



KARA FEDJE

FORMAL EDUCATION

Florida State University

2021 to present (Expected Graduation in May 2025, 3.9 GPA)
Ph.D. Candidate, Art Education
T/A & G/A for the Art Education

Western Illinois University

2009 to 2010 (Graduated with Honors, 3.8 GPA)
Master of Arts, Museum Studies
President of Graduate Experience in Museum Studies

Southern Illinois University

2005-2006
MFA in Textiles (Completed 18 credit hours)

Augustana College

2001 to 2004 (Graduated with Honors in May 2004, 3.6 GPA)
Bachelor of Arts, Fine Art

Lewis & Clark College

2000-2002 (Transferred to Augustana College)
Bachelor of Science, Environmental Studies

HIGHER EDUCATION EXPERIENCES

Florida State University

Teaching Assistant, Sept. 2022 to May 2023

Awarded a teaching assistantship to facilitate and lead an undergraduate gateway course, *Special Topics: Introduction to Museum Education*.

Graduate Assistant, Sept. 2021 to Sept. 2022

Awarded the Graduate Assistantship Scholarship to support the publication of a book on qualitative research in art museums co-written by Dr. Ann Rowson-Love and Dr. Deborah Randolph.

Western Illinois University

Adjunct Instructor for MA in Museum Studies, Jan. to May 2021

Combined digital and in-person courses on Museum Exhibitions to teach the following topics: discussions on DEAI work as it pertains to exhibitions and accessibility, evaluation work and exhibition assessment, narrative and storytelling, coordination/budgets of building an exhibition, and inclusive label writing and signage.

Guest Lecturer for MA in Museum Studies

Presented practical approaches to LGBTQIA+ public representation, gender definitions, resource groups, policy change, LGBTQIA+ publications, and resources. Discussed professional arts education experience with the Des Moines Art Center's *Queer Abstraction* exhibition and related educational content.

Black Hawk College

Alternative High School Art Teacher, Jan. 2008 to May 2008

Taught a variety of mediums as a long-term substitute art teacher, including fiber art, drawing, and painting to historically underserved high school students in an alternative school setting. Additionally, I taught adults & seniors a continuing art education program in jewelry-making and repurposed art.

PROFILE

I am a Fiber Artist, Social Scientist, and Arts Educator, with more than two decades of non-profit, museum, and teaching experience. I have worked at Florida State University, Western Illinois University, Illinois State Museum, Des Moines Art Center, Putnam Museum, and Figge Art Museum. I currently learn/teach about DEAI and Belonging within Art Education and Visitor Research & Evaluation.

CONTACT

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PROFESSIONAL EXPERTISE

- Teaching & Facilitating in Higher Education
- Creating Curriculum & Educational Programs for Lifelong Learners
- Facilitating Contemporary Art Conversations
- Diversity, Equity, Accessibility, Inclusion, & Belonging with marginalized communities including LGBTQIA+, Working Class, Otherly-Abled, BIPOC Seniors with Dementia, Pre-Speech Early Learners, Children and Families with ASD
- Critical & Empathic Thinking
- Community Engagement
- Nonprofit Management
- Volunteer Management
- Event Management
- Grant Writing
- Budgets & Reporting
- Social Media & Marketing
- Qualitative Narrative Research & Evaluation with young people

ART-MAKING EXPERTISE

Tapestry Weaving
Pattern Weaving
Jacquard Digital Weaving
Surface Design
Natural Dye
Commercial Dye
Crochet & Knitting
Fiber Art Collage
Spinning Fibers
Quilting & Sewing
Screen-printing & Adinkra
Coiling & Basketry
Drawing & Painting
Large Scale Charcoal Still-Life Drawing
Pastel, Crayon, & Marker
Mixed Media Assemblage
Metals & Jewelry-Making
Mono-printing & Printmaking
Sculpture & Installation Art
Dichroic Glass
Photography
Wheel-Thrown Ceramics

ART EXHIBITIONS

2022 *Playing with Art: Cassia Kite and Soundstitching*, Co-curated Kite's exhibition at the William Johnston Building Gallery at Florida State University, Tallahassee, FL

2021 *KLF Landscape Tapestries* in Quad City Arts' *Art at the Airport*, Rock Island, IL

2011 A co-created community sculpture was exhibited and installed at the Putnam Museum and Science Center through the Smithsonian Museum of Natural History, [Hyperbolic Crochet Coral Reef Project](#). I supported the installation of more than 4,000 crocheted corals, created content for public educational demonstrations, crocheted a coral, and managed volunteers.

