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News Bulletin

2026 Tennessee Arts Academy Summer Institute

For Immediate Release

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Local Educator Chosen To Attend The Tennessee Arts Academy

_____(Your Name), a _____(teacher or administrator) at _____ School, has been selected to attend the 2026 Tennessee Arts Academy Summer Institute, the nation's premier professional development program for arts education. The TAA Summer Institute will officially open on July 12, 2026. More than 325 K-12 public and private school teachers from across the state have been chosen to attend the weeklong session. Hosted on the campus of Middle Tennessee State University in Murfreesboro, Tennessee, TAA will be celebrating 40 years of service to arts educators. This year the TAA Summer Institute's nationally and internationally renowned instructors come from across the United States. They will teach a diverse range of classes in music, visual art, theatre and dance, as well as special classes in arts leadership and administration. The Summer Institute's advanced curriculum, cutting-edge methodology and unique philosophical perspective maximize participants' learning experiences.

There will be many special moments throughout the week, starting with TAA's opening performance on July 12th by Young Concert Artists on Tour, including cellist, James Baik; saxophonist, Estel Vivó Casanovas; and pianist Zhu Wang. On Wednesday evening, July 15th, during Bravo – The TAA Awards Banquet and Performance, awards will be presented to Marc Shaiman (TAA Distinguished Service Award), Talmage Watts & Debbie Greenspan (TAA Lorin Hollander Award), and to the 2026 TAA Arts Rich Schools of the Year (Idlewild Elementary School, Chattanooga High Center for Creative Arts - Middle School, and Bearden High School). Following the awards, Betsy Wolfe, fresh off her starring role in Broadway's *Death Becomes Her*, will perform under the musical direction of Steven Jamail. Reservations and ticket information may be obtained by visiting the TAA website (www.tnartsacademy.org) or by contacting TAA at 615-988-6250 or at taa@tnartsacademy.org.

Other highlights include daily plenary sessions starting on Monday, when jazz pianist, educator, and composer Eli Yamin addresses TAA participants. Tuesday's session features a presentation by American visual artist Joyce J. Scott. On Wednesday, award-winning lyricist, composer, orchestrator, and performer Marc Shaiman will speak, followed by a Thursday session featuring Besty Wolfe. TAA will showcase four on-campus art exhibitions including *My View: Midwest Memories* by Gregory Steele in the MTSU Todd Art Gallery in the Andrew L. Todd Hall. Three additional art exhibitions will be held in the MTSU Andrew L. Todd Hall, First Floor Galleries. These exhibits include *The Best of the Best Tennessee Student Art Exhibition*, *Connections: The Tennessee Art Education Association Teacher Exhibition*, and *STARS: State of Tennessee Art Review and Showcase Exhibition*. The week will also include daily performances presented by New Ballet Ensemble (*Peter and the Wolf*), The 129th Army Band of the Tennessee Army National Guard (*Instrumental Music Concert*), and Nashville Children's Theatre (*Seussical the Musical*). On Thursday, TAA will sponsor an Arts Expo, Vendor Fair, and Artist Market, featuring booths hosted by arts-related businesses and organizations, along with artwork, crafts, and jewelry items for sale, created by TAA participants and professional artists. At Friday's Finale Luncheon, the Joe W. Giles Lifetime Achievement Award will be presented to long time music educator Susan Ramsay; and the 2026 TAA Teacher Hero Awards will be presented to Melanie Anderson, Lauren Baker, Russell Bennett, Carrie Brooks, Nathan Dumser, Johnathan Elliott, Tomica Lake, Elizabeth McClain, Allen Moody, Rosa Palacios, Naomi Pugh, and Curtis Southerland. The Summer Institute concludes with a performance by the Tennessee Arts Academy Chorale, under the direction of Thomas J. Standish-Rinn.

Teachers and administrators trained at the TAA Summer Institute impact more than 200,000 Tennessee students (approximately 20% of the state's student population) when they return to their schools and districts in the fall. With renewed energy and knowledge, educators trained through TAA programs are better equipped and motivated to raise achievement standards and affect positive and lasting change for students, providing them with the necessary skills to become creative and productive members of our workforce and society. Several TAA Summer Institute events are free and open to the public. Visit www.tnartsacademy.org or call 615-988-6250 for more information.

Tennessee Arts Academy

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