

2021 ROSTERED ARTISTS
Elk County Council on the Arts



What will you learn next?

A close up profile of the amazing AIE teaching artists and the new skills they can teach you!

Arts in Education Programming
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Adam Brooks

**PERFORMING ARTIST:
MUSIC, THEATRE**

Adam Brooks has been teaching music to children of all ages for the past 13 years. While holding several public school positions in Pennsylvania, he enjoys creating music with students of all grades and ages.

He has a Bachelor's degree in Music Education with elective jazz studies and a Master of Arts in Music Education from Mansfield University. In 2016, he became a Resident with the Arts in Education program through ECCOTA and has provided several classes on reading, literacy, and movement through music. He is a firm believer in creating interesting musical opportunities for our young children and to give them a new, fun way to learn about music with each experience. He wishes to instill that music and the arts can be a lifelong activity that builds character, independence, and excellence.

Adam is currently the vocal director at St. Marys Area High School and teaches elective classes such as guitar, piano, music history, and music theory. He resides in St. Marys with his wife Michelle and three children: Ela, Alison, and Jamie.





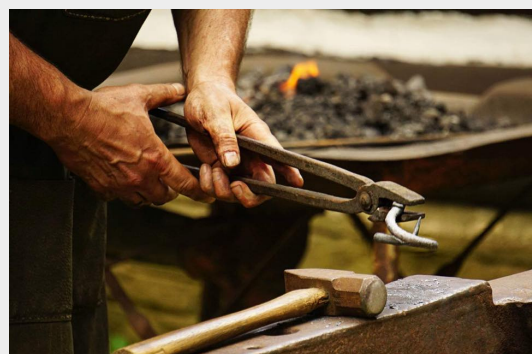
Doug Firestone

**VISUAL ARTIST:
BLACKSMITHING,
SCULPTURE, MIXED MEDIA**

Doug Firestone is a blacksmith from Potter County, PA where he lives with his wife and son. He has been practicing the art of blacksmithing since 1993. A mechanical engineer by training, Firestone developed an interest in blacksmithing and early American life and worked toward developing his craft through personal research and “stubborn persistence.” He moved his family to Potter County and opened his forge and shop, Firestone Forge. Since then, he has been hard at work selling his wares at 18th century trade shows and living history rendezvous and helping to promote the arts.

In the summer of 1999 Doug was invited to demonstrate blacksmithing at an 18th century living camp at Bartram’s Gardens in Philadelphia during the celebration of John Bartram’s birthday. Following this event Doug was retained at Fort Mifflin in Philadelphia as the blacksmith to demonstrate at a youth summer history camp sponsored by the city. In both of these events Doug portrayed an 18th century blacksmith, complete in attire and equipment appropriate for this time period. The items he made were necessary to an early American settler. Doug still does historic demonstrations at Wood Hick events held at Pennsylvania State Parks.

Doug believes that everyone is an artist and has promoted this as a board member and participant of the Northern Tier Cultural Alliance, PA Wilds Artisan Trail Board, Route 6 Artisan Trail and the Artisan Center in Coudersport. In 2012 he was honored to receive the PA Wilds Artisan of the Year.





Susan Gobbel

**VISUAL ARTIST:
JEWELRY, METAL, DRAWING**

Susan Gobbel is a visual artist and retired art teacher from Warren County who has been involved in Arts Integration for most of her twenty-year career. An artist since childhood, Susan has enjoyed both performing and visual arts. Her passion is in creating 'one of a kind' silver jewelry designs using fabrication, forging, cuttlebone casting, and wire wrapping techniques.

Susan has a BS in Art Education from Edinboro University, and studied Jewelry Design at Arrowmont School of Arts and Crafts. Susan is a firm believer that the arts are core to the total educational development of the child and to the human spirit! The arts lend themselves to natural connections and relationships to core subjects. Current brain research validates how the arts impact learning in a positive and enriching way. It is a joy to introduce new art skills, help students make connections with core material, and watch the problem solving and creativity develop. The arts elevate learning and the spirit!





