



Power of  
Storytelling  
NARRATIVE 4

# Stories of Impact

Annual Report 2022

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# Lisa Consiglio

Chief Executive Officer and Co-Founder



There he is in the middle of a photo that has become a bit famous in various Narrative 4 (N4) circles. Now over ten years old, it's a group shot of artists and activists who would eventually go on to help create a game-changing organization.

There he is again, over ten years later in his home state of Louisiana. Darrell is onstage and about to accept N4's first, annual Global Empathy Award.

But wait. Before we get to that stage, let's revisit those ten years.

"We went up to the mountains one night [in June 2012] and we spent the weekend brainstorming," he remembers. The resulting initiative, Narrative 4, is now a global network of educators, artists and students working to empower young people to learn how to hear others' voices and empathize with their stories.

In an innovative methodology, participants are paired with someone from another part of the world, or a different ideology, motivation or philosophy. They exchange their stories with one another one-on-one, sharing the details of their hardships, fears and motivations. The participants each have an opportunity to reflect on their partner's story, then come back the next day and tell that story to the entire group in first person. The result is a powerful and moving shift in understanding of the other's perspective. "It's a safe space where we can tell our stories and not be afraid of each other," he says.



In 2018, when N4 held their annual summit in New Orleans, Bourque was asked to head up the immigration theme for the kids who came from all over the world: Ireland, Connecticut, Africa, and Nazareth, among other [places].

"My job was to plan the students' immigration experience for the summit," he says. "I brought them into Arnaudville in a bus and

## "Darrell Bourque's poetry reflects empathy – both seen and envisioned"

by Anne Songy - July 15, 2021 partial interview reprinted from *The Daily Iberian*





asked them to imagine they were immigrants, going into a place and into a culture they had never seen before.” Bourque had the bus drop the group off a mile from the reception and they walked together, discussing the idea of cultures and migration. “I got a group of Native American dancers and singers to welcome them into Arnaudville, as we approached the house,” he recalls. “They brought us inside and had us do the welcome dance, too.”

Throughout the experience, Bourque explains, the Native American group walked with them, reminding them of how it feels to navigate a new culture. They ate Creole food and discussed the cuisine. They met Genaro Smith, an African American-Vietnamese poet and novelist, who told them about growing up as a mixed-race man in America. They met Phoebe Hayes, who talked about forced migrations. And they listened to musician Coleman Thibodeaux play Creole music and tell his immigration story.

Much of Bourque’s recent work has been rooted in strong social activism, “partly because of Narrative 4, which gave me insights as to what I could do to support it.” His last published work, *migraré*, is one he most associates with N4. “That book was brought on by my thoughts trying to process this whole idea of migrations and immigration and why that makes us so afraid.” He explores images of the wanderer and the wayfarer and how those travelers were always treated well in literature. “But all of the sudden in the 20th century, when a stranger comes into town, there’s all this distrust. And you do just the opposite of what that literature of antiquity tells us to do.” It’s precisely the theme he has helped students work through in Narrative 4.

Bourque’s experiences with N4 are also the impetus for his latest work. “I’m playing around with writing a group of poems that fuses conflicts,” he says. “The tentative title is *The Family*.” For Bourque the family in his poems is the one he’s been introduced to through Narrative 4: a diverse group of strangers who have come together from disparate places to tell each other’s stories, to give each other a voice and ultimately to meet somewhere in the middle.



Darrell Bourque



Back in June of 2012, one of the questions I asked of Darrell and the other artists was, “What is the highest aim of storytelling and how can we harness that energy to transform the world?” It’s not surprising Darrell’s answer would help shape and inform what was to become Narrative 4.

“After years of writing poems and teaching poetry workshops and thinking that I could not construct a story as story, this is opening up a whole new way of seeing how writing could work. The story, like a poem, is guided by the heart in search of itself, by the thinker being guided by best thought, by the drama that is about people living in the world, paying attention to what we are called to do as members of a family, a society, a nation, or by any subgroup in every conceivable division of those larger units.”

Darrell, thank you for your time, talent, and tireless dedication to using the power of poetry to unite people and inspire us to imagine a better world into being. Alongside of you, we are creating this world student by student, school by school, story by story.

We are so proud that you accepted our first, annual Global Empathy Award during the Louisiana Book Festival on October 28, 2022.

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read 'Yixin Cao'.



# Colum McCann

President and Co-Founder

My story begins, as many stories do, on a road. A long dirt road, off a South African highway. It dips and it swerves. Cranky and potholed. It cuts through a landscape of small squat houses, tin roofs, satellite dishes, concrete pipes lying agape, and shreds of plastic lying in a havoc all about. The road rattles beneath me. My heart swerves. I have heard much about this landscape and I am already absorbed by it. Barbershop. Car repair joint. Mobile phone store. Child balancing on the edge of a half wall. A teenager under a hat knit seemingly of scowls. A young boy joyous with a soccer ball.

