



## Dear Community Member/Friend:

Oak Park Festival Theatre is a 501 (c) (3) nonprofit, charitable organization whose mission is Breathing fresh air into timeless texts for Oak Park and beyond.

As the Midwest's oldest professional theatre performing the classics outdoors, we have celebrated over 40 years of theatrical excellence. Since 1975 Oak Park Festival Theatre has been known for producing outstanding productions of William Shakespeare and other classical authors, as well as important contemporary plays by some of the world's greatest playwrights.

Oak Park Festival Theatre is a tradition of Art, Family, Education, and History. We are an award-winning, critically acclaimed theatre company that beats at the creative heart of the Oak Park River Forest community.

Oak Park Festival Theatre is taking applications for potential board members. Enclosed you will find an application. Please complete the form, email it to [Jhenai@oakparkfestival.com](mailto:Jhenai@oakparkfestival.com).

Your consideration to be a board member for Oak Park Festival Theatre is greatly appreciated. We are thrilled to continually bring inspired and energetic members of the Oak Park River Forest community into the fold to share their knowledge and guidance as we continue to build the cultural legacy and artistic work of Oak Park Festival Theatre.

Once we receive your completed application, we will invite you to interview with several members of the Board. It is important for the Oak Park Festival Theatre board members to meet you before the next board meeting and get to know you personally. At the following board meeting, board members will vote for you to serve on the board. We look forward to hearing from you.

Thank you in advance.

Sincerely,

Paul Engelhardt,  
President of the Board of Directors



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## THE HISTORY OF OAK PARK FESTIVAL THEATRE

Oak Park Festival Theatre was founded in 1975 by Oak Park resident Marion Karczmar, and launched its first production William Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. That first inspired production was performed on a flatbed truck parked on the Westgate cul-de-sac in downtown Oak Park, with a cast that included then unknowns David Mamet and William H. Macy.

In 1976 the Park District of Oak Park graciously invited the festival to perform under a canopy of stars in the idyllic Austin Gardens located at 167 Forest Avenue. As a wooded park near downtown Oak Park within walking distance from restaurants, shops Frank Lloyd Wright landmarks, and Metra and CTA trains, Austin Gardens was the perfect venue for the infant company. Every year since that time, we have returned home the gardens to build our summer stage.



A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM (1975) Linda Kimbrough, David Mamet

In succeeding years prominent regional directors brought their talents to Austin Gardens, including James O'Reilly, David Darlow, Patrick O'Gara, Tom Mula and Dale Calandra. In 2003 Jack Hickey assumed artistic leadership in 2003 and is currently serving in that role.

For the first few decades Festival Theatre performed Renaissance works, almost exclusively by William Shakespeare, until 2004, when we broadened our scope to classics of other eras. Careful expansion of the theatre began in 2005 when a second summer production was added to the schedule, generating a two-play outdoor season. The next year expansion continued as an indoor venue, National Historic Landmark Pleasant Home, was added, converting to a three-play season. This format (one indoor spring play and two outdoor summer productions) continued for four years, through 2009. Further growth occurred in 2010-2011, when a season with four full productions was established. In 2013 we returned to our two-play summer season to evaluate and strengthen the financial and organizational foundation of our company. Our 2015 season shattered over four decades of attendance records with over 6,700 delighted patrons, and sent critics running to the thesaurus for superlatives for our productions. Careful planning and the outstanding successes of our productions restored the fiscal health of the company, and in 2016 with an annual operating budget of \$175,000, our first full time employee, Jhenai Mootz, was hired to be the Managing Director for the company.

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Since those humble beginnings, when a few inspired actors gave breath to Shakespeare's words on a flatbed truck, Oak Park Festival Theatre has grown into one of Chicagoland's iconic theatres. Spending an evening under the stars in Austin Gardens enjoying history's finest plays has become a treasured summer tradition for thousands of theatergoers.



