



Diane Garton Edie Legacy Fund 2025-2026 Impact Report

Established to honor Diane Garton Edie's 30 years as Artistic Director of Opera for the Young (OFTY), the Diane Garton Edie Legacy Fund brings opera to schools that couldn't otherwise afford it - completely free of charge. This year, students at three schools experienced opera *for the very first time*:

- Karel Havlíček Elementary (IL) - Feb 6, 2026
- Lincoln Elementary (MN) - Feb 25, 2026
- Tomahawk Elementary (WI) - Apr 29, 2026

Total reach: 1,413 students in 4k-5th grade, plus an additional 150 teachers and school staff.

Program notes: Tomahawk has a history of hosting Opera for the Young - they welcomed us back in 2010 - but hasn't had the funding to bring us back until now. Karel Havlíček and Lincoln both hosted OFTY for the first time this year. All three communities are eager to find local funding to keep these performances coming annually. The evaluations from Karel Havlíček were especially moving: in a box usually left blank, where students are asked "Is there anything else you would like to tell us?", students overwhelmingly wrote in to say thank you - and to beg us to come back next season.

THE ELIXIR OF LOVE EVALUATIONS

DGE LEGACY FUND AWARD

FROM THE ADULTS...

🎵 "Everyone loved it! The kids want the opera company to come back. The performers were so great with my students – this was a cultural experience that most of my students would not have had, or ever will again. I would love for it to come every year."

Jill Ikonnikov, Karel Havlíček Music Teacher (Berwyn, IL)

🎵 "The kids loved it and the staff gave lots of good feedback. My students were glad they participated, and it was an inspiration to them to work hard and pursue musical activities – it encouraged my singer kids to keep singing. My students keep turning in the pictures, and the older students have been talking about warming up their voices before singing. I would love to have OFTY each year, or at least every other year. Financial resources are definitely the number one problem. We are so grateful they were able to come this year!"

Kristi Anderson, Lincoln Elementary Music Teacher (St Cloud, MN)

🎵 "They loved it – my student enjoyed every minute. He smiled, laughed, and clapped the entire time! I loved the fact that students were involved in the performance, and it was a great experience for all of us."

Esmeralda Armenta, Karel Havlíček Paraeducator (Berwyn, IL)

FROM THE STUDENTS...

🎵 "I liked it a lot, the Elixir of Love, and it was super fun!"

Melissa, Grade 5

🎵 "I want to say thank you to all of them, and thank you for coming – and I want to see the opera again."

Alan, Grade 5

🎵 "If I could work in the opera I would be a singer because I think it would be fun."

Kristina, Grade 5

🎵 "I would like to participate in another play with you guys, because you guys were really fun and funny."

Sarahi, Grade 5

🎵 "Yes, there is another thing I want to tell you: I wonder how you change your voice and how it gets higher and lower."

Walter, Grade 3

THE
ELIXIR OF LOVE
AN 85TH ORIGINAL PRODUCTION

