



# OPEN ARTS MINNESOTA

## ANNUAL REPORT 2023

### Our Vision:

Envisioning a world where people with diverse abilities and ages have unlimited opportunity to discover, practice and share creative gifts

### Our Mission:

Open Arts Minnesota creates and fosters inclusive artistic activities for people with disabilities who are of diverse abilities and ages seeking opportunities to discover their unique gifts, develop and practice skills and share their creations in a supportive, compassionate environment.

Current Staff

Wilbur Neushwander-Frink, Executive Director

Amy Jo Piedade- Artistic Assistant

Amber Frederick- Teaching Artist

Esther Marcella Hoffmann- Teaching Artist

2023 Board

Shannon Sinning (Mankato)- Chair

Cheryl Hutchens (Mankato)- Vice-Chair

Clarissa Meissner (Madison Lake)- Treasurer

Jyneal McCrea (New Ulm)- Co-Secretary

Emily Austvold (New Ulm)- Co-Secretary

Erin Ebert (Fairmont)- Director

LeeAnn Erickson (Sherburn)-Director

Jessica O'Brien (St. Peter)- Director

Kathy Shimota (New Ulm)- Director

Melissa Steel (Mankato)- Director

Eric Sletten (Mankato)- Director

Melinda Wedzina (Mankato)- Director



## Our Programs

### In-Person Program Highlights

#### **Aktion Club Theatre of Mankato**



Created a new play that will be staged in 2024 called, *The Welcoming Table*. The play features stories from the actors in the group.

The group hosted a Talent Showcase in May. 25 people shared talents and we about 100 people attend. It was open to the public.

We work with Teaching Artist Esther Hoffmann.

Three people from Aktion Club Theatre participated in NicBlue Cares Compassion event in November. We shared how we sing the song, "Love Can Build a Bridge" with the audience.

Amy and Wilbur continue to be members of the Mankato Kiwanis Club.

Several Aktion Club Theatre members participated in the 2023 State Self-Advocacy Conference in September- we presented a workshop and participated in the Awards Banquet.

2023- 511 Participant Engagements over 11 months, meeting twice a month or more.

#### **The United We Stand Players of New Ulm**



Co-created their new play, *Samuel and Beatrice*, a play based on a play presented several years ago. It is the continuing story. The show will be presented in Fall 2024.

Three members participated in the 2023 State Self-Advocacy Conference- planning the conference and presenting a workshop.

2023- 248 Participant Engagements over 11 months, meeting twice a month or more.

## **Aktion Club Theatre of Fairmont**



The group presented *Golden Belle and the Silver Key* to the public in Fall of 2023 at the Fairmont HS Performing Arts Center. We had about 200 people attend the show.

2023- 409 Participant Engagements over 11 months, meeting twice a month.

### **Our Programs**

#### Virtual Program Highlights



#### **Thursday Theatre Gathering on Zoom**

Most Thursdays at 2:00 PM. We have a steady following of about 8-12 people who Zoom in weekly.

#### **Zoom Box Actors**

The group presented Shakespeare's *Midsummer Night's Dream* in February of 2023. 40 people attended the Zoom presentation.

There are 10- 12 actors who meet weekly with Teaching Artist Amber Frederick.

The group will present a Cabaret-Style show on Zoom in April.

#### **Friday Poet's with Diana**

Friday Poets Meet weekly on Zoom working on stories and poetry. This group is sponsored by Minnesota State University, Mankato's LitReach Program

## **Other Theatre Related Activities of the Year**



Planned and participated in the 2023 State Self-Advocacy Conference- we had an informational table, coordinated registrations and hotel rooms for 50 people from around the state, helped plan the Awards Banquet and presented a workshop on inclusive theatre. 20 self-advocates and allies from the SW region participated in the event.

2023 Summer Youth Social Justice Theatre Camp at Mankato East HS.

Waseca Inclusive Theatre Workshop/Presentation in May and November

Participated in the 6-month Good Governance Cohort with the Mankato Area Foundation.

Presented to 2 MSU Classes in Spring 2023.

Facilitated Disability Equality Training 104 in New Ulm in the Spring.

Participate in the Self-Advocates Minnesota SW group along with the Arc Minnesota Regional Advisory Council.

5- 1:1 Mentoring Meetings with Actors in 2023.

Participated in the NicBlue Cares Event in November- 3 people to an audience of 150 people.

Our Volunteers- Over 11 months we average about 20-25 regular volunteers per month helping with theatre activities.

## **Our Funding Sources**



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Pizza and a Pint Fundraiser- 8%

Program Grant Income- 31%

Earned Income- 51%

Individuals/Other Donations- 10%

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Open Arts Minnesota

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