

Business Council for the Arts Announces the 36th Class of the Leadership Arts Institute

Dallas, TX — August 27, 2025 — The Business Council for the Arts (BCA) is proud to announce the 36th class of the Leadership Arts Institute (LAI), the region's premier program dedicated to preparing professionals for nonprofit board service. The LAI Class of 2026 brings together 55 accomplished leaders from industries including finance, law, technology, healthcare, architecture, education, real estate, nonprofit, and the creative sector.

The Presenting Sponsor of the LAI Class of 2026 is The Jane Nelson Institute for Women's Leadership at Texas Woman's University, and the Dallas Business Journal joins as Media Partner.

Since its founding in 1989, the Leadership Arts Institute has equipped professionals with the tools to become effective board members while deepening their understanding of the challenges and opportunities facing cultural institutions in North Texas. What makes LAI unique is its master class format, which offers participants the rare opportunity to learn directly from many of the region's most accomplished business and philanthropic leaders. In addition to lectures and behind-the-scenes cultural experiences, participants engage in panel discussions with nonprofit and board leaders across disciplines such as visual art, dance, music, theatre, and film. These sessions explore real-world case studies that show how philanthropy not only stems from personal passion but can also be a catalyst for business growth and success.

The program also provides clear direction on nonprofit board responsibilities, including governance, fundraising and development, and financial stewardship. This blend of inspiration and practical training ensures that graduates are ready to make an immediate and lasting impact in the cultural sector.

"Each year's class reflects the extraordinary range of talent in our business community, and this year is no exception," said Jill VanGorden, BCA COO and Head of Programs. "The Class of 2026 includes professionals from varied industries. What unites them is a shared belief that the arts are not a luxury but a necessity that is essential to innovation, economic vitality, and community connection."

With more than 1,500 alumni, Leadership Arts Institute graduates have gone on to serve on the boards of over 170 nonprofit organizations locally, nationally, and internationally. Alumni continue to influence the cultural landscape of North Texas by championing accessibility, creativity, and cross-sector collaboration.

"The arts are not only an economic driver in North Texas, they are also the heartbeat of our communities," said Ahava Silkey-Jones, Vice Provost of the Dallas College School of Creative Arts, Entertainment, and Design, and recipient of the 2025 Obelisk Award for Outstanding Leadership Arts Alumnus, to be presented this November. "This year's LAI class represents

the next generation of cultural leadership. These 55 individuals are prepared to invest their skills, creativity, and business acumen into strengthening the arts, ensuring that North Texas remains one of the most dynamic cultural regions in the country.”

“Business involvement in the arts through board service and patronage is more important than ever,” said Nancy A. Nasher, Founder’s Chair of Business Council for the Arts. “The Leadership Arts Institute plays a vital role in preparing leaders who will sustain and expand the arts in North Texas for generations to come.”

“The LAI program represents the best of what BCA stands for; connecting business and the arts to build stronger, more vibrant communities,” said Stacie Adams, CEO of Business Council for the Arts. “We are honored to welcome this extraordinary group of leaders who will carry forward our mission of advancing the arts as an essential part of life and business in North Texas.”

Leadership Arts Institute Class of 2026:

Name	Company
Noor Adatia	Dallas Business Journal
Mallory Adams	HALL Group
Ruben Aguirre	Jones Day
Amanda Austin	Southern Methodist University
Victoria Bahrami	Vinson & Elkins
Katie Barry	Saks Global
Nichole Belford	Addison Performing Arts Centre
Kristin Blackmar	The Beck Group
Sabina Bramlett	Jackson Walker LLP
Amanda Brown	Fisher Phillips
Emily Burroughs	BGSF
Joanna Clarke	Community Partners of Dallas
Margaret Cochell	Perkins&Will
Andy Colston	TRG
Lindsey Croley	NorthPark Center
Jennifer Del Barto	Capco
Jose Dimas	Corgan
Ann Fields	KERA
Kahla Flynn	CONNECTIVE Agency
Megan Fogarty Germain	Northern Trust
Igor Geyfman	Pariveda Solutions
Daniella Giglio	Ella Cole Group
Preston Gilpatrick	Texas Christian University
Will Groves	Comerica
Chinweolu Greer	University of Texas at Dallas
Isabelle Haemisegger	NorthPark Center
Sarah Haemisegger	NorthPark Center
Timberly Hathorn	SMU Meadows School of the Arts
Trysten Henderson	Holland & Knight LLP
Janel Hunt	BGSF
Paul Jacks	Oncor



Katie Jarman-Chang
Neha Kalantri
Bonnie Karamalegos
Jared Leidner
Daniel Leventhal
Lindsay Loy
Samuel Mallick
Jennifer McCoy
David Moya
Lindsay Murphy
Paulina Nenclares
Lori O'Briant
Zac Pritchett
Mari Ramirez
Samantha Rea
Roxanne Reichl
Mario Saucedo III
William Shea
Janet Sherlip
Dawn Spalding
Dwight Spencer Jr.
Stacey Steen
Imani Thomas
Beena Varnan

IQ-EQ
Pariveda Solutions
J.P. Morgan Private Bank
Harold Leidner Company
Baker Botts LLP
Frisco Heritage Museum
Haynes and Boone LLP
Troutman Pepper Locke LLP
Dallas College
Holland & Knight LLP
Lynn Pinker Hurst & Schwegmann LLP
Corgan
TRG
Dallas Symphony Orchestra
Lockton
Frost Bank
Texas Folklife
Second Chance Players
JKS by Design
North Dallas Chamber of Commerce
For the Love of Creatives
Michaels
Meow Wolf
Garland Cultural Arts Commission

About Business Council for the Arts

Since its founding in 1988 by real estate developer and philanthropist Raymond D. Nasher as a Dallas Citizens Council initiative to foster parallel growth in North Texas's cultural and business sectors, the Business Council for the Arts (BCA) has thrived under visionary leadership. In 2007, Nasher's daughter, Nancy A. Nasher, succeeded him as Founder's Chair, bringing her own passion and dedication to the organization's mission. Today, Founder's Chair Nancy A. Nasher and Board Chair Joel Austin guide a 36-member board and a dedicated staff led by BCA CEO Stacie Adams.

Through its membership of more than 150 leading businesses and organizations, BCA champions the arts in workplaces, classrooms, and communities across the region. BCA's programming spans creative workforce development, community engagement, and leadership cultivation. Signature initiatives include On My Own Time™, an annual art competition that spotlights employees' visual and literary talents, and ArtWorks, a multifaceted initiative that brings professional, rotating art installations to both corporate and public spaces. ArtWorks enhances employee wellness, fosters team building and creativity, cultivates community, and transforms vacant spaces into vibrant, welcoming destinations that reflect the heart of North Texas. Committee-led series—Arts & Health, Arts & Real Estate, and Arts & Technology—explore how the arts drive innovation, well-being, and community revitalization, while the Leadership Arts Institute prepares emerging and established professionals to serve as effective arts advocates and nonprofit board members.

For more information or to join, visit www.ntbca.org.