

COLLECTIVE ARTS AND LEARNING NETWORK

THERAPEUTIC ARTS PARAPROFESSIONAL TRAINING IN AFRICA (TAPTA)

2027 TRIP TO KENYA

January 30-February 14 (Jan 30-Feb 16 with optional safari)

Invitation for Creative Arts Therapists &
Related Professionals to Apply!

DEADLINE - TRIP APPLICATIONS: June 6, 2026*

Applicants will be reviewed & notified on a rolling basis. Apply early to secure lower airfare.

*Trip applications received after the due date will still be considered but may be assessed a higher trip fee if costs for local transportation or accommodations increase



This training is based on the idea that **everyone is a teacher and everyone is a learner**. The education of most visiting professionals has been centered in ideas about therapy and art that are individualistic and Eurocentric in nature. Thus, learning alongside East African participants provides exposure to deeply embedded arts and cultural practices that integrate social, psychological, physical, and spiritual wellbeing within a collectivist understanding of health and wellbeing.

In addition to the formal TAPTA program, we also have some time off from the training to engage with our East African colleagues in exploring local sites, cultural resources, and restaurants. We also do a post-TAPTA excursion with visiting professionals to reflect on our experiences and to prepare for the journeys back to our homes. For those interested, an additional two-day safari is an option.

Background

[The Collective Arts and Learning Network \(CAALN\)](#) is a non-profit organization based in the U.S. dedicated to cultivating creative expression and education through cross-cultural collaboration. Learn more at caaln.org.

CAALN is the host organization for the annual Therapeutic Arts Paraprofessional Training in Africa (TAPTA). Since 2008, groups of arts therapists, artists, counselors, and social workers from the U.S. and other countries have traveled to East Africa for the TAPTA. There, they collaborate with African artists, counselors, social workers, and other professionals in an exchange of therapeutic arts skills and knowledge, with the aim of supporting the development of the creative arts therapies in East Africa.

Therapeutic Arts Paraprofessional Training in Africa (TAPTA)



TAPTA Vision: To make ethical, responsible, culturally relevant therapeutic arts programs widely available for children, youth, families, and communities in East Africa.

TAPTA Mission: To support the development of ethical, responsible, culturally relevant therapeutic arts programs in East Africa by providing adult trainees with the knowledge and skills necessary to effectively apply paraprofessional therapeutic arts practices to their work with children, youth, families, and communities.

Core values:

- That collaboration and the exchange of knowledge and skills are key aspects of respectful and generative cross-cultural trainings.
- That a locally relevant approach to therapeutic arts practices will be shaped by privileging African values, cultural practices, and understandings of health and wellbeing.
- That peer support and feedback are essential to the ongoing development of skills and responsible practice.
- That self-care is essential to sustaining therapeutic arts practice

This mission is addressed by providing **paraprofessional training** for and with East African artists and other professionals who have the interest, skills, sensibilities, and dedication to provide strengths-based therapeutic arts programs in their local contexts. CAALN coordinates the annual Therapeutic Arts Paraprofessional Training in Africa (TAPTA), which is collaboratively developed and led by East African therapeutic artists and creative arts therapists from the U.S. and other countries. The three-year trainings cover basic and intermediate creative arts therapies and counseling skills within a trauma informed and culturally relevant framework.

CAALN also provides **small grants** that “graduates” of the TAPTA 3-year training program are eligible to apply for. The grants support the development and implementation of therapeutic arts programs for children, youth, families, and communities.

In addition, CAALN supports **local workshops** led by members of the East African Leadership Team that introduce the creative arts therapies to professionals in their communities. These workshops serve the dual purposes of expanding the skills of local professionals and identifying candidates for upcoming TAPTA programs.

