

# THE OPERA VOLUNTEER VOICE

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The official newsletter of  
*Opera Volunteers  
International*

*Recognizing  
Partners in Excellence  
Grant Awardees  
Projects of Special  
Merit*

## Opera Conference 2023 in Pittsburgh

*Opera Volunteers International is a nonprofit, volunteer-led service organization and a resource and advocate for the development and advancement of volunteerism in support of opera. OVI is an umbrella organization for opera volunteers, opera volunteer groups, and opera organizations that use volunteers. OVI expands the relevance, reach, and future of opera worldwide by connecting individual opera volunteers, opera volunteer groups, opera producing organizations, educational organizations, and others that support opera in their communities.*

### *2023 Project of Special Merit*

*This prestigious honor is presented to groups who submit outstanding new and long-standing projects in support of opera. Eligible projects feature volunteers, and are designed to educate, build audience, and support the many facets of a company's work.*

#### **Toledo Opera and Toledo Opera Guild**

#### **Opera on Wheels**

This year, **Toledo Opera Guild** presented **Opera on Wheels** with a performance of *The Pirates of Penzance* titled **"Pizza and Pirates,"** Each year, Toledo Opera's Resident Artists serve as touring artists for the Opera on Wheels program which travels extensively, bringing live opera to the Toledo area. Annually, the program is performed for 20,000 students. This season, the traveling production is a newly adapted children's opera, of Gilbert and Sullivan's *The Pirates of Penzance*. **Joshua Borths** of Virginia Opera adapted the score and wrote the libretto. Toledo Opera's **James Norman**, directed.

Founded in 1962, Toledo Opera Guild has played an active role in supporting Toledo Opera's performances, education, and community outreach programs. It is the mission of the Toledo Opera Guild to



promote opera awareness, education, company service, and financial support for Toledo Opera. In the past decade, Toledo Opera Guild has directly contributed over \$350,000. This is in addition support such as cast rehearsal dinners (approximately \$1,000) along with countless hours of volunteer expertise and help with various tasks. Accepting the award will be Co-president of Toledo Opera Guild **Celinda Niggemyer** and presenting information about the program in Pittsburgh will be **Rachael Cammarn**, communications and patron services coordinator for Toledo Opera.

## 2023 OVI Matching Grant Recipients

The purpose of Opera Volunteer International's Matching Grants program is to encourage the expansion and development of programs that recruit, develop, and train volunteers for service in their communities and for participation in all phases of opera company support.

### The Guild of the Glimmerglass Festival

#### Volunteers Support: *A Day at the Festival for Students*

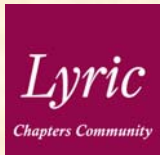


The Guild will use their matching grant to support volunteer efforts for *A Day at the Festival for Students*

at the August 1st performance of *La Boheme*. Area high school students will be treated to lunch and a performance. The Guild's Hospitality Committee will provide the meal, serve as ushers and greeters, and ensure educational materials and teacher resources pertaining to the opera are posted on the Glimmerglass Festival website. Approximately 20 volunteers will participate.

### Lyric Opera of Chicago Chapters' Executive Board

#### *Revealing the Lost Music of the Holocaust*



was a concert held at the **Illinois Holocaust Museum**. Pianist and educator **Paul Dykstra**, who has dedicated his career to uncovering and promoting the music of the Holocaust, was joined by **Cantor Susan Friedman**. Volunteers were recruited to greet the attendees and assist the Museum staff in attendee tours of the facility. Among the goals for this program project are: introducing the Lyric family of volunteers and patrons to those of the Holocaust Museum, and putting into practice Lyric's commitment to the IDEA values of Inclusion, Diversity, Equality and Access while growing a more active and engaged volunteer membership. A full report will be given at the opera conference and in a future OVI Newsletter.

### Opera Maine

#### *Opera for All film screenings*



The 2023 Film Series, conceived, researched and planned by the Volunteer Programming Committee, will present a series of filmed operas from some of the world's most acclaimed opera companies, orchestras, directors and soloists, including *Die Fledermaus* by Johann Strauss II, *La Fille du Regiment* by Gaetano Donizetti, and *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, by Giochino Rossini.

