

James Madison University Student Chapter wins Outstanding Student Chapter of the Year

In recognition of outstanding activities carried out during the year by a student chapter, RAEA annually invites nominations for the Outstanding Student Chapter Award, sponsored by the RAEA. The award, to be given annually, honors an outstanding NAEA Student Chapter. The RAEA/NAEA presents a certificate and monetary award to the selected chapter.



Back Row: Dr. Bill Wightman (faculty), Kate Nesmith (Teaching Assistant), Alycia East (Senior Member), and Dr. Roger Tomhave (faculty); Second Row: Laura-Page Mertins (Chapter President), Grace Breeding (Senior Member), Megan Jones (Chapter Secretary), Dr. Kathy Schwartz (faculty, School Director, and current VAEA Art Educator of the Year); Front Row: Dr. Karin Tollefson-Hall (faculty and Chapter Advisor), Jaci Gordon (Senior Member), and Abbi Pence (Chapter Vice-President)

Retired Art Educators Affiliate of the National Arts Education Association has recognized the James Madison University Student Chapter of NAEA with the 2016 Outstanding Student Chapter Award. The award recognizes outstanding activities carried out by nominated chapters, and it bestows a certificate and monetary award.

According to President Laura-Paige Mertins, the mission of the JMU student chapter “is to smooth the transition from art education preparation to professional practice.” This mission has been accomplished by involvement in campus, community, and professional activities.

The JMU chapter organized events that brought young people to campus. Chapter members led various groups of adolescents in gallery discussions, studio production, and tours of the studio art building. Community activities included planning and implementing art activities in the children’s area for the annual Harrisonburg International Festival, which is attended by 8,000 community members. Members also organized crafts for the Children’s Harvest Festival at the Edith J. Carrier Arboretum, Harrisonburg City Public Schools Youth Art Month Exhibition, and Art Nights at local schools.

Fundraising efforts provided funds to support students to attend the Virginia Art Education Association Conference. Graduate and undergraduate chapter members presented in several

group and individual sessions at the conference. The JMU chapter members were also able to interact with art education professionals.

The chapter advisor, Karin Tollefson-Hall, describes the chapter leaders as being “energetic, passionate about teaching art, and reliable” and commends the level of maturity and professionalism of the JMU Chapter.

Representatives of the JMU Student Chapter will give a presentation at the *Blending Our Voices* session and the RAEA Awards Ceremony at the 2016 NAEA Convention in Chicago.