

Meet the Team: An Overview of the ODALC Board of Directors

Oakland, CA — Monday, January 24th, 2011 — As Oakland Digital Arts & Literacy Center (ODALC) moves into the New Year, the Board of Directors continues to recruit new members and further define the roles of existing ones. What follows is an alphabetical list of ODALC's current Board Members and the individual qualities they contribute.

► **Jesse Elias**

Jesse is responsible for composing the bulk of written materials for ODALC. He has authored a number of proposals, press releases, and items of correspondence that were instrumental in garnering publicity and support for the organization in its first year.

Jesse was drawn to ODALC for its youthful energy and open-minded approach to community outreach. The organization's mission speaks to his personal belief that technological progress is ineffective without equal measures of social progress.

Jesse currently works for the Student Disability Services department at Aliant International University, where he is responsible for editing course materials into formats accessible to visually impaired students. Like Martin, he enjoys the writings of Albert Camus and holds a BA in Modern Literature from the University of California, Santa Cruz.

► **James Fong**

James is a Bay Area native, graduating from the University of California, Berkeley, and obtaining his MBA from the University of San Francisco. He spent most of his adult career in business banking with the Bank of America, where he retired as the Vice-President and Compliance Manager of the Northern California Commercial Loan Service Center. He now spends his time and resources in support of several non-profit organizations such as Oakland Digital Arts & Literacy Center. James is an avid proponent of ODALC's mission; he believes that continued education will help deter crime, reduce poverty, and improve Oakland's economic vitality.

As an ODALC board member, James is now in a unique position to share his corporate experience and insights with local and civic endeavors which aim to improve our quality of life.

► **Martin Kojnok**

Martin is a Co-Founder and Partner of GreenerDM, a sustainability-focused creative and print management agency. His enthusiasm working on a printed media project for ODALC's annual fundraiser quickly led to greater involvement with the organization and ultimately his position on the Board of Directors. As a strategically driven leader, Martin brings organization, planning, and focus to the table.

Martin has fifteen years of professional experience in marketing communications for top advertising and marketing agencies. He has an MBA in Sustainability from Presidio Graduate School and a BA in Modern Literature from the University of California, Santa Cruz. He was drawn to ODALC after his life experiences and residence in Oakland led him to the conclusion that digital technology is taken for granted by a majority of the business world, while there are communities—like many in Oakland—where even the most basic skills remain out of reach.

► **Cathy Kuzia**

Cathy is an Award winning print production strategist with over twenty years of experience. She holds a BA in Fine Art from SUNY Oswego and an MA in Graphic Arts Management from NYU. Cathy has been involved with Oakland Digital Arts & Literacy Center since the board of directors was first formed, citing the enthusiasm and conviction of founders Shaun Tai and Linda Poeng as her reason for initially taking interest in the organization. Since then, her maturity and problem solving skills have proven an invaluable asset to the organization.

Cathy currently works as the print procurer and consultant to Swirl Advertising, where she has been responsible for the current Bay Area "Clipper" campaign. She enjoys a wide variety of worldly interests, including cooking, painting, reading, travel, and caring for Molly, her oversized housecat.

► **Linda Poeng**

In 7th grade, Linda raised \$700 for her school over the course of one month by repackaging and selling candy. Since then, her good business sense has earned her a BS in Corporate Finance from San Francisco State University.

Since ODALC's inception, Linda has had the fiduciary responsibility of overseeing accounting, budgeting, and finance issues for the organization. Her commitment to the organization is driven by her understanding of the need it addresses: "Having access to broadband is one battle won, but many businesses and individuals in underserved communities don't have access to the knowledge and encouragement they need to utilize this technology for their own benefit."

Besides passionately devoting her time to ODALC, Linda acts as Art Director for ZTY MEDIA and is currently pursuing her DRE Broker's license.

► **Shaun Tai**

Shaun is the founder and Executive Director of ODALC. In 2008, Shaun successfully documented the history of Bay Area hip-hop culture, creating an online campaign that exceeded 14-million video views. The project opened his eyes to a lack of positive role-models and opportunities afforded to young adults in East Bay inner-city communities—a realization that would play a large part in his decision to create ODALC.

Shaun has taught at San Jose State University, where he received a BS in Business Marketing and an MA in Architectural & Urban Design. He is currently the Principal at ZTY MEDIA (2002 through 2010), a full-service creative firm with clients such as Facebook, LinkedIn, Accel Partners, Golden State Warriors, and the City & County of San Francisco. At ODALC, his success in digital entrepreneurship is lent to the task of helping Oakland citizens use technology to succeed in their own ventures.

"I love Oakland and I admire what Oakland stands for: diversity, art, and cultural understanding," says Shaun. "Oakland Digital educates, inspires, and empowers Oaklanders by helping them understand technology and through digital literacy, positively impact their lives and economic well-being."

► **Norman Weekes**

Norman is a recent and welcome addition to ODALC's expanding Board of Directors. In addition to twenty years of corporate sales experience, he possesses a background in business banking and commercial lending. His ability to understand corporate and small business perspectives provides a great advantage to ODALC's relations with those sectors.

Having majored in both Psychology and Communication Studies at State University of New York Oswego, Norman has a strong sense of rhetoric that allows him to effectively communicate ODALC's mission and vision. In his words, he "shares ODALC's passion to empower the powerless, awake dormant potential and raise the quality of life through technology and education."

Norman's outside interests include athletics and physical activities: "Although I started playing racquetball not too long after e-mail became popular, I can still beat most people my age and many half my age."

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