It is late April 2022, in South Africa, and I am visiting The Narrative 4 (N4) Joe Slovo project for the first time. It is a brief visit, but I have visited it in my imagination many times before this. I have met Zukiswa Allah, Program Manager, N4 Africa, and several young students who have come to the N4 summits over the years. The area, I know, is a sprawling informal settlement of people relocated from other areas of the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan area. Six out of every ten people are unemployed. Two thirds of the young people have not completed Grade 12. Three quarters of the people have a monthly income of less than \$15.

The statistics stun me, but I also know that so much lies way beyond the mathematics of who we are and where we are going.

The road dips and then climbs another small series of hills. The space seems to widen, and the roadside bushes appear freer of tattered clutter. A low building



appears. Several blue shipping containers. Flower stands made out of tyres. Then a colorful “Recycle” board appears, and an “N4” insignia. Outside, a row of women and children stand along a fence, enormous bags of recycled plastic at their feet.

A soul-splitting awaits us. It is one of those moments that I stand inside and outside at the very same time. I have been invited here alongside my N4 co-founder Lisa Consiglio, our Director of African Operations, Buchi Onyegbule, and our Chief Operating Officer, Gautam Gangoli, each of whom has done an incredible amount in contributing to the reality of this place. I have done, frankly, very little, except to experience from afar the dream of what it might actually become.

The people who have truly brought the center into being are those who live with it on a daily basis— its thrills and its difficulties, its charms and its flaws, its future and its past, the light that is now and the shadows that have been in the past.

Time is suspended as I go through the center. My mind, immediately, becomes a camera-roll of images. The kitchen. The classroom area. The recycling



containers. The bins. The artwork. The library. The outdoor theatre. The sound of the wind swirling around the roof. And, always, the people. The workers. The teachers. The children. The elders. And, of course, Zuki herself, in the center of it all, managing humility, alongside grace, alongside determination too.

If it's a cliché to talk about joy, pride, and beauty, then let it be a cliché, because clichés exist for a reason – they are elements of truth, and they demand further nuance. But beyond the clichés lie other clichés – the open bottle, the syringe, the closed fist, the myopia, the abuse that also exists here, as elsewhere. Put all this together, it is a recipe for life that arises out of life.



during the pandemic. Sometimes kids walk five kilometers to get to the after-school classes. There are Skills and Crafts Acquisition training workshops for young people looking for jobs. Sewing classes. Welding workshops. Computer learning. And even a running club run by Zuki's husband, Jabu.

This pilot project belongs to the community. "If not us, then who?" asks Zuki. The vision is that what happens here can happen in many other places, not just in South Africa, but around the world.

That evening, we settle down to a meal, much of which has been sourced locally, including some vegetables directly from the garden outside. There are songs sung. There are stories told. There are tears wept. There are great jags of laughter that roll out into the nearby cactus hills.

It strikes me that we are in the presence of a local greatness that can have massive repercussions for other places around the world. The epic occurs when seemingly small moments are stacked up on top of each other.

When I leave, it is with reluctance, but also with the knowledge that the road away is also the road back.

*Ch. L.*



## "If not us, then who?"

At the heart of all this is the original idea – arising from an early Story Exchange – of turning trash to treasure. The center collects more than 75 tons of plastic bottles, cardboard paper and cans of soft drinks every month. In return for collecting the waste, the "traders," as they are known, are given access to food stuff, household projects and health items. "We give out food rather than money," says Zuki. "And as a consequence, we give safety. We give esteem. We give meaning. And hope. And, in the end more than 500 families end up being fed by this project."

Not only this, but the center became a distribution center for Covid 19 prevention kits and vaccinations



# Gautam Gangoli

Chief Operating Officer



2022 has been another transformative year for Narrative 4 (N4). We completed the development of our digital platform—an online destination where our global community of educators, students, and artists can easily access all of our programs and download resources for classroom use.

We have also managed to accelerate—faster than anticipated—the growth of our school partnerships and educator trainings, which means we now have the opportunity to scale at a rapid pace.

Throughout the year, we continued to focus on the strategic priorities that form the foundation for N4's global expansion, creating a deeper, sustainable impact at scale.

## Expanding our value proposition:

The N4 Story Exchange is the first point of entry for educators, students, and the general public to engage with the world of N4. In the last couple of years, we have developed interconnected programs and resources to build long-term relationships with our partners. Our programs have been designed to develop what we call “N4 Practices”: curiosity, deep listening, imagination, and positive action.

## Continuous, actionable impact measure:

We developed a N4 impact measurement framework that will help us to measure the efficacy and impact of our programs on students and educators. This framework includes a measurement strategy, indicators, and surveys which will be available on the digital platform.

## Sustainable school expansion model:

Both our train-the-trainer and regional hub models have been very effective in growing our facilitator base. While we are committed to reaching as many schools and students as possible, our focus is to create sustainable impact, while building long-term relationships with educators and students. In 2023, in order to further increase engagement with our existing educators and students, we will continue to build on the success of our models.

