



#AATA2017 - Join 1200+ Attendees at AATA's Annual Conference!

*AATA National Office
November 2, 2017*

As we're packing our bags to head to Albuquerque, we want to remind our attendees of a few details and share some exciting advocacy opportunities happening at the conference. The 48th Annual Conference will be the second largest conference in the AATA's history, with more than 1200 attendees and over 230 educational sessions covering a wide range of professional interests in art therapy. This year the AATA has increased momentum in our state licensure efforts – four bills passed in 2017 legislative sessions! – and strengthened our partnerships with advocacy organizations in the arts and mental health communities.

Last Minute Planning?

- Advanced registration is now closed, but **you can still register on site!** Registration will be open Tuesday (Nov. 7) from 4:00 - 6:00 pm, Wednesday from 7:00 am - 7:30 pm, Thursday and Friday from 7:00 am - 5:00 pm, and Saturday 7:00 am - 2:00 pm.
- AATA members receive a **discount**, so be sure to [join or renew](#) before registering!
- For full schedule details, download the [Conference Brochure](#).
- Download the **conference app** from the app store to read about the presenters and prepare your personal conference itinerary.

The conference is full of opportunities to learn more about what the AATA is doing to assist state chapters in advocacy efforts and how you can get involved throughout the year.

Attend a Session on Advocating in your State:

Interested in learning about the D.C. legislative landscape and how art therapists fit in as advocates? Then don't miss the session ***Lobbying 101: Harnessing your specialized knowledge to effectively educate and inform elected officials and key decision makers to strengthen the field of art therapy*** led by government affairs expert Jay Dick, Senior Director of State and Local Government Affairs at Americans for the Arts, and AATA President-Elect Christianne Strang, PhD, ATR-BC. The session will take place on Saturday from 2:30 to 3:20 pm.

Jay Dick has been in the field of government affairs and advocacy for 25 years, 13 of which have been at Americans for the Arts. He travels the country educating groups about the valuable impact of the arts and culture and works closely with the nation's lawmakers in promoting pro arts legislation. **Take advantage of an extended Q & A after the session** in the Santa Domingo room with the presenters and AATA Policy Advisor Dean Sagar to learn more about advocacy in general and advocating for the arts and art therapy in particular. Jay Dick will be attending several other networking sessions at conference on Friday and Saturday -- don't hesitate to introduce yourself!



To learn about recent progress and challenges in art therapy advocacy, attend the session ***Licensure and Advocacy for Art Therapy: Lessons from the Front Lines*** presented by AATA Policy Advisor Dean Sagar; Laura Salley, MS, ATR-BC, ATCS; Margaret Carlock-Russo; and Mary Andrus, MA, ATR-BC, LCPC, LPC. The session will take place on Friday from 2:00 to 2:50 p.m.

Network with Government Affairs Expert and Civil Rights Activist:

The AATA is also pleased to welcome Bernard Demczuk, Ph.D. to the conference! Dr. Demczuk has been active in community, corporate, academic, labor and government relations for more than 40 years, most recently as the Assistant Vice President for DC government relations at the George Washington University.



Dr. Demczuk began his political career in civil rights working with SNCC (Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee) with Marion Barry and Eleanor Holmes-Norton. He continued to work in DC government with Marion Barry as a policy adviser and campaign manager. When he left DC politics, he was GW's Vice President for Community Relations and Government Affairs. He also has a doctorate in African history, is a lecturer on African American history, and is currently a DC historian on Black DC. His office is at Ben's Chili Bowl on U Street where he offers free lectures and tours, as well as serving as archivist and preserver of DC's Black history. [Read further information](#) about Dr. Demczuk and his work in civil rights and DC government over the past 30 years.

His wide-ranging career includes service as the National Political Director for the American Federation of Government Employees Union; Labor Director for Jesse Jackson's National Rainbow Coalition and helped to lead Jesse Jackson's labor strategy in the 1984 and 1988 Presidential campaigns. He has also served as Director of Intergovernmental Relations for the Executive Office of the Mayor where he was the chief lobbyist for the Mayor to the Washington DC City Council, US Congress and White House.

Dr. Demczuk holds a doctorate in American Studies and African American history and culture from GW (BS, U. of Md.; MS, AU). He lectures internationally on Black history and culture, labor history, community relations and governmental policy, international relations, and civil and human rights.

Dr. Demczuk has been working with the Potomac Art Therapy Association (PATA) on efforts to establish an art therapist license. He will be attending many of our networking events at the conference, where you will have the opportunity to connect with him and learn more about government relations, Black history, or catch up on the D.C. art therapy licensure effort.

Did you know that New Mexico was the First State to pass Legislation that Licenses Professional Art Therapists?

The historic 1993 New Mexico legislation paved the way for Licensed Professional Art Therapists (LPAT) legislation across the country. **Representative Michelle Lujan Grisham** (D-NM 1st District), candidate for NM Governor, advocates for improved mental health care in Washington D.C. She is a friend of art therapy and a representative from her staff will attend our conference to receive our gratitude for her support.

