

ALABAMA INSTITUTE FOR EDUCATION IN THE ARTS & THE ALABAMA ARTS ALLIANCE

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Alabama Arts Organizations Celebrate Success of Joint “Summer SAIL Institute” in Montgomery

A joint venture between the two arts organizations taught Alabama educators how to integrate the arts into their classrooms.

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MONTGOMERY, AL — The Alabama Institute for Education in the Arts (AIEA) and the Alabama Arts Alliance (ALAA) hosted their joint **Summer SAIL Institute** at Saint James School from June 7th through 10th. The professional development workshop brought together content teachers and arts facilitators from across the state to explore arts integration in the classroom. This was the first ever joint meeting of the two organizations.

The immersive institute equipped educators with practical, innovative tools to weave theater, music, movement, and visual arts into daily academic curricula.

The backbone of the institute's success was its lineup of exceptional instructors: **Mr. Lonny Harrison** (Theater), **Dr. Sallye York** (Music), **Ms. Kerri-Noelle Humphrey** (Dance/Movement), and **Mrs. Durinda Cheek** (Visual Arts). Each led three-hour blocks demonstrating practical ways to integrate arts into any subject. The hands-on approach resonated deeply, with one educator noting, **"The warmth and professionalism of everyone in charge was grand! I loved it and enjoyed meeting all the teachers from different schools."**

Beyond the classroom, evening events showcased Montgomery's vibrant culture, including a performance of *Chicken & Biscuits* at the Alabama Shakespeare Festival, an educational resource presentation at "The Sanctuary" by the Montgomery Museum of Fine Arts, and a Montgomery Biscuits baseball game at Dabos Park.

The true impact of the institute was reflected in the glowing evaluations from attending educators. One participant shared, **"This was literally the best workshop that I have ever attended."** Another noted the long-term impact on their school: **"I really enjoyed myself and have learned a lot that I can take back to my classroom and colleagues."**

Ultimately, the program proved that arts integration is a vital asset for all forms of learning. As one educator summarized: **"I highly recommend this for everyone, not just for the arts. I truly believe that all disciplines will benefit from what was learned. It would allow everyone the opportunity to advance and see things differently."**

The AIEA is a statewide nonprofit that provides comprehensive arts training for educators through online programs, an annual Summer Institute, and free traveling Road Shows. For more information, visit artseducation.org.

The Alabama Arts Alliance champions the arts and arts education by connecting artists with schools and communities to ensure the arts remain central to Alabama's educational and cultural landscape. For more information, visit alartsalliance.org.