2008 *Weavings and Spinning Demonstration* Sarah Robb Art Gallery, Davenport, IA

2008 *KLF Art Exhibition* at Painted Monkey Tattoo during *Art Walk*, East Moline, IL

2004 *Senior Studio Art Exhibition* Augustana College, Rock Island, IL

ART MUSEUM EDUCATION

Des Moines Art Center

Museum Educator, Jun. 2016 to Dec. 2019

EVENT PROGRAMMER: Improved the efficiency of the *Art Sampler* program by initiating and organizing the *Entirely Kids Days* free family public programs serving 700 - 1,400 people, three times annually. Activities included a guided museum search, docent tours, performances, storytime, artmaking, and connections to the current exhibitions. Wrote reflective summary reports to senior leadership after events and annually for the Board of Trustees.

PUBLICATIONS AUTHOR: Conceptualized publications, designed, and developed professional resources and materials written at a pedagogical appropriate level. Publications include *Bingo*, *Look for Labels*, and the *John and Mary Pappajohn Sculpture Park Exploration Guide*. Other written publications included the Des Moines Art Center's *Annual Report* and the quarterly membership *News*. Served as a guest on the Art Center's podcast and wrote content for the Instagram digital photo takeover.

SCHOOL COORDINATOR: Implemented educational materials and museum-wide experiences for school children and teachers to support underserved elementary schools. Collaborated with a DEAI lens to provide a diverse community of youth, school, teachers, and student services, including Indigenous, Latin-X, and low-income rural schools. Delivered the arts-based program, *Creativity Days*, to include creative movement, studio art, and museum tours through partnerships with area arts professionals. Worked in tandem with docent corps to deliver dynamic arts programming. Evaluated this program through data-driven decisions by creating small teacher discussion groups, providing surveys to teachers and students, and asking area arts professionals for feedback to improve annually.

DES MOINES ARTS FESTIVAL LIASON: Coordinated and organized an annual art exhibition for four hundred students. Served on the *Event Management Team* to produce the *Student Art Exhibition* at the Des Moines Arts Festival. As a public spokesperson for the Art Center, I publicly awarded students 400 medallions annually.

GALLERY LEARNING PROGRAMMER: Developed and implemented innovative programming to advance best practices in museum education. Initiated *Teen Academy*, a weekly safe space for teen discussions in the galleries. Created and promoted family co-learning through a *Books and Blankets* literacy program for parents with early learners. Designed, wrote, and directed family-oriented, member-only gallery experiences which included a costumed theme, storybook, a treasure hunt complete with treasure boxes and poetic clues, and a conversation with children and families at each work of art.

ART TEACHER FOR CHILDREN ON THE AUTISM SPECTRUM: Led and taught *Art Spectrums*, a gallery and studio art program designed for children and their families on the autism spectrum. Implemented and co-taught classes with a 20-year special education teacher who designed the program with research from a similar program at Stanford University. Classes included a social story with registration, modeled guidelines, tactical preventive security measures in the galleries, sensory toys, and art experiences in both the galleries and studio spaces.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR TEACHERS: Created curricula in tandem with a school curriculum leader to implement a professional development workshop for art teachers who wanted to learn more about museum education and receive teacher certification credit.

DEAI ADVANCEMENT: Supported the Art Center's DEAI efforts with colleagues through the initiation of an LGBTQIA+ Resource Group. Reviewed and implemented best practices through M.A.S.S. (MIA's *Museums as Site for Social Action*), IDI (*Intercultural Development Inventory*), and the AAM's *Welcoming Guidelines*.

CONFERENCE & FORMAL PRESENTATIONS

2024 *Access for All: Digital Games and the Right to Play Them*. International Congress of Qualitative Research, Urbana, IL

2023 *Empowerment or Agency? Qualitative Research Strategies to Center Marginalized Voices in Art Museums*. National Art Education Association, San Antonio, Texas

2023 *Identity Explorations in Arts-Based Research* International Congress of Qualitative Research, Urbana, IL

2023, *Working with Families on the Autism Spectrum at the Des Moines Art Center's Art Spectrums program*, Virtual

2021 *LGBTQ+ Belonging in Museums & Higher Ed*, Presenter and committee member of the Social Justice Symposium, Florida State University, Tallahassee, FL

2021 *Qualitative Research Methods*, International Conference for The Arts in Society, Virtual

2021 *DEAI Workshop for Museum Leaders*, Florida State University, Tallahassee, FL