Anna Lemnitz

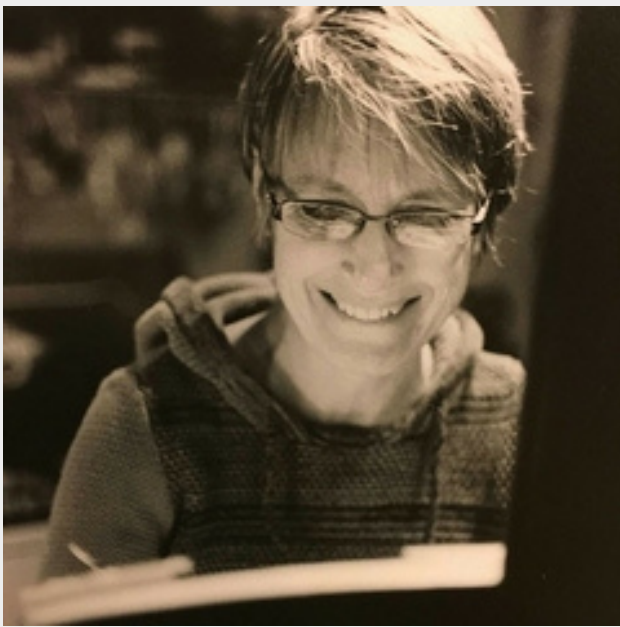
**VISUAL ARTIST:
MIXED MEDIA, DIGITAL**

Anna is an interdisciplinary artist inspired by human experience and her passion for understanding others. Her artist career began at the age of nine with training in drawing and painting. She continued building on that early training, now bringing seventeen years' experience teaching, exhibiting, and participating in the arts. In addition, she has more than eight years working in higher education and five years as a high school arts instructor, much of which has bridged into community building projects.

Anna's work as an artist is a reflection of the world around her. She is passionate about using both traditional and digital tools, as this mirrors our life. Anna employs a twofold process to create her works. First, she utilizes digital photography to capture the visual. That image is then moved into graphic editing (such as Adobe Photoshop or Illustrator) for alteration and collage. The final step is hand-rendering the graphic image in a vibrant display of graphite, gouache, and watercolor.

Her focus as an arts educator is on developing dynamic and diverse learning environments where students thrive in creation and building success in integrating students' arts education into the community.





Julie Mader

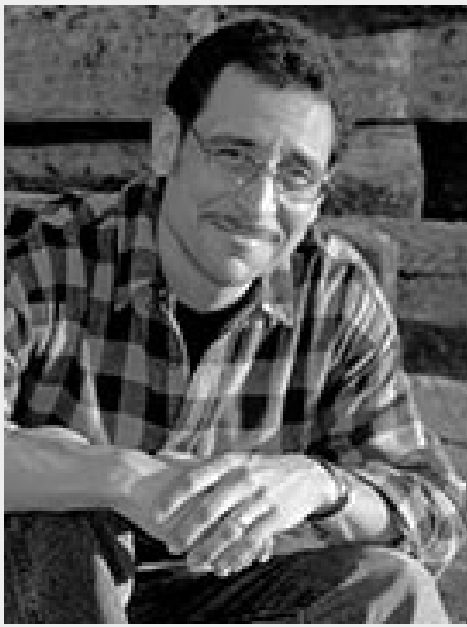
**VISUAL ARTIST:
PAINTING, MIXED MEDIA**

Julie Mader has been creating as well as teaching art to children and adults for the past nine years. She is energized by sharing her 16 years of studio art experience with students of all ages from elementary to life-experienced seniors.

As a teaching artist for the PA Council on the Arts, Julie has completed eleven Arts in Education Residencies since 2015. Connecting meaning for the student to the theme/subject while incorporating into the project lessons on design, art history and medium techniques. Watercolor, silk painting, stained glass mosaic, printmaking and mixed media experiences have been shared with school classrooms, assisted living/skilled care facilities, community senior centers and county probation services; lessons result in smiles, laughter, “ah-ha” moments, self-empowerment, artwork to be proud of and a desire to continue learning and creating art.

Mader, a PA Wilds Juried Artisan, is a 2016 recipient of an Elk County Council on the Arts “Heart in the Arts” award and was recognized as the Champion of the Pennsylvania Wilds 2015 Artisan of the Year. In 2013 Mader’s art collection titled Power Within (made up of her works focused on cancer-fighting plants) received Best of the Best recognition by the Pennsylvania Partners for the Arts.





PJ Piccirillo

**LITERARY ARTIST:
WRITING, POETRY**

PJ Piccirillo's stories and articles have appeared in journals, newspapers, magazines, and as syndicated releases, and he has won several literary prizes, including the Appalachian Writers Association Award for the Short Story. His novel, "Heartwood," was released by Middleton Books, and "The Indigo Scarf" is forthcoming from Sunbury Press.