## Global brand positioning and strategy:

We have now finalized our global brand positioning and communications strategy. We also completed—and agreed upon—the employee code of conduct which aligns with our values. The brand marketing work will play a key role in globally recruiting and engaging with our core audience as we leverage media to communicate our achievements to the world at large.

## N4 digital platform development:

We completed the initial phase of our digital infrastructure and soft launched the digital platform in September 2022. The platform will provide an opportunity for students and teachers to develop meaningful local and global connections, while allowing us to measure our impact at the individual, school, and community levels. Both the new website and digital platform were very well received, and they will be key to reaching an exponential number of students.

“ We have a great team of passionate, enthusiastic individuals who are committed to our mission and our vision, making it a truly global learning organization! ”

**“Throughout the year, we continued to focus on the strategic priorities that form the foundation for N4's global expansion, creating a deeper, sustainable impact at scale.”**





# Margaret LaRaia

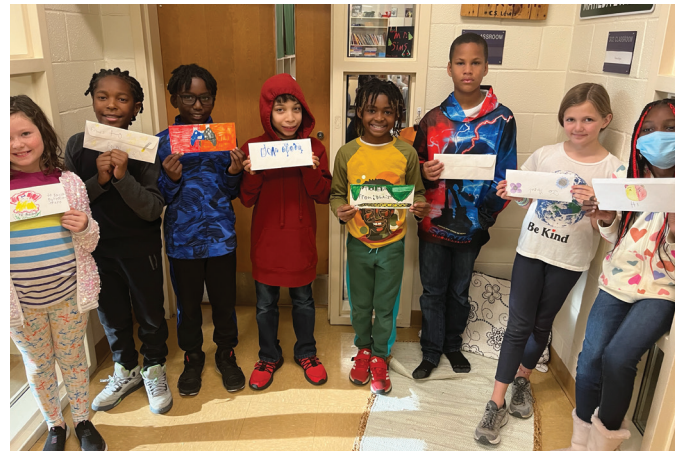
Director of Learning Resources

“How can we sustain community once teachers have learned how to facilitate the Narrative 4 (N4) Story Exchange?”

Throughout 2022, this question has informed our work, taking shape in a variety of ways, namely two projects that emerged from our N4 Teaching Fellows: “The Letter Exchange” and “Storytelling for a New Democracy.”

**“The Letter Exchange” has connected students across the globe with 361 participating students from 22 schools in Ireland, Mexico, Nigeria, and the U.S.**

“Storytelling for a New Democracy” explores how students can move from binary political debate to ethical consensus building. 164 students from 8 U.S. schools are gathering diverse perspectives from other students on issues they care about. Their final product will be a letter proposal to a local politician, identifying both the myriad points of view that need to be considered when addressing the issues and the possible ways the community can move towards positive solutions. Both projects started with a N4 Story Exchange based on the following prompts:



## Being Judged

Have you ever felt judged in a way that felt limiting? Tell a story about that experience or about a time you were able to move past an initially negative judgment of someone else.

## The Value of Diverse Perspectives

Tell a story about a time when your understanding of perspectives different from your own helped you navigate a new or challenging situation.

We are currently pursuing grant opportunities to bring this experience to more students in 2023. Our plans also include piloting more school partner projects that provide authentic connection and ways for students to envision a better future for themselves and others.

“Their final product will be a letter proposal to a local politician, identifying both the myriad points of view that need to be considered when addressing the issues and the possible ways the community can move towards positive solutions.”





# Lee Keylock

Director of Global Programs

Imagine the joy I felt as I glanced over the shoulder of Joseph Onokpe, N4 Africa's Regional Manager based in Nigeria, as he read an email from Obianuju, a student from University Heights School in The Bronx, NY, who had just participated in N4's November, 2022 Field Exchange program with students from Langley, KY.

"So here are some of the ways we (students) can help each other and unite N4 America with N4 Africa. Let me know your thoughts," Obianuju's email to Joseph concluded.

The N4 Field Exchange is designed to inspire in students like Obianuju such ideas; she represents the next generation of youth changemakers. The Field Exchange is an immersive program between two school partners in different regions that focuses on building relationships and turning empathy into action. It's a unique opportunity for youth from completely different communities



to break down barriers, become life-long friends, and envision a world where community and civic engagement are the norm.

Due to the pandemic, we haven't been able to unite these students in person for three years. That means three years since we've been able to witness firsthand the transformative change that happens when you bring together students from vastly different demographics. And three years since we've been able to watch students seek ways to heal our seemingly divided world.

