

LARISSA NIKOLA-LISA

PROFILE

A veteran educator with comprehensive experience in curriculum development, digital media arts and arts integration within urban high school settings. I am committed to equitable education and community-based initiatives that situate creative arts, social emotional learning, and personal storytelling as a pathway to holistic healing and community wellness. My background also includes arts administration, program management and documentary television production.

EDUCATION

MASTER OF ARTS

Visual Media Arts
Emerson College, Boston
2005-2007

BACHELOR OF SCIENCE

Elementary Education
University of Wisconsin, Madison
1997 — 2002

PROFESSIONAL SKILLS

Curriculum Design & Development
Mindfulness Education
Project-Based Learning
Social Emotional Learning
Facilitation & Teaching
Visual Arts Specialist
Community Engagement
Partnership Manager
Video Editing & Production

CERTIFICATIONS/AWARDS

Path to Freedom | Engaged Mindfulness
& Prison Mindfulness Institute | Oct 2024

Inward Bound Mindfulness Teacher
Training | Aug 2023- Aug 2024

Peace-Making Circle Training Community
Justice for Youth | 2017

Mindfulness in Education Network
Conference | 2015

Best Graduate Film & Short
Documentary | Evvy Awards, Emerson
College | 2007

WORK EXPERIENCE

FREELANCE CONSULTANT | Hybrid | 2024 - 2025

- *Project Wayfinder*: Seasonal facilitator of purpose-driven, SEL-based curriculum for professional learning series with regional school districts; presenting to both elementary and high school level teams around meaning, belonging, and equity in k-12 education.
- *NW Corporate Yoga*: Guided meditation and chair yoga workshops for professionals in corporate settings.
- *The Simple Good*: Curriculum consultant for a mindfulness-based youth arts nonprofit, serving diverse populations for a wide variety of school ages and program types, ranging from primary grades to adolescents.
- *Varsity Tutors*: Advising and connecting with families to provide educational support; targeting clients in need of executive functioning skills and stress-reduction.

CREATIVE ARTS TEACHER

Perspectives High School | Chicago IL | 2023 - 2024

- Designed and taught a mindfulness-based arts curriculum integrating expressive arts to support social-emotional learning and creative self-expression.
- Provided trauma-informed, culturally responsive support to high-needs students, centering emotional regulation and safety in the classroom.
- Led instruction for both 8th grade and 9th grade students, tailoring content and strategies across the middle-to-high school transition.
- Demonstrated adaptive problem-solving and resourcefulness within a high-needs, under-resourced public charter school environment.

EDUCATION PROGRAMS MANAGER

Arts + Public Life, University of Chicago | Chicago IL | 2022 - 2023

- Oversaw day-to-day operations of youth arts programs, ensuring smooth implementation and meaningful participant experiences.
- Managed enrollment processes, maintained accurate attendance records, and ensured compliance with program requirements.
- Served as the primary point of contact for students and families, providing clear, timely communication regarding all program aspects.
- Coordinated logistics for field trips, community events, student art exhibitions, and orientation sessions.
- Provided strategic curriculum and operational support to Teaching Artists.

MULTIMEDIA ARTS TEACHER

Chicago Tech Academy High School | Chicago IL | 2019 - 2022

- Designed and taught a Freshman multimedia arts course within a project-based learning environment, fostering student agency, collaboration, and real-world application.
- Implemented differentiated instruction strategies to meet the diverse learning needs and skill levels of high school students.
- Created and facilitated culturally responsive, inclusive classroom experiences that honored students' identities and promoted belonging.
- Developed and implemented a social justice-oriented arts curriculum around relevant contemporary issues.

YOUTH OUTREACH COORDINATOR

The School of the Art Institute | Chicago IL | 2017 - 2018

- Coordinated administrative operations for a youth-focused public arts program, ensuring smooth day-to-day execution and program compliance.
- Led active recruitment efforts in collaboration with local schools and youth-serving organizations to expand access and participation.
- Managed daily oversight of the art studio, including inventory, organization, and maintenance of supplies..
- Maintained accurate records of registration, consent forms, and program documentation to support reporting and evaluation.
- Cultivated and strengthened partnerships with community organizations and schools to deepen program impact and visibility.

