

# Michael Bell: Leading a Global Renaissance in the Art of Education

This February, the world of art education witnessed a groundbreaking convergence at the Art of Education University's ArtEdNOW Winter 2024 Conference. Leading the charge was Michael Bell, the visionary Supervisor of Fine Arts for QACPS.



## Schools celebrate historic year with ArtScene

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## MICHAEL BELL

**Baltimore, Maryland Feb 14, 2024 ([Issuewire.com](https://www.issuewire.com))** - Love is in the air, and in Queen Anne's County, it's not just reserved for Valentine's Day. This February, the world of art education witnessed a groundbreaking convergence at the Art of Education University's (AOEU) [ArtEdNOW Winter 2024 Conference](#). This multi-day extravaganza wasn't just another event; it was a beacon of innovation and collaboration, drawing in visual arts educators from every corner of the globe.

Leading the charge was Michael Bell, the visionary Supervisor of Fine Arts for Queen Anne's County

Public Schools, who took center stage as a featured *After Pass* keynote presenter for administrators. His mission? To unveil the secrets behind transforming ordinary art programs into national award-winning treasures and to inspire other administrators worldwide to champion the arts in their schools.

Bell's accolades speak volumes—he received the 2022 National Art Education Association (NAEA) Eastern Region Supervisor of the Year Award in New York City, is a selected member of the 2023–2024 Maryland State Superintendent's Fine Arts Advisory Panel, and is the 2024 QACPS Outstanding Leadership Award Winner. Recently, he was also honored with the NAEA 2024 National Administration and Supervision Art Educator Award for the nation. Bell acknowledges the support of his talented Curriculum and Instruction team and Superintendent Dr. Patty Saelens, the 2023 Maryland Superintendent of the Year.

With over 2,500 art teachers in attendance embracing the spirit of love and learning, and a lineup boasting more than thirty meticulously curated presentations, the *ArtEdNOW Winter 2024 Conference* buzzed with excitement and creativity. But what truly set it apart was its tangible impact. Attendees weren't just passive spectators; they were active participants, soaking in knowledge and practical strategies to deepen their connection to their craft and immediately elevate their art rooms.

"I got Queen Anne's there by 'challenging the process,'" shared Bell when asked about his success, echoing the sentiment of love and perseverance that defines his art education initiatives—qualities essential for navigating the ever-evolving landscape of art education. His commitment to fostering a tight-knit family of art educators that also 'stay artists' has created a community bound together by a shared love for creativity and expression.

Bell's influence extends far beyond mere rhetoric. He revolutionized the curriculum in Queen Anne's County, introducing new courses aligned with 2-D and 3-D contemporary studio art trends. He pioneered initiatives like establishing National Art Honor Society Chapters at both high schools and bringing AP Art courses to QACPS for the first time in its history. Additionally, he's introduced innovative new courses like *Visual Journaling* for 2024 and established groundbreaking student exhibitions such as *ArtScene*—QACPS' first-ever district-wide student exhibitions, K–12, held at both high schools during the same week on different days annually each April. Furthermore, Bell recently celebrated the one-year anniversary of [ArtScene | the Podcast](#), which he launched to share stories of talented teachers under his supervision.

Stephanie Zeiler, Lead Art Teacher at Queen Anne's County High School, echoed Bell's sentiments as a first-time guest on the Art of Education University Podcast, hosted by Tim Bogatz. Their wide-ranging conversation, entitled "Visual Journals and Classroom Communities (Ep. 397)" discussed the power of visual journals and how they make artmaking more meaningful to students. They also discussed how to create a welcoming classroom community, how to help kids find what they love, and how we can find joy in our teaching careers.

Zeiler's art students at Queen Anne's County High have been the recipients of numerous Maryland State Art and Regional Awards; she has produced QACPS' first ever Scholastic Art National Gold Medalist; and Zeiler was the recipient of the NAEA 2023 National Art Honor Society Sponsor of the Year for the nation.

Andrea Schulte, Art Department Chair at Kent Island High and QACPS 2023 Teacher of the Year, has also achieved state and national acclaim as of late. She was honored as the Maryland Art Education Association's (MAEA) Secondary Art Educator of the Year, and her students have earned showcases in NAEA national exhibits. Notably, one of her students received the 2024 NAEA National Rising Star

Award for art.

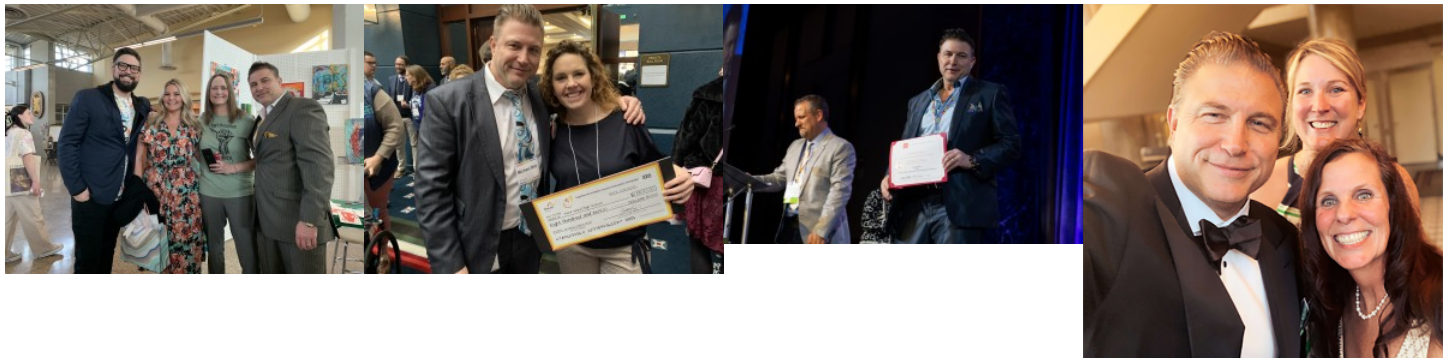
So, the ripple effects of strong leadership in QACPS are evident, and the impacts of this AOEU conference are undeniable, resonating far beyond the confines of Centreville, Maryland. As educators worldwide reflect on the insights gained and strategies shared, one thing is clear: the future of art education has never looked brighter.

When asked about challenging the process, while advocating for his programs, Bell said it is definitely not for the faint of heart.

“If you want to stay endlessly motivated, it’s all about being creative. Everything that creates actually solves,” says Bell. “For me, this began with the relationships that I forged and it all starts with ‘why.’”

Watch Michael Bell’s After Pass keynote for the *AOEU’s ArtEdNOW 2024 Winter Conference* at: <https://theartofed.wistia.com/medias/2z91hfjyay> and tune in to Stephanie Zeiler’s AOEU podcast with Tim Bogatz here: <https://theartofeducation.edu/podcasts/visual-journals-and-classroom-communities-ep-397/>

Tune in to ArtScene | the Podcast for monthly episodes at <https://anchor.fm/artscene>



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