2021 *Suggestions from Art Spectrums: An Art Program for Children on the Autism Spectrum*, Institute for Learning Innovation, Community of Practice Forum, Virtual

2021 *Queer Abstraction: From Canon to Community*, American Alliance of Museums Annual Conference, Virtual

2020 *Inclusion in Museums*. Western Illinois University, Moline, IL

2020 *Art and Activism*, Des Moines Art Center, Des Moines, IA

2019 *Working with Children in a Museum* Des Moines Art Center, Des Moines, IA

2019 *Queer Abstraction*. Iowa Safe Schools Governor's Conference, Des Moines, IA

2018 *Family Programming* Des Moines Art Center Board Meeting, Des Moines, IA

2017 *AAM's LGBTQ Welcoming Guidelines*. Figge Art Museum, Davenport, IA

2017 *Community Engagement*. Association of Midwest Museums, Des Moines, IA

ART MUSEUM EDUCATION (Con't.)

Des Moines Art Center

Museum Educator, Jan 2016 to Dec. 2019

TEAM MEMBER: Served on the LGBTQIA+ Resource Group, Program and Services Committee, Wellness Team, Visitor Services Team, and Digital Team.

ART AND ACTIVISM WORKSHOP PRESENTOR: Developed a series of digital presentations on LGBTQIA+ inclusion and equity, stemming from the *Queer Abstraction* exhibition and education programs. Discussions included practical approaches to LGBTQIA+ public representation in support of studio artmaking for teen audiences.

Figge Art Museum

Gallery Host, Mar 2021 to May 2021

Served the Figge Art Museum as a Gallery Host during a blockbuster exhibition, *For America*, which engaged visitors with dialogue about contemporary and historical works of art.

Western Illinois University Intern & Docent with the Figge Art Museum, Sept. 2009 to Aug. 2010

DOCENT: Attended a year-long training in art history docent program to provide interpretation in the art galleries.

TEEN DOCENT PROGRAM: Wrote a grant to teach and implement a new teen docent program.

ADMINISTRATION ASSISTANT: Provided data and assisted the Education Coordinator with information for art classes.

PREPARATOR: Matted, framed, and installed original student works of art.

ART + SCIENCE MUSEUM EDUCATION

Putnam Museum and Science Center

Vice President of Learning, Dec 2019 to Sept. 2020

BOARD MEMBER: Participated in Putnam Museum Board of Trustees meetings, including strategic mission planning and development. Managed and executed cost-effective annual budget plans for current and future operations.

MANAGER: Supervised and led a team across multiple departments including education, curatorial, marketing, and exhibitions. Supported interpretation plans with educators in the delivery and design of summer camps, workshops, demonstrations, storytime, after-school enrichment, and engineering events.

CONTENT CREATOR: Created virtual learning experience content: video, promotion, social media, and *Play with the Putnam* website. Created videos and backpack science projects for a community partnership with *Spring Forward*, a community educational center serving low-income youth, to provide virtual learning content for more than three hundred students over 6 weeks.

OUTREACH: Annually, oversaw outreach and virtual program offerings for four states, 113 school districts, and more than 50,000 youth through visitor-centered learning strategies.

GREEN TEAM: Initiated the *Green Team*, an inter-departmental resource group, to deliver environmentally sustainable ideas and resources for the museum.

CONFERENCE & FORMAL PRESENTATIONS (Con't.)

2016 *Environmental Education in a Museum Setting*. The University of Illinois at Springfield, Springfield, IL

2015 *Preparing Presenters to Communicate Effectively with a Teen Audience*. Teen Science Café Network Conference, Saint Louis, MO

2014 *Museum Education*. Western Illinois University, Davenport, IA

2014 *Transforming a Volunteer Program*. Illinois Association of Museums, Rockford, IL

PUBLICATIONS & PROJECTS

Fedje, K. (2023) [*Queering the Museum: From a Traditional Model Towards A More Inclusive Practice*](#) in A.R. Love & P. Villeneuve (Eds.) *Dimensions of Curation: Considering Competing Values for Intentional Exhibition Practices*. Rutledge.

Fedje, K. (2022). [*Connecting with Museum Educators*](#), Episode 316 [podcast]. Art of Education University.

Fedje, K. & Ledesma, J. (2020, Mar/Apr). [*Abstract Art, Concrete Goals*](#), *Museum: The Illusion of Identity: Gender, Feminism, Activism, Parity*. 99(2). 32-36.

