



August, 2022 Newsletter



Hamilton Wings
giving our children the wings to soar

On the Horizon

SCORE! Enrollment for Next Session

Enrollment is now open!
SCORE! provides students with the opportunity to create, develop and produce their own opera production.

Learn More on [Page 7](#)

The Sky's the Limit - Fundraising Paint Event

Step-by-step instruction, fundraiser designed as a fun night for parents and adult individuals after a successful summer as we fly back into the school year routine, while raising funds to support Hamilton Wing's arts enrichment programs.

Friday, August 26th @ 7:30 p.m.

Dream Hall at 51 - *lower level*
51 S Grove Avenue
Elgin, IL 60120

Event is free with [Donation](#)

Please [RSVP](#) to Attend

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SCORE! Enrollment for Next Session

Reflection from Hamilton Wings' Executive Director Risé D. Jones, Ph.D.

“What are you going to say to him?”

“Nothing, kid. He’s gotta tell himself.”

In the I-can’t-move-one-more-muscle, afterglow of a twisty-turny-joy-filled-chaos-maneuvering SCORE!

(Students Creating Opera to Reinforce Education) year,

I found myself crying at this exchange between a daughter and her coach father in the latest Netflix, Adam Sandler movie.

Now, I’m a waters work wimp for most sentimental movies, but my tears may have been deemed a little premature for this film which put a new twist on a “Rocky” like genre.

After a grueling training regimen, the athlete that Adam is coaching has hit a wall that seems impossible to break through and no measure or word from his coach can motivate or move him beyond this point.

The only thing that will help this young person move beyond this wall and get to the next level are words from within the young person - himself.

One of the arts practices that we (young people and adult leaders) use in Hamilton Wings to support shared learning and growth is “constructive criticism.”

As we work together to become better and stronger, we offer actionable ways for improvement - with the understanding that as one succeeds, we all succeed.

We use this learning strategy even during the two-week SCORE! Camp in which all of the original pieces created throughout the year-long series of workshops are pulled together for the impending Blizzard Theatre performances.

Yet, there comes a point when the young people are on the stage rehearsing, when one more word or modeling is not going to help them continue to reach their potential.

It can only come from inside.



Risé D. Jones, Ph.D.,
Executive Director, Hamilton Wings

Photo Credit: Marina Makropoulos

I teared up at the mid-point in the movie because the film dialogue exchange is what I witnessed (and have had the privilege of witnessing for over 20 years) with the SCORE! students. You can just see it! They were here, and somehow, somehow, they have reached there! And it was not something that I said or did or what anyone else said or did – but what they gave to themselves. I don’t know what those words were/are...but you can just see it. And it’s tear worthy.

So much of what we do in Hamilton Wings is support young people in tapping into their innate creative brilliance and find ways to express that creativity in contributing to the world around them. But another part of what we do is support young people in finding and accessing that reserve within themselves that allows them to get up one more time, to try one more time, to risk in another way in attempt to discover another, even possible better, way of doing things. And when you witness that transformation...well, it’s truly a remarkable privilege.

As much as SCORE! is a one-of-a-kind arts enrichment program, it is more an act of faith. Everything is created by the students; the students are the creators. And the faith resides in the potential and promise of the young people, in the power of the arts, and in something grand, beyond comprehension, that can unite us all in moving towards a common vision. As she and our Board President (Donna Anderson) readied everything for this year’s SCORE! Red Carpet event, Board Member Marlene Lamz remarked,

“I try to tell people what SCORE! is but they just don’t seem to get it.” Maybe...sometimes...it’s only in the seeing, when the radiance of our young ones comes through in the achievement of an “impossible” task (the creation of an original opera), that one can believe it.

Meet Atoy Spates: Elevating Equity Coordinator

Elevating Equity was initiated by the Grand Victoria Foundation with the belief that the most powerful solutions to community issues can and should come from those facing those issues in their daily lives. Elevating Equity is a unique grant opportunity focused on supporting innovative and impactful, grassroots-led projects addressing systemic inequity, including racial inequity in Elgin.

Leading the effort for the next round of grants is Atoy Spates, the Elevating Equity Coordinator. Atoy comes to Elevating Equity with her experience as an Executive Assistant for a Chicago, non-profit, *Mystic Soul Project*, and freelance experience in photography, energy work and jewelry creation. Atoy has been part of the Elgin Community for as long as she can remember, participating in Hamilton Wings' *SCORE!* in 6th grade and continuing her work with Hamilton Wings as an adult facilitator with the after school program *I'm Just Sayin* between 2012-2014.