And then, in November 2022, our Langley, KY students traveled to meet their South Bronx, NY counterparts and together they visited local individuals who work to tackle some of the most pressing community challenges in innovative ways. At the Bronx Academy of Arts and Dance, choreographer Arthur Avilés and author Charles Rice-González revealed how contemporary dance explores life on the margins in order to promote positive change. At Chocobar Cortez, where chocolate and art come to life, Executive Director Carlos Cortés spoke with students about ways to foster service to one's community. At Starlight Park, Bronx native Journei Bimwala encouraged students to make healthy ecological, recreational, educational, and economic choices using all that nature gifts their communities.



And if this wasn't enough, our Artists Network infused the landscape of civic engagement with even more inspiration. N4's President and Co-founder, author Colum McCann, led students on a walking tour through lower Manhattan to experience his effort to recover, rebuild, and repair after the 9/11 tragedy through his novel, *Let the Great World Spin*. World-renowned artist Molly Crabapple created sketches of students engaging with people and places around the city. Students even got to "imagine their futures" with the N4 Africa Team (Buchi Onyegbule, Zuki Allah and Joseph Onokpe) and Director of Learning Resources, Margaret LaRaia, who, together, made them think about their own strengths and the strengths of those in their communities as the first step in creating positive change.

Cue Obianuju email to Joseph. Joseph's call to action during the Field Exchange inspired her to write:

"we can help build a mentorship program between the US and Africa; run virtual story exchanges between our communities to learn from each other; create a virtual tutoring network to help one another succeed in school; start a book club; learn about the Trash to Treasure recycling program in Joe Slovo, SA, so that we can implement it in our own communities; learn how to fundraise together so that our vision can be realized."

And this, my friends, is why storytelling matters. This is why proximity—collapsing the distance between people and communities—matters. This is why the N4 Field Exchange matters. Because together these things create a platform for nuanced conversations and experiences that truly drive change. Just ask Obianuju and her peers.



**"The N4 Field Exchange is a unique opportunity for youth from completely different communities to break down barriers, become life-long friends, and envision a world where community and civic engagement are the norm."**



# Ru Freeman

## Artistic Consultant

This past November I had the opportunity to visit with one of Narrative 4's (N4) long-time partners, the Polytechnic School in Pasadena. During the course of the day, I had a chance to speak with every age group in separate assemblies, and with teachers and administrators, parents and community members.

Poly had chosen to use a set of N4 Learning Resources that we had built around a novel I had written, *On Sal Mal Lane*, but the engagement went far beyond that into a pilot program that would show us how an all-school, year-long engagement might look. It was the kickoff event, but it told me a great deal about how N4 programming can be adapted not only to a school's needs, but also to a whole community's needs, and used in and out of the classroom.

Poly is a critical partner in that they are the launch pad for all our California programming. They also embody N4's world view, sharing what they have, including their speakers and programming, with those outside the borders of their own community and privilege. Poly students have taken N4 on as a key tool in how they develop their own way of being global citizens, writing grants that can bring N4 into student groups and allow our customizable tools to inform the dynamics of teamwork in the US and abroad.



It was a gift for me to spend a day with a school, not something I get to do very often. It allowed me to see N4's key concept being brought to life, and to talk about the way our Learning Resources center creativity by demonstrating how art informs our work. The Poly event was the start of several events including schools and festivals where I was able to be an in-person ambassador for N4. Despite the wild success and flexibility of the Zoom-world, I do believe that one-on-one interactions are key to understanding what we do, how we do it, and measuring the resulting magic!

**“Our entire life is full of stories just waiting to be told. After seeing the world as a library of stories, your view on others will change. We must look at everyone with the same complexity we hope others will see us with.”**

— Ziko, Student, Polytechnic High School





# Ashley Pinciario

National Operations Director, USA

In 2022, we began working with The Can We? Project in Portland, Maine. The Can We? Project supports students in developing dialogue across differences. Working in multiple schools across the state of Maine, select students and teachers participate in 3 full-day The Can We? Project residencies, culminating in a civic engagement project to help bridge differences in their community. Narrative 4 (N4) partners with The Can We? Project to foster this kind of dialogue by helping students develop their deep-listening skills, their understanding and capacity for empathy, and their ability to build authentic connections with each other.

Last year, in Gorham, Maine, I led a N4 Story Exchange with a particularly wonderful group of students. As the students began to retell their partners' stories, I couldn't help but notice the differences in the group—a student from Iraq who identified as queer, a young man who grew up in the church but was struggling with his faith, a trans student who loved to make the circle laugh. Beyond their differences, I noticed the way they cared for each other. They held each other's stories with deep respect and care. They honored each other's stories through their listening and retelling. After the reflection portion of the Story Exchange, we left the



room and went to lunch. The mood had shifted. I could feel joy and connection amongst the students. New relationships had formed, and students gained a new understanding of each other. I left that day feeling a renewed sense of hope for our shared future, knowing that, with these students at the helm, we'd be in good hands.

