

PRESS RELEASE:

June 11, 2013

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**Frances Phillips of the Walter and Elise Haas Fund,
Malissa Shriver of the Western States Arts Federation,
Shirin Vakharia of the Marin Community Foundation
and Kiff Gallagher of MusicianCorps,
join the Policy Council of California Alliance for Arts Education**

June 11, 2013 (Los Angeles, CA) – Mark Slavkin, Board Chair of the California Alliance for Arts Education, announced today that Frances Phillips of the Walter and Elise Haas Fund, Malissa Shriver of the Western States Arts Federation and Shirin Vakharia of the Marin Community Foundation and Kiff Gallagher of MusicianCorps have joined the Alliance's Policy Council.

"We are delighted to have the unique perspectives of these seasoned leaders," said Mark Slavkin. "The Alliance created the Policy Council to build a broader and stronger coalition of arts education leaders. These new members are helping us realize that goal."

Policy Council brings together a broad cross section of stakeholders from key education, business, arts and parent organizations. Engaging a broad cross section of stakeholders enables the Alliance to focus on the most pressing issues and concerns facing arts education at the state and local levels. Since its formation in 2010, it has grown to close to forty member organizations. Together this group sets the Vision Framework and annual Strategic Priorities for the organization and communicates a powerful, unified message to policymakers.

The California Alliance for Arts Education is the leading statewide arts education advocacy organization dedicated to maintaining and enhancing arts education in our schools. The mission of the California Alliance for Arts Education is to promote, support, and advocate for visual and performing arts education for preschool through post-secondary students in California schools. www.ArtsEd411.org

Frances Phillips is the Program Director for the Arts and the Creative Work Fund at the Walter and Elise Haas Fund in San Francisco, which supports new works by Bay Area artists. The Walter and Elise Haas Fund has long supported arts education, primarily through grants to nonprofit organizations working in San Francisco and Alameda County public schools. A writer, she teaches grant writing and creative writing at San Francisco State University. She is the author of three small press books of poetry from Kelsey Street Press and Hanging Loose Press.

Malissa Shriver serves on the Board of Trustees of the Western States Arts Federation, a regional nonprofit arts service organization that encourages the creative development and preservation of the arts through a national network of clients and alliances by providing innovative programming, technology, advocacy, grant making and other services. Shriver served on the California Arts Council from 2005 until 2013, and acted as Chair during her latter four year term during which time she was instrumental in the formation of CREATE California, which teams innovative thinkers from multiple sectors of California's creative economy, public and private, to rethink and create an educational environment for all California students that features arts education as a central part of the solution to the crisis in our schools. Shriver is a professional painter and writer, and owner of Feruzzi Fine Arts, which specializes in creating old master technique paintings on wood panel.

Shirin Vakharia has been the program director for arts, social justice and interfaith understanding at the Marin Community Foundation since 2011. The Foundation makes grants that support a wide range of issues within Marin County, elsewhere in the U.S., and around the world. Prior to joining the Marin Community Foundation, she managed public health programs for Napa County Health and Human Services Agency in Napa, Ca. for eleven years. Vakharia is also a member of the California Alliance Board. She is passionate about equity and arts funding, valuing the diversity of artistic traditions, and the power of the arts to catalyze social change.

Kiff Gallagher is the CEO and founder of MusicianCorps, a program of the Center for Music National Service. The organization trains and places musicians as teachers, mentors and care workers in public schools, children's and veterans' hospitals and other settings where music can reach, teach and heal. MusicianCorps also promotes the role of music in society through advocacy and policy development. Gallagher has extensive experience in service and the arts, from having been on the legislative team that created AmeriCorps to launching Peacelabs Music, Inc.—a micro-indie record label—where he wrote and produced two independent albums and toured with his band.

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