

Member Spotlight: Lee & Kris Peterson

Kim Alexis Adversario, Associate Director of Membership & Circles of Giving



Kristine was a well-recognized Glendale teacher including being named twice teacher of the year in her school district. Besides numerous community and civic leadership positions, Lee credits his experience at the Heard for two other arts and culture board opportunities as past national chair of the Museum Trustee Association and current board Chair of the Phoebe A. Hearst Museum of Anthropology at the University of California, Berkeley.

You have been Heard Museum Members since 1980. What drew you to support the Heard Museum and become involved?

As we arrived in Arizona in 1972 from Berkeley, California, we soon placed a high priority on learning about the Indigenous cultures of the Southwest. The Heard Museum emerged as an “oasis” rich with learning opportunities enhanced by staff and members welcoming us and encouraging our exploration of the cultures of our new home. Our supporting the multifaceted and noble work of the Heard was for us a natural response of gratitude.

Lee, as a docent, you regularly engage with the museum’s visitors. Can you share any favorite moments from your role as a Las Guias guide?

A choice which has returned dividends in many ways is being a Guild member and a Las Guias participant. We enjoy connecting the world coming in our doors to Indigenous creativity by sharing the stories, voices and vision of American Indian artists. Besides presenting the ever-changing exhibits, a favorite guiding experience is inviting our guests to savor the engaging array of many Indigenous symbols of the welcoming piece of the *HOME* exhibit, *Indigenous Evolution*.

When you reflect on your time and leadership at the Heard Museum—which includes an interim position as the Museum Director—how have you seen the Heard evolve over the years?

An early path of Heard support was the invitation to join the Heard Museum Men’s Council, which offered moments of great fellowship and leadership tasks at times, balanced with members’ demanding professional journeys. Those Council years included valued peers such as Scott O’Connor and Wick Pilcher—and we are still here at the Heard!

My Heard Board tenure included election to Vice Chair and later Chair with the support of the prior Chair, Mark Bonsall. When the need for a volunteer Interim Director arose, I was given the challenging learning opportunity of that role. We concentrated on aligning the well-intended distinct components of the Museum including members, Board, Director, Guild and ever-capable staff. Our internationally recognized Collection and Mission are supported and thriving with a parallel “Collection” of leaders with diverse backgrounds and skills. What a powerful, fortunate combination!

What are you most excited about for the Heard's future?

Kris and I are so pleased to continue our amazing experiences at the Heard Museum as we approach the 100th anniversary of the Museum's opening.

We do so with confidence the Heard will continue evolving as an art museum into the next hundred years, with the essential support of those who will follow us.

Throughout the years, you have invited many friends and family to the Heard. What Heard Museum event do you look forward to spending with them every year?

We have several memorable events each year at the Heard. Upon reflection, two powerfully emerge in particular to us. First, the Best of Show Dinner, when announcements are made of the artists receiving ribbon awards resulting from the Juried Competition of the Indian Fair and Market and the coveted Best of Show piece and artist. All participating artists are invited and celebrated, and the informal hospitality is enjoyed by all attending. One of the highlights of our social year is the elegant evening experience of Moondance. Longtime friends of the Heard and, importantly, new friends mingle and honor a significant artist and a Heard community leader. Truly an exceptional event.



Kris and Lee with three-time Grammy Award Winning Singer/Songwriter Kalani Pe'a