



# Young Audiences Western New York

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## ***LOCAL LEADERS ATTEND NATIONAL INSTITUTE***

**BUFFALO, NY (6/16/11)** – Representatives from Young Audiences of Western New York have returned to Buffalo after participating in an innovative Leadership Institute hosted in New Orleans.

Young Audiences WNY Executive Director Cynn timer Gaasch and Program Director Theresa Woehrel joined attendees from across the country last week for the Young Audiences Arts in Education Leadership Institute. Created with the support of the American Express Foundation, the symposium was developed by Young Audiences, Inc. to promote exceptional leadership in the field of arts education. The conference was designed to develop the professional growth of individual participants, impact institutional development, and have a ripple effect on the arts in education field. Gaasch and Woehrel were selected from affiliates across the country to participate with 23 other individuals in the Young Audiences network.

“Having the opportunity to connect with arts education professionals from across the country is an invaluable experience,” said Gaasch. “We’ve brought back many exciting ideas that we are eager to implement in collaboration with our region’s educators and artists.”

The Institute’s participants represented 14 of a total 30 Young Audiences affiliates. Those attending the Institute are emerging leaders from various departmental backgrounds and with a broad range of experience. The participants are united by the mission to draw on the strength of the network in order to serve their unique community needs and were chosen to attend the Institute because of their commitment to increasing the role of the arts in children’s lives. Their feedback will prove crucial to the next phase of development and in securing the Institute’s longevity and social impact.

Upon the success of this pilot project, Young Audiences will develop a comprehensive Leadership Institute to build the capacity of leaders in the arts in education field as well as address the challenges facing all organizations that champion the rights of children, young adults and communities.

Young Audiences WNY currently provides professional development services for educators and artists in Buffalo and throughout Western New York. The organization is hosting the Fifth Annual Patricia Cotsen Arts Abilities Conference on August 10-12, providing teachers will innovative and applicable techniques for creating an engaging learning environment through the arts. Additional information is available online at [www.yawny.org](http://www.yawny.org) or by calling 716.881.0917.

**ABOUT YOUNG AUDIENCES OF WESTERN NEW YORK:** Young Audiences of Western New York is a not-for-profit arts-in-education organization whose mission is to make the visual, performing, and literary arts a part of young people’s lives in order to enhance their development as creative and productive human beings. This mission is fulfilled every day within the eight counties of Western New York with performances, workshops, and residencies in educational, cultural, and community centers. In operation for 49 years, Young Audiences’ teaching artists support children learning core curriculum subjects through the arts, with over 100,000 artist contacts for children and families each year. Visit [www.yawny.org](http://www.yawny.org) for more information about Young Audiences of Western New York.

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