

# Josie K. Vano

Euclid, OH 🏠  
(440) 251-6763 📞  
josiekvano@gmail.com ✉️  
linkedin.com/in/josiekvano 🌐  
www.josiekvano.com 🌐

Creative Arts Educator and aspiring Expressive Arts Therapist-in-Training dedicated to advancing accessibility in the arts

## Education

**Lesley University**  
**Master of Arts**  
**May 2027**  
Clinical Mental  
Health Counseling &  
Expressive Arts Therapy

**Kent State University**  
**Bachelor of**  
**Integrative Studies**  
**May 2023**  
*Cum Laude*  
Psychology, Theatre, ASL  
Minor: Disability Studies and  
Community Inclusion

**Lakeland**  
**Community College**  
**Associate of**  
**Applied Science**  
**May 2021**  
*Summa Cum Laude*  
American Sign Language Studies

## Certifications

**State of Ohio**  
**Certified Family**  
**Peer Supporter**  
**October 2024**  
License # FPS.000199

## Work Experience

### Theatre Educator

Fairmount Center for the Arts

**June 2025 – Present**

Novelty, OH

- Instructed K-3 youth in theatre through regular weekly classes and summer camps, with lessons emphasizing storytelling through body and voice, turn-taking and community building, and foundational elements of theatre including characterization, improv skills, script work, and the role of production elements (props, costumes, lighting & sound)
- Co-facilitated a new STEAM program for homeschooled youth ages 5 – 8, in collaboration with Great Lakes Science Center, teaching 7-week workshops on science concepts through the arts

### Theatre Educator, Education & Creative Therapies Departments

Beck Center for the Arts

**February 2025 – Present**

Lakewood, OH

- Led theatre experiences for a variety of age groups in diverse settings, including in-house educational workshops and on-site social enrichment groups for children and adults
- Instructed workshops for youth ages 2 – 7, with lessons focused on imaginative play, turn-taking, explorations of body and voice, and foundational elements of theatre, culminating in a final workshop performance for students' families
- Facilitated weekly social enrichment group for adults in a dual diagnosis recovery center, teaching foundational acting skills with activities focused on community building, self-confidence, storytelling, and self-expression
- Guided youth in a crisis nursery through dramatic play activities in a weekly social enrichment group, focusing on self-expression, collaborative play, positive socialization with staff, and normalization of the environment
- Taught multiple weekly adaptive lessons in visual arts and dance for students ages 5 – 30 with a range of disabilities
- Supported community engagement events and short-term camps by leading sampler classes in music and visual arts

### Accessibility Coordinator, Associate Theatre Artist & Admin Support

Fringe Benefits Theatre Company

**October 2021 – Present**

Los Angeles, CA

- Developed HR assets for compliance with state and federal law, including associated trainings and employee handbook
- Created resources on including disabled performers in Theatre for Social Change workshops and other theatrical environments, based on research and other work produced by disabled theatre artists and performance groups
- Adapted material into workshop to present to Fringe theatre artists and other professionals at Master Class symposium
- Reviewed Master Class applications for participant accessibility needs and ensured accommodations were available
- Researched and developed grant proposals in alignment with Fringe's program objectives and funding needs

### Program Coordinator, ACES Creative Arts Club

NAMI Lake County, OH

**March 2024 – June 2025**

Painesville, OH

- Developed program structure for a new middle school support group, ACES Creative Arts Club (Arts for Connection, Empowerment and Support), using creative arts activities to teach coping strategies and foster peer-to-peer connection
- Created arts-based activities to demonstrate coping skills and encourage reflective discussion among participants, using a foundation of culturally responsive, trauma-informed SEL frameworks
- Planned and coordinated first annual Brainwaves Youth Leadership Summit, helping Lake County teens to develop leadership skills in the context of mental health literacy and advocacy
- Developed and led new Youth Advisory Council, giving area youth a voice in NAMI programming, facilitating connection with the NLCO Board of Directors, and developing young leaders in mental health advocacy

## Family Support Specialist, FSS Program

NAMI Lake County, OH

July 2024 – June 2025

Painesville, OH

- Supported, educated, and advocated for families of children (birth to 21) engaged in multiple systems of care across Ashtabula, Cuyahoga, Lake, and Geauga counties
- Developed MS Access database to track family information and advocacy needs, with companion user guide for team
- Produced employee procedural guide for incoming family advocates, detailing various processes in working with families
- Created data tracking systems for responsive grant reporting