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## CRITICAL ACCLAIM FOR OAK PARK FESTIVAL THEATRE



**"HITS HOME WITH CLARITY"**

-CHICAGO TRIBUNE

**"GRACEFUL, POWERFUL PRODUCTIONS"**

-CHICAGO READER

**"TREMENDOUS ACTING AND STAGING.  
BREATHAKING TRANSFORMATIONS,  
A TALL TALE OF FICTION THAT WILL  
ENTERTAIN AND DELIGHT."**

-OAK PARK WEDNESDAY JOURNAL

**"PACK UP A PICNIC AND HEAD TO THE  
GREAT OUTDOORS FOR OAK PARK  
FESTIVAL THEATRE'S PAGEANT OF  
CLASSIC THEATRE!"**

-CHICAGO SUN TIMES

**"SUPERLATIVE...  
LIFE-AFFIRMING PERFORMANCES"**

-PIONEER PRESS

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## SERVING OUR COMMUNITY

### OUR CHILDREN

Deeply committed to offering theatre for all ages, Festival Theatre offers productions are created as multi-generational experiences. Encouraging the love of language at an early age, Festival Theatre offers free tickets to children 12 and under.

Our dedication to share our passion of exploring timeless text with the next generation led us to partner with an extraordinary organization, The Viola Project beginning in 2015. The Viola Project uses the works of William Shakespeare to unite and empower girls so they may grow up to be whoever they want to be. The Viola Project provides a space for girls aged 10-16 to come together and explore classic texts while engaging in a vibrant discussion of contemporary issues facing girls and women. The collaboration of our two organizations created week long summer camps focusing on the



texts from the Festival Theatre summer season. As our professional actors are delving into the scripts at rehearsals, during the day our campers study and explore those same words while working on the Festival Theatre stage. With Shakespeare's text is the common thread The Viola Project uses an interdisciplinary approach to learning by combining self defense, visual arts, music, stage craft, and interviews with professionals from the Festival Theatre productions. The camp ends their week in a performance of their study of the play for their families and friends on the set on Festival Theatre's production, where both they are then invited to stay for Festival Theatre's performance.

### GIVING BACK

Festival Theatre contributes to our vibrant community by creating projects with such local organizations as Prevail, Oak Park Regional Housing Authority, Animal Care League, Oak Park Art League and the Nineteenth Century Charitable Association.

Beginning in 2014, Festival Theatre and the Park District of Oak Park created our *Community Appreciation Night* program. The program specifies that the final preview performance of each summer show is dedicated to our community by providing free tickets to anyone who would like to attend that evenings performance. The gift of free professional theatre to the community allows people without the financial ability to attend normally, experience a high quality of art they otherwise might not get to experience. The response to this program has show staggering attendance numbers from our community. In 2016 we saw an astounding 400+ people come through the gates of Austin Gardens to enjoy event.

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## SERVING OUR COMMUNITY *Continued...*

### LOCAL ECONOMY

Since its inception, the Festival Theatre has been an integral component of the community. Our summer season in Austin Gardens beats at the heart of downtown Oak Park. With a draw of nearly 7,000 attendees a year Oak Park Festival Theatre provides a vital draw of potential income for the downtown area. With an abundance of nearby restaurants, shops and tourist attractions for pre and post show activities, performance nights see hundreds of our theatre patrons flocking to our charming downtown to enjoy its offerings.

### PARK DISTRICT OF OAK PARK

The mission of the Park District of Oak Park states "In partnership with the community, we enrich lives by providing meaningful experiences through programs, parks and facilities."

For over 40 years, Festival Theatre has been one of those meaningful experiences brought to the community. Each summer we return home to build our stage in Austin Gardens through the generosity of the Park District of Oak Park. Festival Theatre makes a concerted effort to work closely with the dedicated and diligent Park District staff to preserve the beauty of Austin Gardens. We promote and educate our audiences in the Park District's "Carry in, Carry out" program, a recycling program vital to the continued health of all of our community parks. We work closely with the Park District to minimize any impact on Austin Gardens, a priceless treasure. Festival Theatre is privileged to be a steward of the park and to work with the Park District of Oak Park to bring arts and cultural programming to the Oak Park community.



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## OAK PARK FESTIVAL THEATRE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**Paul Engelhardt**  
Board President

**Len Grossman**  
Board Vice President

**Douglas Kelner**  
Treasurer

**Brad Bartles**

**Brianne Wilson**

**Patricia McCanna**

**Anne Rooney**

**Sandy Lentz**  
Liaison to the Park District of Oak Park

To read the profiles of our Board of Directors please visit:  
<http://oakparkfestival.com/board-2/>

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## EXPECTATIONS FOR OUR BOARD OF DIRECTORS

***Mission: Breathing fresh air into timeless texts for Oak Park and beyond.***

Oak Park Festival Theatre is a vibrant, active, passionate and growing organization dedicated to and building a theatre that celebrates the timeless stories of artistic masterpieces. Our Board of Directors willingly gives their time, support, and guidance to ensure the organization is financially strong and effectively managed in an ethical and moral manner.

