

Equity in Arts Funding Webinar

Speaker Bios



Atlanta Regional Commission

December 15, 2020 – 1-3PM

Atiba Mbiwan

Executive Director, Zeist Family Foundation

In October 2006, Atiba Mbiwan joined the staff of The Zeist Foundation, a family foundation based in Atlanta, as the Associate Director to fortify their traditional grantmaking in the areas of Education, Arts & Culture and Health & Human Services, and to support the Foundation's "place-based philanthropy" in the Edgewood neighborhood of Atlanta, which began in 1994 with a foundation investment in a school based pediatric clinic model and has since evolved into a multifaceted education, health, and affordable housing initiative.

After 13 years of service as Associate Director, Atiba was promoted to Executive Director in spring 2020, just in time to lead the Foundation's response to the COVID-19 Pandemic and complete the 25th Anniversary Place Based Philanthropy in Atlanta report.

Prior to joining The Zeist Foundation, Atiba served as the Program Officer responsible for Education and Fostering Understanding grantmaking at the Arthur M. Blank Family Foundation from 2001-2005. In this capacity, he managed a portfolio of 125 nonprofits based in Boston, New York City, Los Angeles, Phoenix, coastal South Carolina, and the state of Georgia.

Before joining the philanthropic world, Atiba worked in the nonprofit field with a range of organizations that touched on youth development - serving homeless families across Georgia, supporting young social entrepreneurs in the southeast region, and building quality after school programs around Atlanta. He was instrumental in creating and sustaining AmeriCorps Programs in Georgia throughout the 1990s and has been a consultant with the Corporation for National and Community Service, Southern Community Partners and Echoing Green Foundation.

In addition to beginning his career as a high school Math teacher in the 1980s and eventually serving as a middle school Math teacher in Rhode Island, Atiba has been involved with public school innovation models, ranging from site based management at a Rhode Island school to charter schools in Georgia. During his tenure as a high school teacher-counselor, Atiba was chosen to be a National Endowment of the Humanities Summer Fellow at the City University of New York Graduate Center.

For over two decades, Atiba has served as Coach & Coordinator of the BRAG (Bike Ride Across Georgia) Dream Team and he currently serves on the governing board of Community Farmers Markets and Park Pride. Additionally, Atiba serves on the Advisory Board of the Atlanta Bicycle Coalition, Stewards of the Georgia Coast, the Penn Center (St. Helena Island, SC) and the East Coast Greenway Alliance. In a professional capacity, Atiba has served on the Steering Committee for the Georgia Grantmakers Alliance and as the arts funder representative on Governor Nathan Deal's Arts Learning Task Force.

Atiba is married to Tiffany Friesen and they are parents of three adult children (graduates of Spelman & Georgia Tech, University of Georgia, Cornell University and Syracuse University), and many grandchildren. He earned his B.A. in Economics & Urban Studies at Brown University ('82) and he spent a semester at the University of Lagos in Nigeria (Fall 1980).

Jamil Jude

Artistic Director, Kenny Leon's True Color Theatre Company

Jamil is a highly accomplished director, producer, playwright and dramaturg focusing on bringing socially relevant art to the community. Jamil is the Co-Founder of The New Griots Festival, which is dedicated to celebrating, advocating, and advancing the careers of emerging Black artists in the greater Minneapolis-St. Paul metro area in Minnesota. Prior to joining the staff at True Colors, Jamil served as the Artistic Programming Associate at Park Square Theatre in St. Paul, Minnesota.

Lauren Amos

President, Wish Foundation

Lauren A. Amos is an entrepreneur, philanthropist, and passionate art collector. She is the founder of Wish, a retail experience, located in Little Five Points, providing fashion offerings from street culture to high fashion for Atlanta's clientele. A graduate of the Atlanta College of Art, Lauren is the President of the Wish Foundation, and serves as a trustee of the Daniel P. Amos and SOMA Foundations. She supports several nonprofit organizations dedicated to art and is a member of the Board of Directors of The High Museum of Art. In addition, Lauren supports nonprofit organizations focused on the needs of women and children, and civil and human rights.

Ramatu Afegbua-Sabbatt

Founder & Executive/Artistic Director, Manga African Dance

Ramatu Afegbua-Sabbatt, is a native of Idah in Kogi State, Nigeria, and a descendant of the Okpella tribe's Royal Family of Afegbua. Ramatu got her start in the fine arts at an early age when she began acting from age 14 where she appeared in state television programs in Nigeria. The particular famous pieces she played in are *Wedlock of the Gods*, a famous play by Zulu Sofola, and *The Gods Are Not to Blame* by Ola Rotimi.

Ms. Afegbua-Sabbatt immigrated to the United States in 1988 to Atlanta, Georgia. As a University graduate with a degree in Business administration, a major in Marketing, who served in the mandatory under-graduate program in Nigeria as a high school teacher through the national youth service council (NYSC) for a year. She also holds a Diploma in Insurance and a Grade 11 Teachers Certificate in Education. Ms. Afegbua-Sabbatt graduated from Saint Leo University, Florida with a master's degree in Business Administration in 2012. Since 1988, she has influenced authenticity in African dance by performing with the leading cultural dance companies in metro Atlanta (Extensions of Africa, African Dance Connections, Uhuru Dancers, Barefoot Ballet Many, Giwayen Mata and Ballethnic Dance Company's signature production, *Leopard's Tale*). Ms. Afegbua-Sabbatt co-founded Barefoot Ballet Many. As the founder of Giwayen Mata (translated from Hausa as "Elephant Leaders of the Women"), an all-female percussion ensemble, she broadened artistic expression for female artists by challenging the traditional practice of exclusively restricting drumming to male musicians.

