



SPECIAL NEEDS IN ART EDUCATION (SNAE)
A Special Interest Group of the National Art Education Association
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In the late 1990's a group of art educators convened during the National Art Education Association (NAEA) annual conference to discuss the need for an interest group focusing on supporting access to an art education for all children. As inclusion of all students in the art room was becoming more and more the norm, there was a need to address the concerns of these art educators and to offer knowledge and support regarding best practice to successfully teach all students. In 2000 the interest group, Special Needs in Art Education (SNAE) developed a constitution and by-laws and in 2001, SNAE was established to promote art education for learners with special needs through professional development, educational collaboration, advancement of knowledge, and leadership.

Since its inception, SNAE has grown to become the leader on these topics within the NAEA. The organization addresses art educators' questions and concerns as well as is the leader in the publication of research on these topics. In 2006, *Reaching and Teaching Students with Special Needs through Art*, edited by SNAE members Beverly Levett Gerber and Doris Guay, was published by the NAEA and quickly became the best selling publication in the history of the NAEA press. This work was followed up with *Understanding Students with Autism through Art*, edited by Beverly Levett Gerber and Julia Kellman, and published in 2010.

In 2008, SNAE began to present two awards in conjunction with VSA and the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC). These awards, the NAEA/CEC/VSA Beverly Levett Gerber Lifetime Achievement Award and the NAEA/CEC/VSA Special Art Educator of the Year are named in honor of two of the founders of the organization. Each year at the annual NAEA conference two art educators who exemplify excellence in art instruction and/or research are recognized.

SNAE maintains an information website at <http://specialneedsart.weebly.com/> and also has closed Facebook page. On the Facebook page members share information, ask questions and get answers from others in the community.

The logo above was a clay work created by Larry Marone, a young man with Down Syndrome when he was a child. The image was selected because it personified the fight for children with special needs to have access to art education. In the spirit of the logo SNAE continues to work to ensure that all children experience a vibrant, varied and engaging art education designed to meet their individual needs.

Juliann B. Dorff. A senior lecturer teaching Art Education in the School of Art at Kent State University, Juliann B. Dorff is the 2015 Ohio Higher Education Division Award winner presented by the Ohio Art Education Association (OAEA) and a 2014 Outstanding Art Educator for the Northeast region of the OAEA. She has presented extensively at the Ohio Art Education Association, National Art Education Association and the Council for Exceptional Children conferences. A contributing author in the book *Understanding Students with Autism through Art* (2010) published by the National Art Education Association, Ms. Dorff was an invited participant at *Examining the Intersection of Arts Education and Special Education: A National Forum* sponsored by the Kennedy Center in the summer of 2012 and has a white paper published in the resulting work, *The Intersection of Arts Education and Special Education: Exemplary Programs and Approaches*.