### **The main priorities of our Board of Directors:**

1. Stewardship of the company Mission
2. Fundraising
3. Financial oversight and stability
4. Board Recruitment
5. Oversight of executive staff

### **Our Board of Directors will:**

- Participate and actively support in fundraising efforts
- Ensure the ongoing health and viability of the organization by active Board Recruitment
- Abide in all respects by Oak Park Festival Theatre's Policies and Procedures, the By-Laws and all other rules and regulations of the organization.
- Ensure that their membership and financial accounts and obligations remain in good standing.
- Conduct the business affairs of the organization in good faith and with honesty, integrity, due diligence, and reasonable competence.
- Always hold the betterment of the patrons, staff, and artists, as their first priority, including during all participation in discussions and voting matters and contribute as a productive and positive force.
- Oversees, guides and is reported to by the Managing Director. Acknowledges the Managing Director has independent decision-making authority on *Operational* decisions and will

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distance themselves from such decision-making except where the ethical or moral standards of the organization are threatened.

- Oversees, guides and is reported to by the Artistic Director. Acknowledges the Artistic Director has independent decision-making authority on *creative* decisions and will distance themselves from such decision-making except where the ethical or moral standards of the organization are threatened.
- Votes on the season selection, yet makes no effort to influence, guide, impact, or persuade artistic decisions in the favor of family members, friends, or any other interest.
- Will declare any conflict of interest, be it real, potential, or apparent, which is not immediately obvious with regard to any matter being discussed in their presence during a board meeting, and willingly recuse themselves from any matter in which such a conflict might exist.
- Will protect the organizations information closely and will not release or share confidential information without the permission, preferably in writing, of the person who provided it, maintaining confidentiality of all information which the board deems ought to be kept confidential.
- Will represent the organization informally and formally to others in such a way as to leave them with a positive impression of the organization and preserve and enhance the good reputation of the organization and will avoid behavior which might damage its image.

## Commitments for Our Board of Directors

- Prepare for, regularly attend and participate in board meetings
- Board Meetings are the first Monday of each month, unless otherwise noted, with an Annual Meeting in February
- Attend and support performances, fundraisers and special events
- Serve on at least one committee
- Contribute financial support, whether from their own resources or by soliciting the support of others, at a minimum of \$1,000 per year

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## 2017 OPFT BOARD MEMBER GIVE/GET POLICY

### BOARD MEMBER GIVE/GET DEFINITION

- Any direct monies raised for OPFT by a board member, which can be proved as such, contributes to the give/get requirement of \$1000. The following is included in this definition:
  - Direct cash/check deposit
  - Any grant monies raised by a board member
  - Any donation made by a patron who designates their donation as attributed to a board member. Examples:
    - Board member delivers the check
    - Check indicates in the notes
  - Any tickets sold to a **fundraising** event on behalf of a board member
    - Tracking ticket sales for productions and attributing to a board member is too difficult to verify and track.
    - Production ticket sales and fundraising are two separate revenue streams.
- Board Members have all year to achieve their give/get, this equals less than \$100 a month per person.

### BOARD MEMBER GIVE/GET PENALTY

- Should a Board Member fail to meet their give/get requirements:
  - Notification during January board meeting that give/get was not received by the December 31<sup>st</sup> deadline.
  - Board Member is given a 120 day warning.
  - If Board Member has not met the \$1000 give/get requirement by April 30<sup>th</sup>, member status is put to a vote during May board meeting.



## APPLY TO BE A BOARD MEMBER

To apply for membership on the Oak Park Festival Theatre Board of Directors, please submit your resume and a brief statement telling us about yourself, your organizational affiliation, your interest in our organization, and professional skills you can contribute to Festival Theatre.

**Please email statement and resume to [Jhenai@oakparkfestival.com](mailto:Jhenai@oakparkfestival.com)**

Thanks for your time, consideration, and support of Oak Park Festival Theatre.