



ASSOCIATION OF WISCONSIN SYMPHONY ORCHESTRAS- ANNUAL SPRING WORKSHOP

May 3rd, 2024

Capitol Civic Centre, 913 So. 8th Street, Manitowoc WI 54220

MORNING WORKSHOP SCHEDULE:

8:30 AM - 10:00 AM

Mertens Lounge

Registration, Breakfast, and Networking

8:45 AM - 9:45 AM

Salutz 2 Lobby

AWSO Board Meeting (board members only)

9:30 AM – 9:50 AM

*Optional Capitol Civic Centre theater tour
(signup requested)*

10:00 AM - 10:45 AM

West Auditorium

Welcome

Peggy Pitz, John Stern, Mayor Justin Nickels, Tourism Director Courtney Hansen

West Auditorium and adjacent Salutz 2 Lobby

Roundtable Breakout Sessions- followed by brief summations (topics selected by attendees)

10:45 AM - 10:55 AM

Break

10:55 AM - 11:40 AM

West Auditorium

“Crescendo! How One Orchestra Cured its Audience’s COVID Doldrums!”

Brian Kulas, Manitowoc Symphony Principal Bassist, Board Member, and Task Force Chair

11:40 AM – 12:00 PM

West Auditorium

Presentation of the AWSO Service to Music Award



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AFTERNOON WORKSHOP SCHEDULE:

(All in Mertens Lounge, except as noted)

12:00 PM - 12:50 PM

Lunch Served

12:15 PM - 12:45 PM

Annual General Meeting (During Lunch)

12:50 PM - 1:00 PM

*West Auditorium
Group Photo*

1:00 PM - 1:45 PM

“Happy Birthday! The Wisconsin Arts Board turns 50!”

Brian Kelsey, Wisconsin Arts Board Chair and Peninsula Players Managing Director, Door County, WI

1:45 PM – 1:55 PM

Break

1:55 PM – 2:40 PM

“Making Foundation Grants Work for YOU ... a User Guide.”

Donna Firman, President of Mustard Seed Advisors, Manitowoc WI

2:40 PM – 2:45 PM

Summation and workshop ends

2:45 PM – 3:05 PM

Optional Capitol Civic Centre tour

2:45 PM – 3:30 PM

Optional socialization/ networking

3:30 PM

Event closing deadline

WORKSHOP SESSIONS:

1.) ROUNDTABLE BREAKOUT SESSIONS

2.) BRIAN KULAS

“Crescendo! How One Orchestra Cured Its Audience’s COVID Doldrums!”



Brian is a native of Stevens Point, a UW- Stevens Point graduate in information technology, and earned an MBA from Marquette University. He is an independent IT & ERP consultant by profession and has served as the Manitowoc Symphony Orchestra’s principal bass for many years.

He is a Manitowoc Symphony board member and chairs its Crescendo task force- which is the topic of this presentation. When Brian isn’t working or making music, he enjoys spending time boating, “van camping”, and with family.

Spoiler alert... Crescendo’s results didn’t come without considerable effort!

3.) SISTER LORNA ZEMKE FSCC DMA

AWSO 2024 Service to Music Honoree



Sister Lorna was part of the early history of the Kodaly movement in the United States, by founding one of the earliest Kodály teacher training programs in the country at Silver Lake College in Manitowoc in 1973. Since then over 200 music educators from all over the United States have earned graduate certifications there, and they have gone on to inspire thousands of students to love music! Sister Lorna began her career working with Hungarian-American Dr. Katinka Daniel on a pilot program in Santa Barbara, CA, and helped found the Organization of American Kodály Educators, Midwest Kodály Music Educators of America, and Association of Wisconsin Area Kodály Educators. Sister has spoken at hundreds of conferences in 9 different countries. She has been recognized by the International Kodaly Society as an honorary member- alongside luminaries Eugene Ormandy, Bela Bartok, Antal Dorati, Leopold Stokowski, George Solti, Dmitri Kabalevsky, Yehudi Menuhin, and many others. She also established Kodaly- based programs “Music for Tots” for pre-schoolers and “Love Notes” for near- term un-born babies, whom science has shown to respond positively to their mothers through music, in utero.

It’s fitting that Sister Lorna be honored here in her home community, and maybe she can even enlighten us more about the Kodaly concept!

4.) BRIAN KELSEY

“Happy Birthday! The Wisconsin Arts Board Turns 50!”



Brian is the Board Chair of the Wisconsin Arts Board and celebrates his 17th season as the Managing Director of Peninsula Players Theatre in Door County. He comes to the Players with a broad range of “for profit” and “not for profit” business experience, gained both in the United States and Europe, in the fields of operations, finance, marketing and public relations. Brian is engaged in the arts and tourism industries and also serves on the board of the Peninsula Arts and Humanities Alliance (past president), on the Diversity, Equity, Accessibility and Inclusion Committee, as well as the Marketing Committee of the Wisconsin Governor’s Council on Tourism. A journalism graduate of Marquette University, Brian is pleased to share his business experience in the community that raised him, and for the organization that gave him his first performing arts experience as a child.

5.) DONNA FIRMAN

“Making Foundation Grants Work for YOU... a User Guide”



Donna’s rural Michigan upbringing instilled strong values of giving back to community. While in college at Northern Michigan University, she took advantage of the travel opportunities that it offered, and developed a lifelong love of travel since. She utilized her business degree to embark on her first career in the manufacturing world in Detroit, and quickly advanced up the leadership ladder- often as the only woman in such positions. But, her early family values kept calling her to her first love- working with nonprofits. So, in addition to manufacturing management, Donna began doing consulting work for nonprofits 15 years ago. “I knew that one day I’d make a career where my passion fuels good works and helps others,” she said. “and I couldn’t be happier than I am right now.” Her consulting work brought her from Chicago to Manitowoc so often that she fell in love with the community and its people, and actually moved to Manitowoc 7 years ago.

She has since formed Mustard Seed Advisors- devoted to helping nonprofits accomplish maximal operational excellence, successful fundraising, and achievement of mission. She has been an active community leader for many Manitowoc- area nonprofits, most recently the local chapter of the National Alliance on Mental Illness. She was recently recipient of the local Chamber of Commerce Athena Award, awarded annually “for professional excellence, community service and for actively assisting women in their attainment of professional excellence and leadership skills.” She has written hundreds of successful grants over the last 15 years, and is in demand as a speaker- for her energy, enthusiasm, experience, and knowledge.