Fedje, K. & Featherstone, J. (2019). [*John and Mary Pappajohn Sculpture Park Exploration Guide*](#).

Fedje, K. (2014). [*Saturplay Blog*](#)

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

2023 FSU Social Justice Symposium, Planning Committee Member

2022 Visitor Studies Association

2021 American Alliance of Museums, LGBTQIA+ Alliance

2018 American Alliance of Museums

2019 National Art Education Association

2017 Association of Midwest Museums

2015 Illinois Association of Museums

2013 Iowa Museum Association

ART + SCIENCE MUSEUM EDUCATION (Con't.)

Putnam Museum and Science Center

Education Specialist, Dec. 2010 to Dec. 2013

SUMMER CAMP LEADER: Led, managed, and taught summer camp to over 700 students in 8 weeks each summer. Supervised summer camp employees, interns, and volunteers.

OUT-OF-SCHOOL-TIME LEARNING FACILITATOR: Designed and delivered outreach for elementary after-school STEM programs four days a week. Initiated and implemented the program with the Davenport Community Schools *Steppingstones*, a high-quality afterschool enrichment program.

STEAM PRESCHOOL OUTREACH CREATOR: Created, developed, and managed *Putnam for Preschool*, STEM outreach for early childhood learners in several area preschools.

SCOUTS EVENT COORDINATOR: Led 200 Boy Scouts and 200 Girl Scouts in monthly museum-wide events that incorporated a museum search with activities throughout the museum, a film, and large group engineering competitions.

EVENT MANAGER: Assisted the Education Director and volunteers from John Deere in implementing large-scale engineering events including *Battle of the Bridges*, *FIRST Lego League* robotics competitions, and *Introduce a Girl to Engineering Day*.

Illinois State Museum

Mary Ann MacLean Educator, Jan. 2014 to June 2016

SATURPLAY INVENTOR: Initiated, developed, and implemented weekly STEAM activities for *Saturplay* a family program engaging more than 7,000 visitors in 52 weeks. Wrote and received a grant-funded budget of \$2,000 annually.

MARKETING/ BLOG CREATOR: Collaborated with the Development/Marketing department to implement visitor data-driven, marketing strategies for a weekly curated blog highlighting science experiments and art projects for parents with early learners.

COLLECTIONS: Assisted the Decorative Arts Collections and Research Curator with database information.

Monticello Intern, June 2004 to Aug 2005

SUPER SATURDAY PROGRAMMER: Developed a monthly program for 200-400 attendees. Work included art projects, games, science experiments, written interpretation, visiting speakers, and the creation of marketing and promotional materials.

OUTREACH INSTRUCTOR: Presented environmental education and outreach for summer campers as a guest speaker at Lincoln Memorial Gardens.

SCHOOL PROGRAMMER: Assisted the Associate Curator of Education with teaching school groups and archaeology classes. Created hand-drawn materials for school programs.

AWARDED GRANTS

2024 Levano-Kerr Scholarship, \$5K
2022-2023 FSU TA Assistantship, \$20K
2021-2022 FSU GA Assistantship, \$20K
2015 Teen Science Café Grant, \$3000
2015 1877 Fund Grant, \$2000
2014 1877 Fund Grant, \$2000
2010 Graduate Experience in Museum Studies (Western Illinois University), \$500

GRANT IN-PROGRESS

2024-2025 IMLS National Leadership Grant for Museums on *Queer Museum Inclusion: Belonging for Lesbian Families* for \$475,000 to fund research.

TECHNOLOGY SKILLS

Microsoft Office Suite
Adobe Photoshop
Survey Monkey
Social Media
Zoom
WordPress
PowerPoint
Blogger

OTHER PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCES

Michael's Arts and Crafts: Framer, Educator, Customer Service
Younkers: Customer Service
Vector Marketing, Cutlery Sales
US Postal Service, Casual Carrier
St. Paul Lutheran Church, Nursery Aide
Genesis Home Health Aide, Certified Nursing Assistant
Active Endeavors, Outdoor Gear Sales
Living Lands and Waters, Administrative Assistant

ART + SCIENCE MUSEUM EDUCATION (Con't.)

Bettendorf Family Museum of Arts and Sciences

Museum Educator & Intern, Sept. 2009 to Dec. 2010

FAMILY CLAY CLASS INSTRUCTOR: Designed weekly clay-making programs, which included a different recipe of clay, and taught hands-on *Tot Classes* to early learners ages 2-4, using different sensory prompts, mediums, and activities with clay.