Aims of the TAPTA trip:

- To advance the development of local therapeutic arts programs through formal workshops and skill shares, informal interactions, and collaborative peer consultation.
- To provide the opportunity for a cross-cultural exchange of skills and knowledge among therapeutic artists and other care professionals from East African countries and creative arts therapists and related professionals from other countries.
- To educate visitors about the rich social and cultural resources in East Africa, including arts-related health and social practices designed to address the needs of children, youth, adults, and communities.
- To address the needs and challenges of local TAPTA participants relative to their nascent, developing, or established therapeutic arts practices.

General Structure



Pre-trip orientation and preparation:

Mandatory pre-trip orientations conducted online cover information about the CAALN and the TAPTA, the trip itinerary, expectations of trip participants, and practical aspects of the trip. The leadership team also provides an orientation to Kenya and the broader East African context, critical considerations for cross-cultural work, the model used in the TAPTA trainings, and the roles and expectations for trip participants.

Required readings and other resources support these orientation meetings and are explored further through optional online pre-trip discussions and through the in-person orientation in Kenya.

The East African participants also have online and in-person orientations to become acquainted with one another and to orient new participants to the framework, theoretical basis, and expectations for participation.

Orientation in Africa:

Once the visitors arrive in East Africa, there is an orientation meeting to get to know one another as collaborators, to establish the framework for the training program, and to more deeply understand the collaborative consultation model used in the TAPTA.

Following this, there are introductions and an orientation for East Africans and Visitors together, with the aims of providing informal and formal opportunities for everyone to get to know each other, to establish roles, guidelines, and working relationships, and to review the training schedule.



Destinations and training focus:

The 2027 TAPTA will take place in Kenya. Those of us who are visitors will be joined in Nairobi by experienced therapeutic arts paraprofessionals and new trainees from Kenya, Tanzania, Rwanda, and Uganda. Training workshops and skill shares will take place in Naivasha, Eldoret and Kisumu, which are in Central and Western Kenya.

Our focus is on multi-level training, with the overall goals of sharing knowledge and cross-disciplinary practices that can be applied to psychosocial issues in the East African participants' local contexts.

The primary emphasis of the trip is on therapeutic arts and counseling skills training through presentations, workshops, discussions, and art-based skill shares. The training is cross-cultural and interdisciplinary in nature, with visiting creative arts therapists, counselors, and African therapeutic artists working together whenever possible to lead training sessions. The visitors share their knowledge and experiences related to the arts therapies and counseling, and the East African participants share their knowledge and experiences related to cultural practices and resources, local therapeutic arts practices, Indigenous healing practices, and the needs of their communities.



Expectations of visitors:

- To work in a collaborative, cross-cultural, interdisciplinary manner.
- To be open, sensitive, and respectful in relation to cultural differences between visitors and East African participants, as well as among visiting participants.
- To listen more and talk less in order to foster dialogue with non-native English speakers and to ensure our emphasis is on the training needs of the East African participants.
- To enable true cross-cultural collaborations by decentering the expert role.
- To understand that personal educational interests and travel agendas are secondary to the primary aim of the trip, which is development of the therapeutic arts in East Africa through paraprofessional training.
- To contribute to cultural exchange through sharing knowledge, skills, ideas, feedback, and support.

Meetings:

Throughout the trip, a morning group reflection time will enable Visitors and East African participants to collectively reflect on their experiences, address issues that arise, and share cross-cultural perspectives.

There are also regularly scheduled meetings for Visitors to check in with each other and with the Leadership Team about the overall trip experience, share perspectives, pose questions, and support one another.

Arts & culture:

Though the primary aim of this trip is not tourism, there will be opportunities to visit arts and culture sites in Kenya, including through both whole group outings and a visitor-only post-trip excursion..



Optional safari

Visitors can also elect to participate in an optional safari at the Masai Mara National Reserve at the end of the trip, once the training program and post-training excursion have concluded.

Health and Safety Considerations

CAALN makes the safety of travelers a top priority. We are concerned with the physical, mental, and emotional aspects of a safe travel experience. We attend to these concerns through both pre-trip preparations and on-the-ground safety practices. In the event of any potential risks to health or safety associated with our travel plans, the itinerary will be adjusted accordingly to prioritize the overall safety and wellbeing of participants.

