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Sarasota Opera expands Development Department

Staff promotion and new hires position Sarasota Opera Team for continued growth

As Sarasota Opera's Fall and Winter seasons approach, the company has expanded its development staff and promoted a longtime employee.

Brenda Tamm, has been named Patron Giving and Operations Manager at Sarasota Opera, where she now oversees STAR and Youth Opera giving programs and handles the training and technical needs of the development staff. She has been with the company since 2015, most recently serving as Individual Giving Officer.

Tamm came on board as the assistant to General Director Richard Russell. She joined the development team in 2016.

Before coming to Sarasota Opera, she worked as an office manager for a real estate developer and entrepreneur. A Florida native, Tamm grew up in Daytona Beach and moved to Sarasota in 2001. She enjoys Sarasota's rich culture and volunteers at Marie Selby Botanical Gardens.

Davis Wolfe has been named Patron Giving Associate. He recently moved to Sarasota from Portland, OR where he was born and raised, to join the opera's development team.

Wolfe has had several years of experience in the performing arts field, most recently as a house manager for the Portland 5 Center for the Arts, where he facilitated the presentation of opera, theater, dance, comedy and music. Prior to that he has worked for the Pacific Northwest Ballet and the Willamette University Theater.

Wolfe is an avid music aficionado and enjoys swimming and traveling. He is passionate about the arts and is excited to be supporting Sarasota Opera fundraising efforts at the individual giving level.

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Karen Misantone has joined Sarasota Opera’s development team as Leadership Giving Officer, working with high-level donors. She has more than two decades of local nonprofit experience, including with The Circus Arts Conservatory, the Child Protection Center and Asolo Repertory Theatre.

Misantone also has a background in college instruction. She earned her master’s degree in sociology from the University of South Florida and her bachelor’s degree in sociology and English literature from St. Lawrence University in New York.

“I am very excited to have Karen and Davis join Brenda and me as we continue to serve our community of supporters and further Sarasota Opera programs and mission,” said Melissa Voigt, Director of Development. “It is rewarding to have the opportunity to work with these talented individuals.”

About Sarasota Opera

This is Sarasota Opera’s 66th Season of bringing world-class opera to Florida’s Gulf Coast. 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 Program in the U.S. The Sarasota Opera House, which underwent a \$20 million renovation and rehabilitation in 2007, has been called “one of America’s finest venues for opera” by Musical America. Since 1983, the company has been under the artistic leadership of Victor DeRenzi and administrative leadership of General Director Richard Russell since 2012. 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.

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