Her passion for the community first led Atoy to Elevating Equity when she applied for a grant with a program to build community healing through ancestral reverence and ritual. The application process instantly inspired her, as Atoy interacted with the Design Team and saw how affirming and empowering the grant process was. When the Elevating Equity Coordinator position for the next iteration became available, Atoy knew this is where her journey was meant to take her.



As the Elevating Equity Coordinator, Atoy will recruit the Legacy Team; who will be the vision holders of Elevating Equity and Community Catalysts who will be connecting to the community and encouraging our brilliant community members with visions for a more equitable Elgin to apply for this next round of grants and supporting them along the way. Atoy will be supporting both teams as they build community within their groups and supporting Elevating Equity as a whole as it becomes a resource and larger presence in our Elgin Community.

Atoy's knowledge, experience and dedication to Elgin and the community are huge assets, and we at Hamilton Wings are so excited for her role as the Elevating Equity Coordinator.

GRAND VICTORIA
FOUNDATION

Featured Board Member: Danae Molitor



Hamilton Wings' Featured Board Member, Danae Molitor is the perfect example of an individual who can speak to and demonstrate the benefits of healthy living both physically and mentally and how it relates back to the arts. Danae brings a wealth of knowledge, dedication and passion to Hamilton Wings with her ability to connect the arts to a physically and emotionally healthy life in adults and children alike.

Danae started her career in the fitness industry 28 years ago; working as a personal trainer and fitness instructor in 1994 and later becoming group fitness certified. She moved with her husband to South Elgin from Schaumburg and continued her fitness journey at the Edward Schock Centre of Elgin. While Danae had previously met Risé, it became quite clear when they re-met at the Centre that Risé was doing *BIG* things at Hamilton Wings and Danae needed to see more! Witnessing a SCORE! Performance sealed her love for the program and Danae knew she wanted to be part of Hamilton Wings and has been an amazing asset and role-model ever since.

Throughout the years, Danae has helped support various fundraising events, including "Go with the Flow", a Yoga workshop that featured a flowing chocolate fountain and tasty treats as well as "Arts Appetizers" that combined donations from downtown Elgin eateries and an opportunity to learn a little about each program that Hamilton Wing's offers. During the pandemic, she collaborated with Del Webb in Elgin with virtual links and videos for various workouts and also had alumni and Dr. Jones featured in offering a creative art experience also done virtually.

Danae has been involved with the Girls in Motion program that Hamilton Wings offers with a focus on health and wellness to girls in 4-6th grade. The program reinforced art and leadership skills with a strong emphasis on building self-confidence and self-esteem through various activities.

Today Danae works as a fitness instructor and personal trainer at The Edward Schock Centre of Elgin, Edgewater by Del Webb in Elgin, and NISRA (Northern Illinois Special Recreation Association) providing programs at AID (the Association for Individual Development) in Elgin; an organization helping special needs adults with job training and placing.

Danae shows true dedication and passion to the community and is an amazing asset to Hamilton Wings, our families and continuous endeavors. We are so grateful to have her.



Image from Girls in Motion program

Featured Funder: Seigle Foundation



*Robin & Mark Seigle, Seigle Foundation
Founders & Board Members*

The Seigle Foundation provides grants to non-profit organizations in the Elgin-Dundee communities with a leadership focus on an ethic of passion, tenacity, innovation and effectiveness. The Seigle Foundation was designed to be a lasting legacy of charitable resources for their community. To fulfill this legacy, the Foundation provides grants to support the health and well-being of the nonprofit organizations that do this work so they can achieve their missions effectively and with excellence.

The philanthropy of the Seigle family has gone back generations and is part of their genetics to give back to the community that in their words, has done so much for them. The Foundation has evolved over the years with the Seigle Foundation coming to life a year ago; with a renewed focus on specifically the local Elgin and Dundee communities. Mark and Robin Seigle believe that full engagement in their work reflects their best selves, and that hard work produces results. They deploy the same commitment in their giving and are especially interested in organizations whose leadership demonstrates this passion with proven results.

SEIGLE
FOUNDATION

The Seigle Foundation funds in four broad areas considered essential to a thriving region; education, food, housing and the arts. Nonprofits can apply for a grant from one of the four areas during designated seasonal times; an education grant in the spring, food in the summer, housing in fall and a grant for the arts in winter. The selection process for grant recipients each season involves much review and research to determine which nonprofits are providing a needed service and demonstrating proven success.

