

NEWS RELEASE

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J. Paul Getty Museum showcases SCCOE for its work in arts integration

SAN JOSE, CA – The J. Paul Getty Museum invited representatives from the Santa Clara County Office of Education’s STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics) team to share their new approach to professional development as one of six case studies during “[Arts Integration+California: A Convening](#)” this week.



Jennifer Rosales and Nadine Rambeau from the CalArts Community Arts Partnership take a picture with Esther Tokihiro, Director of the SCCOE STEAM Program, Jeff Schmidt, SCCOE’s Career Technical Education Coordinator, and Kristy Esparza, former Manager of Education Programs at the Smithsonian’s Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden at the J. Paul Getty Museum.

“We were honored to be recognized for our work in Northern California by the Getty Center,” STEAM Director Esther Tokihiro said.

During the two-day summit, approximately 75 arts integration stakeholders from academia, advocacy, cultural institutions, education, journalism, philanthropy, and policy gathered for an exploration of arts integration across California.

On Monday, Tokihiro alongside Jeff Schmidt, SCCOE’s Career Technical Education Coordinator, and Kristy Esparza, former Manager of Education Programs at the Smithsonian’s Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, presented “Connecting Through Digital Storytelling: Innovative Professional Development Practices for the 21st Century.” The talk focused on a yearlong “[Digital Storytelling Certificate](#)” opportunity launched in 2015 through a partnership with the SCCOE and the Smithsonian Institution.

“The emphasis was on arts integration and how we provide professional development that results in effective classroom practices,” Tokihiro said of the presentation. “The model itself has proven to provide the support that teachers are looking for, a professional learning community amongst themselves, and it’s also given way to innovative practices and interdisciplinary integration with the arts.”

The cross-national partnership bridges the arts with STEM subjects to create authentic learning experiences modeled by industry partners. During the program, approximately 30 teachers work toward earning four different badges through modules including photojournalism, documentary, graphic novel, and animation. Each badge includes 12 hours of professional development and field application. In earning the animation badge, for example, participants are asked to create an animated story for start to finish using a multi-plane camera setup.

“What makes our certificate model unique is the fact that it’s anchored by industry professionals,” Tokihiro added. She noted the Walt Disney Family Museum is a partner for the animation badge while KQED pairs with the documentary badge, and San José State University and Slave Labor Graphics with the graphic novel badge. This year, the photojournalism badge will be expanded to include The Pulitzer Center and Palo Alto High School.

Schmidt said the event inspired conversation about equity and access to arts education and the importance of practicing integration at all levels, from integrating art into academic content areas or vice versa.

“You can’t forget there’s two sides to the coin,” he said. “We all agree that any level of arts integration is very powerful. And to really engage students, to make content more relevant in science, history, English language learning, mathematics, you can make a personalized connection when doing it through the arts.”

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