**“Beyond their differences, I noticed the way they cared for each other. They held each other's stories with deep respect and care. They honored each other's stories through their listening and retelling.”**

Narrative 4 is working in

**35**  
countries

In North America we have

**139**  
new partners

**1,053**  
new facilitators

**15,353**  
new participants



## Jen McCool

Northeast Regional Manager,  
CT, PA, DE, MD, DC, and OH

In October 2022, we partnered with the University of Scranton (Scranton, PA) and several other community partners in Scranton, as part of "Scranton's Story, Our Nation's Story," a series of events focused on immigration and migration. Narrative 4 (N4) co-hosted two events—an Artists Network panel followed by a dinner and a mini-Story Exchange and a Story Exchange with 40 students from Scranton High School.

Those events were an excellent demonstration of the many facets of N4's work. Through both events we were able to bring together several different groups—students, community members, artists, and a diverse array of new Americans and immigrants. Those who attended the Artists Network event talked about feeling more connected after the mini-Story Exchange and how they had learned something new from their neighbors whose paths they would never cross in their daily lives. Similarly, the Scranton High School students shared stories



about feeling isolated and disconnected. Some told stories about not having many friends at school, while others shared what it was like to be a first-generation American. These events



highlighted how vital our work is. The isolation, disconnection, and polarity one can feel is not limited to any one age or race or community. Rather, it affects us all.

**"Returning to the act of listening to others fully and non-judgmentally is such a crucial skill to develop. We often think we know what another person means or what another group stands for, but we can miss a lot. I came out with a determination to be more conscious of this in my daily life. Slow down and listen and acknowledge others' points of view."**

— "Scranton's Story, Our Nation's Story" Participant



# Allison Lerman-Gluck

Northeast Regional Manager, ME, MA, NJ, NY, NH, VT, and RI



In November, a group of 30 educators from John F. Kennedy Memorial High School and Woodbridge Middle School in Woodbridge Township, New Jersey, came together for two days to take part in a N4 Story Exchange and Facilitator Training. Prior to the start of the Story Exchange and training, the teachers were understandably tired and feeling burnt out from the work of the late-Fall school year. But after two days, our work with these educators seemed to renew their energy and excitement for engaging students and bringing these two groups together.

**"I was a skeptic yesterday.  
Now I'm a believer."**

— Woodbridge Township Story Exchange Participant



Over the course of those two days, I was pleasantly surprised to see how excited the teachers became about N4's work. As one participant shared with me, "I was a skeptic yesterday. Now I'm a believer." At the end of the second day, I asked for a handful of volunteers to take point on our shared work. I was expecting 3-5 people to raise their hands. I've got a sign-up list of 12.

The goal of this partnership is to spark a collaborative civic engagement project between the middle and high school as part of the county's DEI initiative. Both schools will run multiple exchanges over the course of 6 months, concluding with the project proposal to be shared at the annual school board meeting in the spring.

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# Jahi Mackey

Southeast Regional Manager,  
LA, MS, AL, TX, FL, and GA

When I started with Narrative 4 (N4) as Regional Manager for the Deep South this year, my biggest priority was to engage with institutions that represented the full demographic and cultural diversity of the South. This was an important goal for me because I am not only a N4 Regional Manager, but I'm also a Louisiana native and resident.

N4's work with the Re'Generation Movement, a metro-Atlanta-based nonprofit that works with refugee and immigrant youth to celebrate diversity and promote global citizenship and peacebuilding, is an example of a new partnership that allowed us to realize our goal of reaching more diverse communities. In April, during our first virtual Story Exchange with Re'Generation Movement, people shared stories on topics ranging from universal experiences such as teenage growing pains and dealing with failure, to experiences no one should have to go through such as fleeing war and forced displacement. Afterward,

Re'Generation Movement Executive Director and Co-Founder, Jongdae Kim, and Director of Development, Paul Mvukiye Kesser, decided to integrate the Story Exchange into their ongoing work. In October, Re'Generation Movement facilitated their own Story Exchange with Clarkston-area youth (Clarkston is a suburb of Atlanta), and the organization plans to host more Story Exchanges in the future.

The South is a region made up of a kaleidoscope of cultures and nations, both past and present. Atlanta is one of those cities that best represents the South's diversity, and so we are excited to be working in the Greater-Atlanta area.



**“Having the space and opportunity to share a meaningful part of my own personal story and then hearing it come from someone else’s mouth gave me a new perspective on the value and significance of storytelling. Stories have power, and they are a valid and important part of our lives; if we share our stories, and are willing to listen to others, they could, even in the smallest ways, change our world.”**

