



SARASOTA OPERA

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Sarasota Opera Receives \$12,500 Grant from the Community Foundation of Sarasota County to Support Strategic Planning

August 19, 2026 — Sarasota Opera has been awarded a \$12,500 grant from the Community Foundation of Sarasota County to support consultant fees for the organization's strategic planning process. Funding for this grant was made possible by the foundation's Joseph and Sylvia Bloom Unrestricted Fund.

Sarasota Opera has partnered with consultants from F&H Partners, Amy Funk and Peter Hussell, to guide the organization through the development of a forward-looking strategic plan. The process has engaged a Strategic Planning Committee made up of 14 Sarasota Opera staff and Board members who will serve as thought partners, offering insight and perspective to help ensure the plan is mission-aligned, forward-looking, and identifying the organization's potential on stage and throughout the community.

The committee has been participating in a series of working sessions and a final review session prior to Board approval. The planning process has included opportunities for broader input, including a public survey and staff discussions, before the final plan will be presented to Sarasota Opera's Board of Trustees.

"We are grateful to the Community Foundation of Sarasota County for supporting this important work," said Richard Russell, General & Artistic Director of Sarasota Opera. "This planning process will help Sarasota Opera build on its strengths, clarify priorities, and ensure that we continue to serve our community through the power of opera for years to come."

About the Community Foundation of Sarasota County

The Community Foundation of Sarasota County is a public charity founded in 1979 by the Southwest Florida Estate Planning Council as a resource for caring individuals and the causes they support, enabling them to make a charitable impact on the community. With assets of \$605 million in more than 1,600 charitable funds, the Community Foundation awarded grants and

scholarships totaling \$44.7 million last year in the areas of education, the arts, health and human services, civic engagement, animal welfare and the environment. Since its founding, the Community Foundation has been able to grant \$542 million to nonprofits in our community thanks to the generosity of charitable individuals, families and businesses. For more information, visit cfsarasota.org or call 941-955-3000.

About Sarasota Opera

Sarasota Opera is in its 68th season of bringing world-class opera to Florida's Gulf Coast and celebrating 100 years of the historic Sarasota Opera House. The company was launched in 1960 in the historic 320-seat Asolo Theater on the grounds of Sarasota's Ringling Museum of Art. In 1984, the company moved into the former A.B. Edwards Theater — now the Sarasota Opera House. Since then, the company has gained an international reputation as one of the leading regional opera companies in the U.S. through initiatives such as the Masterworks Revival Series and the Verdi Cycle. The company's Sarasota Youth Opera is the most comprehensive youth opera program in the U.S. The Sarasota Opera House, which underwent a \$20 million renovation in 2007, has been called "one of America's finest venues for opera" by Musical America. Richard Russell has served as General Director since 2012 and added the role of Artistic Director in June 2026. Sarasota Opera is sponsored in part by the State of Florida, Department of State, Division of Arts and Culture and the Florida Council on Arts and Culture and the National Endowment for the Arts. Programs are paid for in part by Sarasota County Tourist Development Tax revenues. Sarasota Opera • 61 N. Pineapple Avenue • Sarasota, FL 34236 • (941) 366-8450 • SarasotaOpera.org