

Creative Enterprises and Downtown Prosperity Workshop

February 25, 2016

Speaker Biographies

The Arts at Work: Presented by Anne Katz

Anne is Executive Director of Arts Wisconsin, Wisconsin's non-profit statewide community arts action, service, and development organization. Ms. Katz received the 2010 Alene Valkanas State Arts Advocacy Award from Americans for the Arts in 2010, and has been honored by Wisconsin Women Magazine in March 2010 and by Madison Magazine in June 2004 for her community cultural development work. She serves on the boards of the Wisconsin Public Radio Association, Wisconsin Nonprofits Association and Wisconsin Downtown Action Council. She is chair of the City of Madison's Cultural Plan Steering Committee, and was co-chair of the Madison Metropolitan School District's Arts Task Force in 2008. She has been featured at the Maine Community Arts Conference and the Tennessee Arts Commission's "Talk to Me" Conference, as well as numerous arts, creative economy, education, economic development and civic conferences in Wisconsin.

Evaluating and Supporting Creative Businesses: Presented by Harriet Parker

Harriet Parker is Manager of the Illinois Small Business Development Center at Waubensee Community College. Ms. Parker has over 20 years of experience managing successful start-up businesses, where she played a key role designing and marketing software products that are in use nationwide today. In addition to her role with the Illinois SBDC, she also is co-owner of HubTack, Inc. a web-based business serving land surveyors and engineers. Ms. Parker actively supports the local business community through her involvement on numerous boards and committees.

Portage Arts Lofts: Presented by Cyd Smillie and Kelli Wefenstette

Cyd Smillie is the Founder, Director, and Chief Artist of Arts Alive Chicago, a community-based 501(c)3 arts non-profit that has executed 500+ projects since 2011. A former Art Director for film and television in Los Angeles, she utilizes 30+ years of design experience to cultivate vibrant place making focused, pedestrian centered commercial centers by engaging local artists, businesses, community organizations, elected officials, and creative professionals to stimulate the economic vitality of Chicago's northwest side.

Kelli Wefenstette is a Community Organizer and Educator who engages neighborhood revitalization through the cultivation and promotion of arts, urban agriculture, and economic development. She is trained in Asset Based Community Development, and utilizes 10+ years of experience in special event programming. She serves as the Executive Director of Six Corners Association in the Portage Park neighborhood of Chicago.

Developing a Creative Economy: Presented by Pam Schallhorn

Pam Schallhorn is a Community and Economic Development Educator for the University of Illinois Extension (UIE) and holds a Master's degree in Political Studies. In 2010, she developed a course specifically designed for the creative entrepreneur, *Creating the Creative Business* which she has taught in Rockford and Chicago. She has assisted dozens of creative enterprises to start-up or expand, and

played an integral part in developing a creative economy in downtown Rockford, IL. Pam has been a guest speaker at several conferences on the impact of creative entrepreneurs on community, placemaking and poverty, and she is co-author of the UIE Building Entrepreneurial Communities blog.

It's More Than Fine Arts Panel Discussion

Wendy Tritt, owner Trittenhaus Design-Wendy has over 25 years of design experience. She has built a solid reputation by paying close attention to each client's specific needs and delivering unique, creative, well-produced materials. Prior to starting her own design studio, she was Director of Publications at the Center for Governmental Studies at NIU. Wendy has also served as President of the Sycamore Chamber Board of Directors, President of the Midwest Museum of Natural History Board of Directors, President of the Sycamore CUSD #427 Citizen's Advisory Committee and as a board member of the Sycamore Education Foundation.

Lisa Sharp, owner Sharp Architects-Lisa is the founder and principal of Sharp Architects, Inc. She opened the office in 2008 to bring client-oriented, environmentally responsible, quality architectural design to the local community of DeKalb, IL as well as the greater Chicago metropolitan area. While many architects were shuttering office windows and mothballing projects as the nation's economy began to turn south, Lisa broke rank with her peers and started her own business. A licensed Architect in the state of Illinois since 1996, she brings with her over 24 years of experience in the industry, and a wealth of knowledge about a great variety of project types.

Rachel Polly, owner of Urban Grace-Urban Grace is a retail shop in downtown DeKalb that features repurposed and painted home furnishing. In addition to creating items herself, Rachel also offers classes for the public.

Cohen Barnes, President and CEO of Sundog IT- Sundog was founded in 1989 and is currently located at 444 East Hillcrest Drive Suite 350, DeKalb, Illinois. Sundog is a full service IT Company focusing on small to medium organizations helping them excel through the simple and innovative use of proven technologies. Sundog is a Dell Preferred Partner, a Microsoft Certified Partner and Microsoft Small Business Specialist. Having these specializations, Sundog can approach a client's technology needs holistically implementing the right solution the first time.