CALM CLASSROOM INSTRUCTOR

Erikson Institute | Chicago IL | 2017 - 2018

- Mindfulness and meditation facilitator for CPS early childhood program.
- Instructor for research-based social emotional learning study, pilot program for Chicago children, grades kindergarten - 2nd grade.

FACILITY RENTAL AND PRODUCTION COORDINATOR

Chicago High School for the Arts | Chicago IL | 2015 - 2017

- Produced in-house video content for school-wide initiatives, performances, and art exhibitions.
- Managed media assets and created a digital archive of student performances, ensuring organized, accessible documentation for internal use and family engagement.
- Coordinated logistics for facility rentals and student performance bookings, serving as liaison between school, families, and external partners.

DIGITAL MEDIA ARTS INSTRUCTOR

Free Spirit Media | Chicago IL | 2011 - 2014

- Lead instructor for high school audio/video production courses, designing and delivering curriculum grounded in youth development principles, technical skill-building, and social justice education.
- Mentored opportunity youth in all phases of media production, resulting in award-winning student documentary films showcased at local and national festivals.

Developed and facilitated real-world, off-campus learning experiences—including community-based film shoots, industry collaborations, and public screenings—that connected students to professional networks and authentic audiences.

ASSOCIATE PRODUCER

American Masters (PBS) | Boston, MA | 2010 - 2011

- Managed pre-production logistics in a fast-paced, deadline-driven environment, including creation of detailed call sheets, per diems, and daily schedules.
- Coordinated complex travel arrangements for rotating cast and crew, resolving last-minute changes and emergencies with speed and professionalism.
- Handled post-production media management and assistant editing tasks, ensuring timely delivery and smooth transitions between production phases under tight turnarounds.

PRODUCTION COORDINATOR

Art21, Inc. (PBS) | New York City, NY | 2007 - 2009

- Co-managed day-to-day logistics for broadcast video shoots, ensuring smooth execution across multiple sites.
- Coordinated scheduling and on-site access with artist studios, museums, and gallery partners.
- Oversaw equipment and gear reservations, tracking availability and ensuring timely pick-up/drop offs.
- Maintained and organized the videotape archive, including dubbing, cataloging, and media asset management.
- Produced, filmed, and edited educational video content for online distribution, aligning with institutional learning goals and aesthetic standards.

MEDIA LAB INSTRUCTOR & FREELANCE PRODUCTION ASSISTANT

Emerson College & Harvard University | Boston, MA | 2005 - 2007

- Led hands-on workshops in cinematography, studio lighting, and audio/video production for undergraduate students, with a focus on broadcast standards and industry practices.
- Provided technical training in professional editing software, preparing students for work in television and digital media production.
- Supported broadcast television productions (PBS, Food Network, History Channel) through a range of on-set roles including camera assistant, slate operator, and set dressing/props coordination.

VIDEO EDITOR & INSTRUCTOR

Dreaming Tree Films | Chicago, IL | 2003 - 2005

- Lead in-house video editor for corporate clients, delivering high-impact visual storytelling across branded content, promos, and internal communications.
- Instructor for a national youth filmmaking program, teaching video editing techniques, visual narrative structure, and post-production workflow to aspiring teen filmmakers.
- Oversaw video archiving and media asset management, ensuring organized and accessible storage of large-scale digital content libraries.

VIDEO TEACHING-ARTIST

Community TV Network | Chicago IL | 2003 - 2004

- Core video instructor for *Media Smart Youth*: a health and media literacy pilot program with middle-school youth

ARTS PROGRAM COORDINATOR

Northwestern University | Evanston, IL | 2002 - 2003

- Documentation, research and evaluation for citywide Arts Partnerships
- Key liaison between arts organizations, Chicago Public Schools, and Northwestern University

VIDEO EDITOR & CINEMATOGRAPHER

UW Madison | Dept. of Curriculum & Instruction | Madison, WI | 2001 - 2002

- Produced, filmed, edited Spanish education videos distributed to the Wisconsin Public School System in a pilot program, The *TEACH Project*

C O N T A C T I N F O

Larissa Nikola-Lisa

3316 W Carroll Avenue

Chicago IL 60624

773.209.1497

nikolalisa@gmail.com

www.linkedin.com/in/larissa-nikola-lisa

www.margapictures.com

**References available upon request*