Ms. Afegbua-Sabbatt is listed on Fulton County's School Arts Program, Georgia Council for the Arts' residency Artists Directory, and former Young Audiences/Woodruff Arts Center. Mrs. Afegbua-Sabbatt is in her 17th year as an instructor in Atlanta Ballet's Dance Education Program at Fulton County's West End Performing Arts Program.

Susan Grant

Board Chair, Community Foundation for Greater Atlanta

Susan is deeply engaged as a community activist, as a non-profit Board leader, as an anti-racist practitioner, and as a mentor coach.

Currently, Susan serves as Board Chair of The Community Foundation for Greater Atlanta; as a Board member and immediate past Board Chair of Heifer International, a nonprofit, humanitarian organization dedicated to ending hunger and poverty; as Vice Chairperson of the Board of Trustees of Morehouse School of Medicine; and as immediate past Chair of Agnes Scott College's Board of Visitors. She volunteers with Leadership Atlanta, and, when there isn't a pandemic, serves as a supervisor at the Zaban Paradies Center for homeless couples.

Susan graduated from the corporate world after 30 years at CNN where she led the Company's digital and affiliate businesses. During her tenure, CNN Digital became the Internet's leading news destination globally across myriad online and mobile platforms. Her portfolio of businesses included CNN Digital, CNNMoney.com, CNN Newsource Sales, CNN ImageSource, the CNN Library, CNN Student News and CNN Business Operations. Under Grant's leadership, CNN's affiliate businesses built exceptional, sustainable collaborations with their broadcast, radio and licensing partners. She served as CNN's representative on the Board of Internet Broadcasting System from 2005 through its sale to Nexstar in 2014.

For her leadership in off-air management, the Radio and Television News Directors Foundation honored her with its First Amendment Service Award in 2008. In 2013, Grant received Womenetics' POW! Award, celebrating her for stirring the status quo with excellence in leadership, and she received New Trier High School's 2013 Alumni Achievement Award, joining her high school's "Hall of Honor", and achieved her goal of making fellow honoree Scott Turow laugh.

Susan is a graduate of Vassar College and happily resides in Atlanta with her partner, Nory LeBrun. She is an exceptional aunt to three nieces and many dogs.

Ash Nash

Founder/CEO, Power Haus Creative

Ash is more than just the founder and CEO of Power Haus Creative, she is a community leader who mentors local artists, and helps them to develop sustainable careers. She has immersed herself in the local arts economy, and empowers visual artists to utilize their influence for change in underserved communities, and to build capital for the creative class.

Recognized for her impassioned work ethic, Ash has led several highly successful campaigns for a multitude of global brands such as Papa John's, Coca-Cola, and Nike. She gained international attention

in 2019 for her strategic work coordinating #Kaeperbowl, a public art/activism initiative centered around muralist Fabian Williams and former NFL player Colin Kaepernick.

Her work has been recognized by *Creative Loafing*, and she has been featured in *Visionary Artistry Magazine*, *The Atlanta Podcast*, and the *Our Voices. Our Lives.* docu-series. In her partnership with Remerge Community Museum, Ash serves as a Creative Community & Cultural Strategist. Ash is also an active board member for MINT Art Gallery, and W.A.G.E Certified Gallery in Historic Southwest Atlanta.

In her role as principal of Power Haus Creative, Ash serves as a liaison and accountability partner to both visual artists and the brands that hire them.

Heather Infantry

Executive Director, Generator

Heather Infantry is the Executive Director of Generator whose mission brings people together to generate ideas that shape the future of cities. She also serves as the Arts & Culture Champion for the TransFormation Alliance, a collective advancing equitable transit-oriented development as a pathway to Black prosperity. Throughout her career Heather has fostered an ongoing curiosity for people, places and ideas at the intersection of culture and equity. In May, Heather publicly called out the Community Foundation for Greater Atlanta for excluding Black arts organizations in COVID relief funding resulting in an unprecedented contribution of nearly \$1.1M to 23 Black organizations. Heather holds a B.A. in Theater from Georgia State University and an MBA in Nonprofit Management from Trinity University.

Josh Phillipson

Principal for Arts, Culture, and Creative Placemaking, Atlanta Regional Commission

Josh Phillipson is the Principal for Arts, Culture and Creative Placemaking at the Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC). In this role, he manages the Arts Leaders of Metro Atlanta leadership development program, the ARC's cultural forums, and leads the implementation of the ARC's Arts, Culture, and Creative Placemaking strategic plan. Through the plan, the ARC seeks to encourage a metro Atlanta that values arts and culture as essential for building a thriving, inclusive, and economically healthy region, and recognizes the transformative role of art in addressing broader civic issues.

Prior to the ARC, Josh worked at the Community Foundation for Greater Atlanta on the Foundation's Metro Atlanta Arts Fund, which provided grants and capacity-building assistance to metro Atlanta's small and mid-sized arts organizations. In addition, he managed the Foundation's Grants to Green program providing grants to improve the water and energy efficiency of nonprofit's buildings and served as a liaison for philanthropic work throughout the 23-county region.

Josh has a theater degree from Emory University and has since served as the board chair for the Theater Emory board. He was a Southeastern Council of Foundations Hull Fellow and is an Arts Leaders of Metro Atlanta graduate. He is currently on the board of Dad's Garage Theatre Company and is the chair of MARTA's Artbound advisory committee.