



For Immediate Release

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## **GRANT PARK ORCHESTRAL ASSOCIATION WELCOMES EIGHT NEW APPOINTMENTS TO THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

*Peter Ascoli, Penny Brown, Jerry Goldstone, Adam Grais, Paula Kahn,  
Susan Noel, Cynthia Stone Raskin and Rhoda Davis Sweeney Join the GPOA Board*

CHICAGO (October 29, 2014)- Grant Park Orchestral Association (GPOA) Board Chair Chuck Kierscht has announced the appointments of **Peter Ascoli, Penny Brown, Jerry Goldstone, Adam Grais, Paula Kahn, Susan Noel, Cynthia Stone Raskin and Rhoda Davis Sweeney** to the Association's Board of Directors. The eight new board members will each serve a three-year term.

"We look forward to drawing on the expertise of this group, each of whom care deeply about the Festival's essential role to the vitality of the city of Chicago," said Kierscht. "These respected leaders join our existing board members who are committed to operating the Grant Park Music Festival with integrity and fiscal stability."

**Peter Ascoli** has worked as a fundraiser for a variety of cultural and educational nonprofit organizations, including Steppenwolf and Chicago Opera Theaters. He holds degrees from the University of Chicago, Oxford, Northwestern and UC Berkeley, and was a former faculty member

at the Spertus Institute. He is also the author of a biography on his grandfather Julius Rosenwald, the Chicago businessman and philanthropist who headed Sears, Roebuck and Co. and founded the Museum of Science and Industry.

**Penny Brown** is the former Chair of the board of Kendall College and currently is the President of the Kendall College Charitable Trust. She also sits on the Business and Advisory Boards of Kendall College and has served on the board of the Arts and Business Council of Illinois. Penny practiced law as a trial attorney for almost 30 years, and retired to become the Director of Tourism Initiatives for the City of Chicago, Department of Cultural Affairs.

**Jerry Goldstone** was the founder of BCR Enterprises, Inc., the publisher of Business Communications Review magazine, which for 30 years was one of the leading telecommunications and networking publications in the United States. He is also the principal of Miller House, LLC, a commercial real estate development firm with property in downtown Naperville. Jerry has been active in recent years in the Aspen Institute and the Chicago Council on Global Affairs, and is a Governing Member of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. He received a degree in electrical engineering from Stanford University and an MBA from the Harvard Business School.

**Adam Grais** is managing partner at Sugar Felsenthal Grais & Hammer, LLP. He advises clients on structuring business and financial transactions, including complex federal income tax issues. Before joining his current firm, Adam was in-house counsel for the Pritzker Family. Prior to practicing law, he worked as a drummer and a music teacher in San Francisco and Chicago and he continues to be involved in music as a member of the Chicago Bar Association Barristers Big Band. Adam is a graduate of Columbia University and the University of Chicago Law School, and is a former board member of the Suzuki Orff School of Music.

**Paula Kahn's** business background includes account management positions in Benton & Bowles in New York, J. Walter Thompson in Chicago, Hal Riney & Partners in San Francisco, and again in New York as an executive vice-president at Wells Rich Greene. Paula has provided counsel to a variety of Chicago nonprofits including the Chicago Children's Museum, Chicago Humanities Festival, Big Brothers Big Sisters and Family Focus. She has served on the boards of the Park West Community Association and the Midwest Region of the American Jewish Congress and is currently on the board of the Young Women's Leadership Charter School.

**Susan Noel** is President of the Robert & Isabelle Bass Foundation, Inc., which focuses on supporting outreach efforts in the performing arts and sciences to under-served communities in Chicago. She received her A.B. in government from Cornell University and her Ph.D. in clinical psychology from the University of Wisconsin Milwaukee. Susan has served on the board of directors for the Patrick G. and Shirley W. Ryan Opera Center/Lyric Opera of Chicago since 2010 and Chicago Opera Theater since 2012.

**Cynthia Stone Raskin** has devoted her work life to non-profit companies and organizations. After graduating from the University of Wisconsin, she worked for Irving Harris' Prime Time School TV and Ruth Rashman Associates. She created her own firm in 1990 specializing in arts-related clients, and launched a public art and water conservation/conscious-raising organization a few years ago entitled "Recycle the Raindrops." She sits on the Membership Committee and Educational Outreach Board for the Chicago International Film Festival, and is creating lesson plans for teachers from under-resourced schools.

**Rhoda Davis Sweeney** is a recently retired Cook County Circuit Court judge. She graduated from Northwestern University, from which she also received a master's in speech and language. She holds a law degree from the Illinois Institute of Technology. Her parents were Ruth Wexler (former secretary of Joseph P. Kennedy) and Louis A. Wexler (former Cook County Circuit Court judge). She is married to Fred Drucker, a retired attorney and philanthropist, and was a previous board member of the Grant Park Concert Society.

#### **Grant Park Music Festival**

Acclaimed by critics and beloved by audiences, the Grant Park Music Festival is the nation's only free, summer-long outdoor classical music series of its kind. Its 81st season, running June 17—August 22, 2015, will take place in Millennium Park's Jay Pritzker Pavilion with Artistic Director and Principal Conductor Carlos Kalmar leading the Grammy® Award-nominated Grant Park Orchestra and Chorus Director Christopher Bell directing the award-winning Grant Park Chorus.

The Grant Park Music Festival is proudly presented by the Grant Park Orchestral Association with key support from the Chicago Park District,

and the Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events.

In addition to Carlos Kalmar and Christopher Bell, the Festival is led by Grant Park Orchestral Association President and CEO Paul Winberg, and Board Chair Chuck Kierscht.

For more information about the Grant Park Music Festival including membership and group seating, visit [gpmf.org](http://gpmf.org) or call [312.742.7638](tel:312.742.7638). For additional information, visit the Grant Park Music Festival Facebook page or follow the Festival on Twitter @gpmf.

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