His residencies, which help participants discover ways of writing that work best for them, are rooted in rediscovering why we write fiction and in uncovering some of the infinite places from where we can start. He often helps the writers create their fictional worlds by building outward, in steps, from simple core ideas they conceive in writing, memory, and discussion prompts.

PJ also conducts programs for the Pennsylvania Humanities Council at rural libraries, promoting the value of literary art for cultural and personal insights. PJ returned to fiction after ten years in marketing communications, writing advertising, promotional, news, and technical copy. He holds a B.A. in English literature from St. Francis University and an M.F.A. in creative writing from the University of Southern Maine.





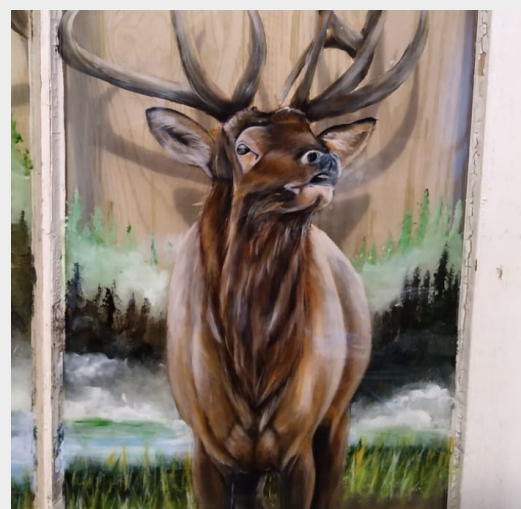
Mickayla Poland

**VISUAL ARTIST:
GRAPHIC DESIGN, PAINTING**

California born but Pennsylvania raised, Mickayla Poland fell in love with the green landscapes of the Pennsylvania Wilds and now lives and works in St. Marys, PA. After high school, Poland pursued a BFA in graphic design and photography at Edinboro University. Poland is also a self-taught painter that is pursuing her passion for painting and managing her own small business, PA Made, that showcases both her graphic designs and her unique wildlife paintings.

Art and design have always been a life-long passion for Poland and she recently started to pursue her art full-time. Poland has experience in designing posters, books, logos, and various Pennsylvania and outdoor-inspired designs. She has been a Professional PA Wilds Juried Artisan since 2017 and has worked with the PA Wilds Conservation shop on creating unique PA Wilds logos for stickers, t-shirts, and more. She recently worked with the Elk County Conservation District on creating the Clarion Pennsylvania River of the Year logo. Along with designing she also donates and sells paintings to help benefit other conservation and other non-profit organizations.

Design is in our everyday life and Mickayla has used design to express and share her passion for Pennsylvania and the Pennsylvania Wilds. Her goal is to continue to help her community, to grow herself as an artist, and to help other artists grow.





Rich Valley Apiary

**CRAFT ARTIST:
BEEKEEPING**

Rich Valley Apiary was founded by Ryan & Brandi Magaro and their 3 children as a way to spread the love of the honeybee and the amazing products they produce. Rich Valley Apiary is always trying new things and new ways to create using beeswax and honey. Rich Valley Apiary believes in only using natural ingredients of the highest quality in what they create.

From the hive to the shelf the products are made by hand. When doing outreach programs, the organization incorporates the wooden hive components, paint and stencil work, hands on learning, and encourage engagement with the audience. The programs are adaptable for audiences and host goals. Their goal is to educate as many people as possible about the importance of the honeybee.

Honeybees have evolved over the last 150 million years to become a major component of our ecosystems. Their biology as true insects, their comb design in engineering, and the collaboration as a superorganism make them excellent subjects to incorporate into any curriculum.





Samila Sasic

**VISUAL ARTIST:
PAINTING, MURALS**

Samila Sasic is a teaching artist for ECCOTA and Erie Arts and Culture. She has completed an artist in residence for Crary Art Gallery in Warren for three consecutive years. Sasic is also a teaching artist for Tri-County Arts Council in Alleghany, NY (former CCAC) for four years. She has taught various art classes for high school students and adults.

Samila Sasic is a native of Bosnia and Herzegovina and moved to the United States in 1992. In addition to her Interim Director of Study Abroad and International Services position, she also serves as adjunct professor of Art at Pitt-Bradford. As a Fine Artist, Samila has used her cultural immersions throughout her artistic career in both a private and academic setting. Her belief is that lifelong learning and traveling is the true way to enrich one's life.