To help with the grant selection process Mark and Robin invited in another board member, Karina Nava a lifelong Elginita with experience in social service, nonprofits, the community and as a public servant. Karina, Elgin Assistant City Manager, first met Mark Seigle at the beginning of the pandemic when foundations were coming together for the Covid-19 Response Fund. Karina has brought unique experiences, perspectives, and knowledge communities' obstacles with an understanding about where services are most needed.

Mark, Robin and Karina are truly inspirational and with the Seigle Foundation, are ensuring the vibrancy and resilience of Elgin and Dundee into the Future. They believe that with a strong economy, diversity, stable institutions, and a strong social fabric will generate positive outcomes for all its residents. We at Hamilton Wings are so grateful and appreciative to have been a recipient of the Arts grant this past season and for the support of the Seigle Foundation in continuing to give our children the wings to soar.



*Karina Nava, Elgin Assistant City Manager &
Seigle Foundation Board Member*

The Importance of CREATE-ing Joy-Filled, Soul-Replenishing, Art-Infused Spaces



“Due to the pandemic many of our children have forgotten how to interact with others, how to have healthy relationships with other kids. We want opportunities that will bring them closer to other students again, teach them how to work together, support each other, and share.”

~ Daniela, Ronald O’Neal Parent

“We know each child is like a unique world. Their needs vary due to different factors, but we are confident that the arts can contribute to their development in an integral way. These types of programs can help support our kids and give them a better quality of life.”

~ Claudia, Coleman Elementary Parent

(Quotes from Elgin Padres con Poder’s Afterschool Programs Visioning)

The pandemic, economic uncertainties, and political strife have caused immeasurable stress on youth and their families.

“The gap in wealth and access to resources makes it challenging, if not impossible, for members of under-served communities to navigate pandemics and economic downturns in ways that keep them physically, emotionally, and mentally healthy.”

(Curtis, Kyle; “The Benefits of Music and Art Education on Under-served Communities”, August 17, 2021. www.studentassembly.org).

Art is a powerful tool for building social emotional skills, supporting mental health, and providing a creative outlet for stress. Art and music can help families and communities thrive.

Hamilton Wings is looking forward to initiating CREATE, Creative Relationships and Empowering Arts Transforming and Equity Building, this Fall with five partner school and with the collaboration of and in response to the urgent need identified by parent leaders from COFI (Community Organizing and Family Issues) and Elgin Padres con Poder.

The overall goal of CREATE is to support the development of the social emotional skills of self-awareness, social awareness, self-management, goal directed behavior, relationship skills, personal responsibility, decision making and optimistic thinking through fun-filled, arts-based experiences, exploration, and expression for young people and their families.

In addition to the above collaborators, CREATE will be implemented in collaboration with Mujeres Latinas Unidas en el Arte y Bienstar and various local artist & youth development educators.

If you would like to support CREATE through a donation or through your artist or youth development expertise as an instructional leader, please contact

Risé D. Jones, Ph.D. at hello@hamiltonwings.org

Hamilton Wings is an In-Residence Ensemble of Elgin Community College



Enrollment Begins in August for SCORE!

Students Creating Opera to Reinforce Education



Attention: Young people Who Like to be Creative Inside and Outside of the Classroom
Join us for our 20th Original Opera Production which is called ___?___ and is about ___?___...

Well, we don't know because it is ALL created by the SCORE! Students!

What we do know: that the 20th original, student opera will be June 30th and July 1st, 2023!

SCORE!. Students Creating Opera to Reinforce Education, provides students ages 10-13 with the opportunity to create, develop, and produce their own original opera production over the course of a year.

Young people do it all!

In this program, one of the few of its kind in the United States, up to 60 5th-8th grade students write the libretto, compose the arias, choreograph the dance and movement, design the costumes, and build the sets to tell their own original opera story with the support of professional artists in over 130 hours of intensive arts and leadership workshops over the course of 8 months.

Do you have to be a good singer? No! Most of our time is actually spent in the creative process. So, if imagining possibilities is your thing...then SCORE! might be too!



The SCORE! Family Orientation

Thursday, October 27, 2022, 6:30 p.m.
Elgin Community College, Building H (Arts Center)

Stay tuned for more information.

Is your Student interested in joining SCORE!?

[Register Here!](#)



Hamilton Wings

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We are so grateful and thankful for the teachers, families, volunteers and community engagement and commitment with Hamilton Wings. We truly appreciate your donations, time and support to continue *giving our children the wings to soar!*

[**Donate to Hamilton Wings**](#)