of Decolonized Futures and Radical Dreams at Mosaic Justice

- Associate Dean of Students and Director of the Center for Diversity and Inclusion at Ringling College of Art and Design
- Director of the LGBTQ and Intercultural Resources Center at Rutgers University Newark; and
- Director of the Women's and Gender Resource Center and Survivor Advocacy at Arizona State University.

Rosario's breath of work centers on implementing and facilitating intergenerational, intercultural, and intersectional programs and initiatives, training and leadership coaching, as well as long-term strategic planning that address important social justice issues through the interdisciplinary investigation of indigenous and diasporic cultures, histories, narratives, healing and the arts for building healthy organizational and educational environments.



Mara Torres González

Mara Torres González is an artist born and raised in San Juan, Puerto Rico, based in Sarasota, Florida.

Mara demonstrated skill in art and design since her early childhood. She started her trained artistic journey at the age of four at 'Liga de Arte de San Juan' in Puerto Rico where, as the youngest of the class, one of her paintings was selected for a group

exhibition. It was at "Liga de Arte de San Juan" where she met artist professor Betsy Padín, who became her mentor, being transcendental in her artistic formation. Mara would create and sell her creations through her childhood, she would create at home and sell at school. She was certified by PRIDA, Puerto Rican Institute for the Development of the Arts, and started selling her artwork at festivals and events. After graduating from high school in 1997 with an Art Honor Award, Mara continued to acquire formal art studies at the School of Plastic Arts and Design of Puerto Rico, 'Escuela de Artes Plásticas', where she studied with Artist Professors Rafael Rivera Rosa, Carlos Marcial, Luis Felipe López, Julio Suárez, Charles Juhasz, Elizam Escobar, amongst others. In 2001 Mara started her first business, designing and handcrafting event invitations, primarily with handmade paper. She graduated in 2004 from the School of Plastic Arts and Design of Puerto Rico with a bachelor's degree in Fine Arts and Painting.

A few years later she evolved and transitioned from the visual arts and the event invitation business, into a design firm. Since then, she has lived through art in various ways, as an artist and as an event designer. Some highlights of her event designer career include a partnership in 2017 with celebrity event designer Preston Bailey. In this event they received people from 12 countries including Malaysia, Nigeria, Sri Lanka, UK, Peru, Mexico, Bolivia, Uruguay, Honduras, Panama, Ecuador and USA. Mara also designed the wedding of NBA player from Dallas Mavericks, José Juan Barea with Miss Universe Puerto Rico Viviana Ortiz. After a very successful 18+ year career as an event and floral designer, Mara transitioned back to her roots, the visual arts. In 2020 she

opened an Art Studio + Gallery in Sarasota, Florida. At the studio there are different workshop opportunities including acrylic pour, abstract art, encaustic, and others. She strongly believes in the power of community, opening the doors to contribute with other artists in the area. At the gallery she showcases her work, as well as the work of other modern contemporary artists.



JD Hardy

JD Hardy is a Third Culture Kid, who grew up in southeast Asia with parents from a small beach town in northern Florida. She attended ten schools across three countries before the age of 18. In the summer of her junior year of high school, a dump truck collided with the old Cutlass that she and two others were riding in. The car crash killed her boyfriend, Brian, and JD's body was left badly

broken.

Both the dislocation she experienced as a child and trauma from the wreck triggered the effects of dissociative amnesia. Her artwork grounds itself in this groundless state and explores themes of lost memory and alienation, mirroring the dissociative traits that mark our contemporary society.

Recovering a sense of self has been her driving force. She began a non-profit for the arts in her community of Omaha, NE after graduating with her BFA from the University of Nebraska. Through this, a community that she was once displaced within in, became her own. There, she also founded two gallery spaces that were inclusive incubators for emerging artists, musicians, poets, and makers. Planting seeds of belonging for herself and for others.

In 2021, JD graduated from the MFA program at the University of South Florida. While in Tampa she saw her skills in video translate to the classroom as an instructor of record in Beginning Video classes while also assigned to maintain the two galleries associated with the School of Art and Art History.

JD continues to develop her love of art installation on the preparation team at the John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art in Sarasota, FL. Specializing in A/V installation she has seen her love of tech become an asset within the Collections Department and been growing in her understanding of art handling across all mediums.



Dr. Jay Boda

Dr. Jay Boda is The Ringling's Associate Director of Academic Affairs and Collections. He oversees the Programs Team which include the Archives, Collections, Education, and Library departments. As a Florida State University faculty member, he also supervises the Ringling's higher education academic programs and teaches in-residence interns enrolled in Florida State University's (FSU) Museums and Cultural Heritage Studies (MCHS) and Museum Education and Visitor-centered Curation (EC) programs. A two-time Samuel H. Kress Foundation Scholar, Jay's research areas include performance-based pedagogies in museums, transmedia storytelling, and critical thinking. He graduated with his Ph.D. from FSU's EC program (2020) and holds an MFA in screenwriting from FSU's Film School (2015). Jay started his museum career as a volunteer docent at the Salvador Dali Museum (2011) and established the Director of Education and Interpretation role at the Imagine Museum (2018), both in St. Petersburg, Florida. Before his museum career, Jay honorably retired from the U.S. Air Force as a Master Sergeant (1989-2010).