INTERPRETATIVE PLAY CREATOR: As part of the dinosaur exhibition, I created a variety of interpretive activities using puppetry and theater to tell the narrative of the extinction of dinosaurs.

ART CART MAKER: Responsible for researching and teaching hands-on art and science projects as part of a roaming art station within the children's gallery.

STUDIO ART TEACHER: In the art studio classroom, I facilitated drop-in art classes for young museum visitors, designed art projects for visitors of all ages, and prepared and cleaned supplies for 100's of visitors.

OUTREACH FACILITATOR: Co-created and taught after-school enrichment curriculum to elementary students through the Davenport School's *Stepping Stones* program.

SUMMER CAMP TEACHER: Assisted with the design and implementation of a wide variety of summer camp classes utilizing the museum's gallery spaces and the outside water play area.

COMMUNITY ARTS ENGAGEMENT

Quad City Arts

Gallery Manager, Dec. 2008 to July 2009

Managed a fine arts gallery to support local artists, sales gallery, and community art resources. Supported 120 local artists through the promotion and sales of fine art.

PREPARATOR: Moved and installed original works of art at the Quad City Arts Gallery, *Art at the Airport*, and *Grapevine* home art showcases.

METRO ARTS INSTRUCTOR: Taught a youth apprenticeship arts program, *Metro Creative Arts*, which included the creation, performance, and sale of public youth art.

FESTIVAL OF TREES: Participated in a community-wide holiday event selling local artist wares.

VISITING ARTIST SERIES: Supported facilitation and travel of visiting performing artists and musicians.

Augustana College

Co-director and Instructor of *Kaleidoscope*, Mar. 2021 to July 2021

Designed and delivered both online and in-person 2D and 3D hands-on art courses for children ages 4-12. Managed art faculty in a studio summer camp setting.

Instructor of *Kaleidoscope*, Sept. 2002 to July 2021 (as needed)

Created & taught art education curriculum for ages 4-12.

Studio Assistant, Sept. 2002 to May 2004

Maintained and prepped the studio for students in the weaving studio.

Gallery Guard, Sept. 2002 to May 2004

Secured the art gallery and interacted with visitors.

Art Museum Director's Assistant, Sept. 2002 to May 2004

Made in-home donor visits with the Museum Director

Exhibition Installation Gallery Preparator, Sept. 2002 to May 2004

Selected, matted, and framed original works of art. Hung artwork in Augustana College's library and the President's office.

RESEARCH & EVALUATION

Rockman et. al Cooperative

Associate Researcher, Aug 2023 – present

DATA COLLECTION: Recruited, surveyed, and recorded participant information of low-income and BIPOC families for several media studies that will help determine outcomes for a national media source to decipher the best ways of utilizing their materials to best serve diverse audiences. Worked with a wide range of children who may have hearing and vision impairments, neurodiversity, come from a working-class family, and/or are racially diverse.

Collected qualitative research data for clients by making in-home visits and virtual meetings with children and families. For most studies, I recruited study participants to deliver top-line findings for the clients.

Projects included:

- Lyla in the Loop (story and game)
- YouTube (media study)
- CC-PES (co-creation study)
- [Designing for Tomorrow \(Exhibition Design\)](#)
- [ASTC-ACM Workforce Survey Report](#)
- Accessibility study (disability & media study)
- Tiny Time Travel (television show)
- Wombats (podcast)
- CampTV (learning website)
- Jelly, Ben, & Pogo (television game).
- [STEM Escape Game \(University of Kansas\)](#)
- [Evolving STEM \(University of Pittsburgh\)](#)
- [SparcNET \(Bridgewater State University\)](#)

REPORTS: Created reports final findings to clients through online reports and presentations.

IRB CERTIFIED: All studies have been IRB-approved.

Contracted Researcher, May 2022 – Aug 2024

Recruited, surveyed, and recorded participant information of low-income, disabled, and BIPOC families for a media study that will determine outcomes for a national public media to decipher the best ways of utilizing their YouTube platform to better serve audiences with all abilities. All results from each study were cumulated into a formal presentation for the client.

Institute for Learning Innovation

Contracted Data Analysis, Sept. 2020 to Jan. 2021

Assisted the Director of Evaluation at the Institute of Learning Innovation in the qualitative analysis of the Luxembourg Science Center secondary education program to investigate what circumstances students experience at LSC contributed to a range of positive changes in STEM interest, identity, and behavior of young adults. Translated German data.