## Assistant Teacher, OST Program

Cleveland Play House

January 2024 – March 2024

Cleveland, OH

- Planned and facilitated after-school creative arts programming with K-5 students to support students' social emotional learning experience and overall development while maintaining a positive classroom environment
- Assisted community partners in facilitating programming to engage students in variety of learning opportunities

## Career Peer for Students with Disabilities

Kent State University Career Exploration and Development

January 2022 – May 2023

Kent, OH

- Expanded career services programming for disabled students to address their specific needs, experiences, and career goals by collaborating with university partners and collecting feedback from students
- Advised students on developing resumes and cover letters, provided general career guidance, and connected students to resources for interviewing, applying to graduate school, and finding jobs and internships
- Presented career-focused lectures to a diverse population of students to supplement classroom instruction

## Summer Intern

Cleveland Foundation

May 2022 – August 2022

Cleveland, OH

- Partnered with Cleveland non-profit host site, the Jarvis Gibson Foundation, while also participating in site visits, professional development sessions, and networking events with the Cleveland Foundation
- Assisted in curriculum development for an educational program focused on youth development through sports by aligning program activities with Penn State's Developmental Assets for Positive Youth Development
- Researched and developed grant proposals to support host site programming, successfully raising funds for a new food access initiative for youth in Cleveland's Central neighborhood

## Volunteer Experience

### Girl Scouts of North East Ohio

Gold Award Advisor, 2025

### Arlene's Broadway on Buffalo

Youth Summer Theatre Camp

Education Director and Accessibility Coordinator,

July 2024 – present

Advisory Committee, July 2023 – present

Youth Awards Banquet Host, January 2026

Awards Banquet Coordinator, January 2024

### NAMI Lake County, OH

NAMI Walks 5K

Event Staff, July - October 2023

NAMI Connection, Return to Hope

Support Group Facilitator & MH Educator,

October 2021 – March 2024

### Kent State LGBTQ+ Center

Rainbow Run 5K

October 2021, October 2022

### Kent State Community Engaged Learning

Utuaodo, PR – Alternative Spring Break

Service Trip

Trip Leader, March 2023

Detroit, MI – Alternative Spring Break

Service Trip

March 2022

### Kent State Transfer

Advisory Council

Herrick Conservatory Cleanup

November 2021

### Habitat for Humanity

Construction Volunteer, August 2021

### Destination Imagination

Assistant Director, 2018 – 2020

### Minds Matter Cleveland

Spring Gala Photographer, March 2018

### Special Olympics Ohio

Polar Plunge

Fundraising Participant, 2013 – 2015

### Great Lakes Medieval Faire

Volunteer Street Performer, 2006 – 2016

### Newton Community Theatre

Children's Theatre Program

Assistant Director, 2006 – 2007

## Organizations and Involvement

### Educational Theatre Association

Pre-Professional Member, May 2025 – present

### Expressive Therapies Student Association (ETSA)

Expressive Arts Therapy Committee

Dec 2024 – present

### International Expressive Arts Therapy Association (IEATA)

Student Member, Oct 2023 - present

### McNair Scholars Program

Student Researcher, 2022 – 2023

### Psi Chi Honor Society

Kent State Chapter

Vice President, 2022 – 2023

### Alpha Psi Omega

Beta Psi Cast

2022 – 2023

### Deaf Access and Allyship Organization

Kent State ASL Club

Treasurer, 2022

### Sigma Sigma Sigma Sorority

Alpha Beta Chapter

Housing Manager, 2022 - 2023

Honor Council Goals Coordinator, 2022

DEI Committee, Spring/Summer 2022

Education Committee, Spring 2022

Emerging Leaders Delegate, Spring 2022

### Order of Omega

Omega Nu Chapter

2022 – 2023

### Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society

Alpha Psi Rho Chapter

Chapter President, 2020 – 2021

### Lakeland Signers Club

Club President, 2020 – 2021

### Sigma Kappa Delta Honor Society

Lakeland Community College Chapter

Chapter President, 2020 – 2021