Members of the CAALN Visitor Leadership Team have worked for nearly 25 years with a known and trusted local tour company. This tour company consults with security and government personnel in East Africa and is well apprised of political conditions on the ground. In addition, Linda Stolz, CAALN's Executive Director, has made more than 40 trips to Africa over the last 25 years, and other trip leaders have traveled to East Africa numerous times. Thus, they have collectively maintained keen awareness of local politics and events and strong connections to the region.

CAALN also monitors public health threats, risks, or associated restrictions like those that took place during the COVID-19 pandemic.

In addition, CAALN continues to monitor anti-LGBTQIA+ laws within Africa, which are remnants of colonialism and often influenced by Evangelical Christian beliefs exported from the U.S. and other countries. Though visitors are unlikely to be the targets of such laws or sentiments, we recommend that LGBTQIA+ trip participants take seriously the U.S. State Departments recommendations for LGBTQIA+ travelers and the UK's advice for travelers going abroad. Members of the Visitor Leadership Team who identify as LGBTQIA+ are available to speak with prospective trip participants about their own experiences as visitors to East Africa and as participants in the TAPTA.

Trip Leaders



Linda Stolz
CAALN Executive Director
Michigan City, Indiana, U.S.

Second from right, with Sane, Sam,
and Eunice Wadu from Kenya.



Cathy Moon

Art therapist and Professor
Emerit, School of the Art
Institute of Chicago
Bloomington, Illinois, U.S.

Left, with Mukasa Moses Beswige
from Uganda on the right.



Michelle Johns

Art Therapist at the Royal
Children's Hospital
Melbourne, Australia

Left, with Christa Komba from
Tanzania on the right.



Emily Anne Evans

CAALN Board Secretary
Los Angeles, California, U.S.

Left, with Haji Maeda from
Tanzania on the right.

2027 Fees and Timeline

Fees

\$4000	Trip Fee* <i>Does not include airfare to and from Kenya.</i>
\$1050	Optional safari

Timeline and payment schedule**

June 6	Trip application questionnaire and resume due
Rolling	Non-refundable \$500 deposit due upon acceptance (\$750 incl. safari)
June 11	Last day for notifications of acceptance
July 15	Additional payment of \$1750 (\$2150 if taking safari)
Oct 15	Final payment of \$1750 (\$2150 if taking safari)
Jan 30-Feb 14	Trip dates (including travel)
Jan 30-Feb 16	Trip dates with optional safari included

***The trip fee covers** accommodations, most meals, program fees and supplies, travel within Africa, and the underwriting of costs for trip leaders. It also helps cover the travel and accommodation costs for our East African participants. It does not cover immunizations, visa (called Electronic Travel Authorization and is currently \$30 for U.S. citizens; price may differ for citizens from other countries), trip cancellation and medical evacuation insurance, drinks, snacks, tips for drivers and hotel staff, optional activities, or personal shopping purchases.

The additional fee of approximately \$1050 for safari covers accommodations, meals, park fees, safari vehicles, drivers, and transportation to and from conservation area.

**Meeting the payment deadlines ensures the price quoted for the trip. Late payments are accepted but may be assessed a higher trip price due to rising cost of accommodations or local flights in Kenya. Alternative payment plans can be discussed if necessary.

Application

Trip application

Potential trip participants must submit a trip application, including their resume/CV at caaln.org/tapta-app

Additional Information

To request more information about CAALN or trip logistics, please contact:

- Linda Stolz, CAALN Executive Director, U.S., Lstolz@caaln.org

If you have questions about the TAPTA training program, please contact one of the following people:

- Cathy Moon, Professor Emerit, Art Therapy Department, School of the Art Institute of Chicago, U.S., cmoon@saic.edu
- Michelle Johns, Art therapist at the Royal Children’s Hospital, Melbourne, Australia, michellejohns.lg@gmail.com

