

Hi everyone,

It has been an amazing two years for me! I think this is the best way I can sum up the experience, "A lot of huge highs and deep lows". I felt that I had a huge learning curve in a very different way than what I was used to when I worked in Information Technology at HP/Agilent. At the same time, I applied much of what I knew to grow BAGI by using technology to create more outreach into the community. My vision to connect with the community and the organization has been worth every bit of time and effort. In the past 2 years, we have re-established old friends and created many, many new ones. There are so many successes that I can't list them all in the message: new classes for kids, new ways to get the word out to the local community, new events and new Visiting Artists have been the highlights of the past 2 years. BAGI's outreach and collaborative vision has opened up possibilities of new projects in the community. The future is certainly looking bright for BAGI.

In mid-July, I will step away as BAGI's Executive Director and take on an assignment with a private-sector technology company. It is a bittersweet choice I have made but this decision will help take care of a situation very important in my personal life. I will be part of the interview team for the next Executive Director and will continue to help BAGI with events, studio repairs and as "an Artist", rent blow time at BAGI on a regular basis. The next Executive Director will have a chance to work with some great people and an organization that is truly something very special in the South Bay. However, continuing the vision for BAGI will not be a "walk in a park". As with all non-profits, we must continue to re-invent ourselves and evolve, as demonstrated by the changes since I enrolled in my first class at BAGI in 2003. Creating sustainable economic models is critical for arts organizations like BAGI and for artists. You and so many others have helped BAGI through some very, very tough times. Please continue the fight to make BAGI a "treasure" in San Jose, the Bay Area and the arts community.

Mark