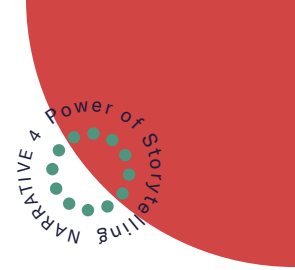
— Abby Kim, Story Exchange Participant





# Evan Barker

Southeast Regional Manager,  
TN, KY, WV, VA, NC, and SC



In the Upper South, 2022 has been a year of deepening relationships and nurturing, long-term projects. Building on the work we started in summer 2021 with the Moriah Fund-supported *Apeirogon* Narrative 4 (N4) Learning Resource pilot program, students at the W.E.B. DuBois Academy in Louisville, KY read Colum McCann's novel *Apeirogon*. As part of this pilot program, they wrote about what they learned from the novel and participated in a N4 Story Exchange. Then, "edutainers" (educational entertainers) from two, student hip-hop groups, the Mighty Shades of Ebony and Lionheart, wrote and recorded an original composition based on *Apeirogon*. In October, they held a music video premiere party on the top floor of the Muhammad Ali Center in downtown Louisville. In addition to a screening of the music video, the celebration included a Story Exchange.

The *Apeirogon* pilot project represents the dynamic programming N4 can offer as it combines the N4 Story Exchange and the *Apeirogon* N4 Learning Resource, engaging students with literature, fostering creativity and joy, and inspiring civic engagement. The Mighty Shades of Ebony and Lionheart "edutainers" are living the N4 credo of "empathy into action."



Edutainer Oren Hatchett describes the work: "We are kids who want to make sure what we produce makes the world better. You don't have to understand how to get there, you just have to have an interest in something, educate yourself about that thing, and cultivate a passion to activate your community around that issue. The momentum of that care and interest will allow you to affect the change you want to see."

The Upper South region also added our first Regional Associate to the team, Kate Rudder. Kate first encountered N4 in Zimbabwe while researching her master's thesis, and she was instrumental in bringing N4 Africa's Director of Operations, Buchi Onyegbule, to Harare for the first-ever N4 Story Exchange in Zimbabwe. Kate has since returned to her hometown of Chattanooga, TN, where she is recruiting new partners and conducting community-facilitator trainings. We're thrilled to have Kate and her talents supporting the Upper South region.

**"We are kids who want to make sure what we produce makes the world better. You don't have to understand how to get there, you just have to have an interest in something, educate yourself about that thing, and cultivate a passion to activate your community around that issue. The momentum of that care and interest will allow you to affect the change you want to see."**

— Oren, Student, WEB Dubois Academy





# Taelor Lewis

Midwest Regional Manager,  
ND, SD, MN, MI, WI, IL, IN, and IA

2022 has been an incredible year of growth for the Midwest Region. Our focus has been on deepening our relationships and community ties within Chicago Public Schools and throughout the Chicagoland Area. We've developed partnerships with Act Now and Community in Schools Chicago (CIS Chicago); these partnerships have been instrumental to helping us spread N4 to the larger Chicago community and Illinois overall.



This year, we've also worked to build upon connections with partners that have a historic affiliation with N4. Christian Fenger Academy High School and N4 Master Practitioner Charles Miles, for example, are pillars of the N4 community and have done incredible work over the years. With Charles' hard work, we were able to host a school-wide, N4 Story Exchange event at Fenger High School as part of their Wellness Wednesday, the school's ongoing workshop series. Over 200 students and 21 staff members participated in their first, school-wide Story Exchange. Seeing the culmination of Charles' years of hard work and dedication to the N4-Christian Fenger Academy High School partnership was incredible.



That event was just one of many that have contributed to the growth and success of the Midwest Region. I also want to highlight the incredible work Christina Pearce, Regional Associate, has done this year; her advising and leadership have led us to some incredible growth, and we look forward to continuing in 2023!



**“This year, we’ve also worked to build upon connections with partners that have a historic affiliation with N4.”**





# Tai Schroeder

Pacific Northwest Regional Manager,  
WA, OR, ID, and CA

**“In one year alone, our partner portfolio has grown from 25 to 46 (and counting)! We are grateful for the love, support, and continual enthusiasm we have received in the field.”**

Two years into building Narrative 4's (N4) network out West, our Pacific Northwest Team has started to feel the positive effects of organic network weaving and grassroots community organizing. In one year alone, our partner portfolio has grown from 25 to 46 (and counting)! We are grateful for the love, support, and continual enthusiasm we have received in the field.

Below are just some examples of the incredible work our new 2022 PNW partners have accomplished in their first year with us.

## Boise, Idaho:

In June, the N4 Pacific Northwest Team partnered with both the Wassmuth Center for Human Rights and the Open Arms Dance Project. The collaboration supports the Open Arms Dance Project ambassadors, “a community of neurodiverse dancers with diverse bodies, ages, abilities, and dance experience creating powerful art together.” As trained N4 facilitators, the ambassadors plan to use the Story Exchange with students in the schools to complement the Dance Project’s vision “to empower a diversity of people to share their unique creative expression through equitable, collaborative dance making that has the ability to transform communities.”

