

Influential Women Profiles: Jean Mineo, Executive Director of Bellforge Arts Center in Medfield, Massachusetts

MEDFIELD, MA, UNITED STATES, June 8, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Leading the Transformation of a Historic Campus into a Multidisciplinary Arts and Cultural Hub Focused on Community Engagement and Creative Access

Jean Mineo is an accomplished nonprofit arts leader and the Executive Director of Bellforge Arts Center in Medfield, Massachusetts, where she is guiding a major cultural redevelopment initiative aimed at transforming historic buildings into a vibrant center for the performing arts, education, and community engagement. With a Master's Degree in Arts Management from American University in Washington, D.C., and a Bachelor of Fine Arts from the Rochester Institute of Technology, Mineo has

dedicated her career to expanding access to the arts and developing creative spaces that strengthen communities.



Mineo began her career in the nonprofit arts sector working for a national arts agency, gaining broad experience in arts administration and cultural programming. While this role provided valuable professional development, she found her greatest sense of purpose after returning to the Boston area and joining a community-based arts center in Newton. There, she experienced a defining shift in her career focus as she witnessed the direct impact of arts engagement on individuals and communities. Interacting with participants, artists, and audiences reinforced her commitment to creating accessible, community-centered cultural experiences.

This experience became the foundation of Mineo's long-term dedication to nonprofit arts leadership. She has since focused her career on building programs and initiatives that connect

artists and communities in meaningful and inclusive ways. Her work emphasizes the role of the arts as a catalyst for personal expression, civic engagement, and social connection.

As Executive Director of Bellforge Arts Center, Mineo oversees an ambitious \$25 million capital campaign to convert two historic buildings on the former Medfield State Hospital campus into a dynamic performing arts and education facility. Her responsibilities include strategic planning, fundraising, programming development, construction coordination, historic preservation efforts, and community engagement. She also plays a key role in managing relationships with municipal partners and stakeholders to ensure the project aligns with community priorities and preservation standards.

Under her leadership, Bellforge's vision extends beyond performing arts to include future phases dedicated to visual arts, culinary arts, and expanded community programming. A significant component of this vision involves the restoration of a historic agricultural field on the property, originally cultivated in the 1890s. The initiative aims to reintroduce food production to the site while honoring its historical roots and creating opportunities for education, sustainability, and cultural connection.

Mineo's professional path reflects a consistent focus on community engagement and the tangible impact of the arts. Her transition from national-level arts administration to community-based programming shaped her understanding of how direct participation in creative experiences can transform individuals and strengthen communities. This perspective continues to inform her leadership approach and organizational strategy at Bellforge.

A central principle guiding Mineo's work is the importance of active engagement and relationship-building. Throughout her career, she has prioritized collaboration with community members, artists, elected officials, and organizational partners to strengthen support for arts initiatives. She emphasizes that sustainable community development in the arts depends on strong relationships, ongoing dialogue, and shared commitment to long-term goals.

In her leadership role, Mineo also emphasizes determination and adaptability as essential qualities for success in the nonprofit arts sector. She recognizes that arts organizations frequently face rejection and logistical challenges, particularly in fundraising and large-scale development projects. She encourages creative problem-solving and persistence in overcoming barriers, particularly when advancing long-term cultural initiatives.

Mineo identifies several ongoing challenges in the nonprofit arts field, including the complexities of maintaining visible commitments to diversity in a changing cultural environment. At Bellforge Arts Center, more than half of participating performers are BIPOC artists, a value that remains central to the organization's programming and mission. She notes that while such commitments may not always be highlighted externally, they remain deeply embedded in the organization's practices and priorities.

Another significant challenge lies in capital fundraising. Bellforge's development efforts are primarily supported by individual donors rather than large corporate sponsors or foundations. Mineo explains that while foundations often focus on programmatic support, capital projects require sustained engagement with individual contributors who are invested in long-term cultural infrastructure. Despite these challenges, she sees strong opportunity in building a committed donor community that supports the organization's vision for growth and expansion.

Looking ahead, Mineo continues to guide Bellforge toward becoming a multidisciplinary cultural destination that integrates performing arts, visual arts, culinary programming, and educational initiatives. This expansion is intended to broaden community access to creative experiences while strengthening Bellforge's role as a regional cultural hub.

Mineo's leadership is grounded in core values that include diversity, inclusion, collaboration, and community engagement. She emphasizes the importance of creating spaces where artists and audiences from all backgrounds can participate meaningfully in cultural life. These principles inform both her professional decisions and her broader approach to community involvement.

She also remains committed to fostering strong relationships across all levels of her work, from artists and participants to civic leaders and community organizations. In addition, she supports youth-focused initiatives such as Medfield Cares About Prevention, which provide creative and developmental opportunities for young people in the region.

Through her leadership at Bellforge Arts Center, Jean Mineo continues to advance the role of the arts as a driving force for community connection, cultural enrichment, and civic engagement. Her work reflects a sustained commitment to building inclusive, accessible, and creatively vibrant communities.

Learn More about Jean Mineo:

Through her Influential Women profile, <https://influentialwomen.com/connect/Jean-Mineo>, or through her profile on Bellforge Arts Center, <https://bellforge.org/team/>

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