Admission is open to all, and free to selected senior communities and, through Opera Maine's Opera for All initiative, free to audience members aged 25 and under. New volunteers from the University of Maine graduate program will offer pre-show talks and set up and operate audio visual equipment and provide tech support. As always, the volunteers will provide friendly greetings and serve as ambassadors for Opera Maine.

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## 2023 OVI Matching Grants (continued)

### Minnesota Opera

#### Light Walkers Project



“Light Walkers” are volunteers who stand-in for the principals during the often-tedious, yet much-needed technical rehearsals to set light cues in a given production. Approximately 28 Light Walkers will be recruited for the staging of *Don Giovanni*. The volunteers will be recruited and managed by Minnesota Opera using *Galaxy* (a volunteer recruitment, management and communication tool). Volunteers will be given an orientation and directed by MN Opera Staff. These volunteers will get an “up close and personal” behind the scenes experience in the creation of an opera.

MN Opera tracks the cost of staff hours dedicated solely to volunteer support and training, and this project will come to roughly 148 hours, which is roughly \$3700 on average. Ancillary supplies such as printed training materials and light refreshments are also provided.

### Opera Theater Oregon

#### *Nu Nah-Hup: Sacajawea’s Story*



Opera Theatre Oregon’s project centers on *Nu Nah-Hup: Sacajawea’s Story*, an intercultural collaboration with Agai-Dika/Lemhi-Shoshone culture bearer and descendent of Sacajawea, **Rose Ann Abrahamson**.

*Nu Nah-Hup: Sacajawea’s Story* will reimagine the extraordinary Shoshone woman who was a crucial member of the the Lewis and Clark Expedition in a new opera-theater work. OTO will premier a 35- minute scene of this new work alongside excerpts of music, soundscapes, and presentations of traditional Agai-Dika/Lemhi-Shoshone language and culture. As many as fifty volunteers will be recruited throughout the production period to assist with everything from fundraising, marketing, organizing the benefit soiree, to set design, accounting and more.



*OVI Group members in good standing are eligible to apply for matching grants which are awarded annually each February. Visit our webpage for details and to download an application*

## 2023 Partners in Excellence

The prestigious Opera Volunteers International **Partners in Excellence Award** program recognizes individuals who have given extraordinary volunteer service to opera in their communities or groups observing special anniversaries. The awardees of this once-in-a-lifetime honor will be acknowledged at the Opera Volunteers International Awards Luncheon held this May at Opera Conference 2023 in Pittsburgh, PA.

### Arlene Alm

### Twin Cities Opera Guild



Arlene has been a member of Twin Cities Opera Guild for 45 years, serving in many leadership roles since 1977. In addition, she has supported and promoted opera through her company, Ovation Opera Tours - opera tours between 1977 and 2017, leading people to opera in the US and opera tours throughout Europe. Some of her roles at Twin Cities Opera Guild include, 1993-2001 -TCOG Assistant Treasurer, 2001-2005 -TCOG President, and 2005-Present -TCOG Treasurer. She created a mailing list of 2000 friends of opera and music education for TCOG. The guild has made grants totaling over \$758,000 benefiting 208,000 students.

*“Arlene has gone above and beyond in her volunteer work because she also performs most of the duties that would normally be done by an executive director. The TCOG has been made better because of Arlene’s passion, commitment, and talent”.* **John Kupris**

### Lisa Hagstrom

### Opera Omaha Guild



Lisa Hagstrom was nominated by Opera Omaha and the Opera Omaha Guild for her over 25 years of volunteer activities. According to **Deb Peterson**, Opera Omaha Guild President, “Lisa’s time volunteering shows her love and commitment to her community, ...[she] is always available to help when needed, all the while working full time and raising her family.” Her commitment to volunteering merits recognition with this achievement award. Lisa has served as OOG Marketing Chair, Membership Chair, Guild Vice President, 2014 OOG Cotillion Chair, 2017 Cotillion involvement, 2006 and 2014 Guild President, and 2022 Opera Omaha Advisory Board. Lisa will attend the Awards Luncheon in Pittsburgh with her daughter, who is also active in Opera Omaha Guild’s Cotillion.