## Davis, California:

University of California, Davis journalism students took part in a pair of Story Exchanges. The first was a student-to-student exchange, used to strengthen social connections between students and familiarize them with the methodology, structure, and power of the exchange. The second was an exchange between students and frontline health workers in their community, and provided the journalism students with meaningful, personal introductions to the stories of the healthcare system that would become key components of their reporting projects throughout the semester.

## Portland, Oregon

Youth Advocates for Immigrants & Refugees is a group of highly-motivated Portland State University students who have united to build bridges of cross-cultural understanding through art, activism, and storytelling. YAIR students hosted a Story Exchange in a local mosque and in various elementary schools, focusing on strengthening their refugee community programs.

Thank you to all of our partners who have supported N4 in the Pacific Northwest. Whether you are a new partner or have been with us since the beginning, we are proud to be working with you, and we are excited to continue thoughtful and intentional collaboration with you in 2023!





# James Lawlor

Director, N4 Ireland

Narrative 4 (N4) Ireland launched two new initiatives in 2022, the N4 Empathy School Award to amplify and highlight the incredible work that teachers are doing in fostering caring and empathetic environments for their students, and the “N4km Walk and Talk.”

The Empathy School Award recognises post-primary schools that foster an environment of empathy, lead with kindness, and cultivate connection and understanding in their students and staff. There are three levels of award: Bronze, Silver, and Gold. In working towards the Bronze Empathy School Award, schools must complete 5 Story Exchanges, have at least 3 teachers trained in N4 Story Exchange facilitation, complete a presentation to staff about N4, take part in the “N4km Walk and Talk Empathy Challenge,” and deliver a Story Exchange

to 15% of staff. In 2022 over 6,000 students across the country took part in the Empathy School Award, and four schools achieved their Bronze Award.

The “N4km Walk and Talk” was born out of the Covid-19 pandemic when teachers expressed the need for more outdoor activities for their students. With a focus on wellbeing, the “N4km Walk and Talk” is an outdoor 4km walk where students pair up and respond to a series of prompt questions as they talk, reflect, and get to know each other.

Both programs have increased engagement between N4 Ireland and our facilitator network. They have highlighted active N4 schools, and allowed us greater exposure to the impact, the reach and the potential of the N4 Story Exchange.



**“Our school took part in the Bronze Empathy School Award. We found both the students and teachers really benefited from the activities. It created a culture of care within the class. We are now working towards our Silver award!”**

— Sr. Liz Smyth, St. Dominic’s College Ballyfermot (our first Bronze awardee!)







# Buchi Onyegbule

Director, N4 Africa

"It was very uncomfortable, but I don't think that's necessarily a bad thing. I think that discomfort is the essential catalyst for growth..."

At the end of 2021, after establishing a Narrative 4 (N4) presence in two East African countries—Tanzania and Kenya—we made the strategic decision to bring N4 to Zambia, making it our second Southern African country after South Africa.

However, early in February 2022, I spoke with Kate Rudder, currently N4's Southeast Regional Associate, who was then studying in Zimbabwe and who had engaged with N4 and our work through Southeast Regional Manager Evan Barker. Kate and I had a conversation about what she admired about N4, and she asked why I couldn't come into Zimbabwe. I tried to explain that it was not budgeted or planned, but if you know Kate, you know she does not take "no" for an answer. "How can we make it work," she asked. We put our heads together and set up a Facilitator Training at Chisipite Senior School in Harare, Zimbabwe, as well as an inter-school Story Exchange in the same city, all taking place over two days.

While completing our planned expansion in Lusaka, Zambia, I applied for a Visa and jetted into Harare, Zimbabwe. Chisipite's amazing Drama teacher, Jamie McClaren, supported our efforts, and while the training was successful thanks to our amazing hosts, it was the inter-school Story Exchange that stuck with me the most.



You see, the N4 Story Exchange is famed for the myriad ways it makes impressions on the young mind, creates connections and teaches empathy. But there was a constant thread through the engagements from these young people in Harare, Zimbabwe that stood out: They all learned and showed an immense willingness to de-center themselves and to lean into their discomfort in order to share and empathize. From sports jocks to reserved, quiet and studious students, each one was effusive about their biggest take away that centered around this particular learning. And for the first half of 2022, when training Story Exchange facilitators, my favorite phrase became "discomfort is the essential catalyst for growth." I'd come into Harare, Zimbabwe as an N4 Story Exchange veteran, equipped and willing to discuss the importance and benefits of learning empathy, but I ended up learning perhaps my biggest lesson from teenagers who were experiencing the Story Exchange for the first time in their lives.

**"I think that discomfort is an essential catalyst for growth and this experience really helped me grow."**

— Phil K., Student, St. John's College,  
Harare, Zimbabwe



# Maru Castañeda

Operations Manager, N4 Mexico



One of my favorite 2022, N4 Mexico projects was our first community event, *“El arte como la historia de nuestras vidas”* (Art as the Story of Our Lives). In partnership with the Universidad del Noreste (UNE), we hosted a two-part art and storytelling event in June that involved over 70 community participants from Tampico, Mexico.

First, participants of all ages experienced a photography-based N4 Story Exchange. We created a gallery with images taken by UNE students. To take care of our environment, the images were displayed on several TV’s and, with the help of the UNE team, a beautiful set was created. After exploring the gallery, our participants were asked to select the image that resonated with them the most and to then share a story based on that particular photograph. Our UNE-trained facilitators, N4 alumni, and the N4 Mexico team led a beautiful story exchange. One community member reflected on the event, noting, “The moment we finished sharing our stories I realized we were all equally human.”



**“The moment we finished sharing our stories I realized we were all equally human.”**

— N4 Mexico Community Event Participant



The second part of that night, “Music & Literature,” highlighted the artistic talent of UNE students and continued to take our breath away. N4 has always connected art and stories, and this day was no exception. We wanted to have an event that highlighted our diversity and inclusion. Students sang the song *“Color esperanza”* in sign language, and the evening included a dance performance, violin recital, and much more!

The event reached our local newspapers, where I shared the importance of giving our community a space to express their stories. One lesson learned from the success of this event is the importance of having partners like UNE that believe in, and support, N4’s work. Our partners are key to spreading the N4 magic. We hope to recreate this community event annually, incorporating different N4 themes and inviting our Tampico community to become more and more involved.





November 2022

# Global Staff Retreat

Our first Global Staff Retreat since 2020 was a week filled with energizing bonding activities, fireside chats, and fun!



Together, we worked toward developing a shared understanding of N4's mission and vision and how they align with our individual and collective goals. We took time to reflect on—and



celebrate—key organizational milestones: N4's 10th anniversary, the development and launch of our digital platform, and the growth and innovation campaign.



Thank you to all of our supporters who have generously given  
their time, talent, funds and friendship!

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# N4 Board and Staff

(in alphabetical order)



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Director of Employee Experience & Engagement

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Regional Associate

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Program Coordinator, N4 Ireland

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Director of Global Programs

**Lisa Consiglio**  
Chief Executive Officer and Co-Founder

**Ly Lo Cong**  
Global Director of Technology Information

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Director of Learning Resources

**Maru Castañeda**  
Operations Manager, N4 Mexico

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Consultant

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Program Assistant, N4 Ireland

**Rachel Gleeson**  
Program Manager, N4 Ireland

**Ru Freeman**  
Artistic Consultant

**Ryan Alexander**  
Chief Financial Officer

**Sean Cain**  
Regional Associate

**Summer Payne**  
Regional Associate

**Surabhi Raj**  
Digital Operations Assistant

**Taelor Lewis**  
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**Tai Shroeder**  
Pacific Northwest Regional Manager

**Vanessa Manko**  
Communications Manager

**Zukiswa Allah**  
Program Manager, N4 Africa

## Narrative 4 Global Board of Directors

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**Colum McCann**  
President and Co-Founder

**Sharhonda Bossier**  
Director

**Heather Mitchell**  
Director

**Gideon Stein**  
Treasurer

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**Colum McCann**  
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**Vicki Nash**  
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**Bill Shipsey**  
Board Member

## Narrative 4, Inc. and Subsidiary

### Consolidated Statement of Activities

Year Ended December 31, 2021

|  | Without Donor<br>Restrictions | With Donor<br>Restrictions | Total               |
|--|-------------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------|
| <b>REVENUE and SUPPORT</b>                                 |                               |                            |                     |
| Contributions and grants                                   | \$ 1,647,541                  | \$ -                       | \$ 1,647,541        |
| Program fees   | 96,804                        | -                          | 96,804              |
| Miscellaneous revenue                                      | 29,233                        | -                          | 29,233              |
| Net assets released from restrictions                      | 700,000                       | (700,000)                  | -                   |
| <b>Total Revenue and Support</b>                           | <b>2,473,578</b>              | <b>(700,000)</b>           | <b>1,773,578</b>    |
| <b>EXPENSES</b>  |                               |                            |                     |
| Program services   | 2,344,176                     | -                          | 2,344,176           |
| Management and general                                     | 650,979                       | -                          | 650,979             |
| Fundraising  | 266,209                       | -                          | 266,209             |
| <b>Total Expenses</b>                                      | <b>3,261,364</b>              | <b>-</b>                   | <b>3,261,364</b>    |
| Gain on forgiveness of Paycheck<br>Protection Program loan | 129,825                       | -                          | 129,825             |
| <b>Change in Net Assets</b>                                | <b>(657,961)</b>              | <b>(700,000)</b>           | <b>(1,357,961)</b>  |
| <b>NET ASSETS</b>  |                               |                            |                     |
| Beginning of year  | 1,187,963                     | 1,300,000                  | 2,487,963           |
| <b>End of year</b>   | <b>\$ 530,002</b>             | <b>\$ 600,000</b>          | <b>\$ 1,130,002</b> |



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NARRATIVE 4

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