

**The 2015 OBELISK AWARDS
HONOREES AND THEIR NOMINATORS**

The Obelisk Awards honor businesses large and small for the generous, and often pivotal, role that they play in the growth and sustainability of North Texas nonprofit arts and cultural organizations. Please see below for a synopsis of each honoree by their nominator.

Note that the Arts Leadership Award is given to one individual, and that two new awards were instituted in 2015. The Outstanding Cultural Organization Award is given to a nonprofit arts organization for creating a mutually beneficial opportunity for business to advance the arts. The Leadership Arts Alumna Award is given to an individual alumnus of the Leadership Arts Institute.

NEW INITIATIVES AWARD CATEGORY (PARTNERSHIPS OF LESS THAN 3 YEARS AND NEW CONCEPTS)

LARGE – MORE THAN 500 EMPLOYEES

Virgin America

Nominated by Dallas Film Society – *Lee Papert*

This year, the Dallas Film Society (DFS) welcomed Virgin America Airlines as a new sponsor for the 2015 Dallas International Film Festival (DIFF). Virgin America provided the DFS with more than 50 pro-bono flight vouchers to assist in flying in more than 150 filmmakers and guest stars to the 2015 DIFF, in addition to their cash sponsorship fee. Further embracing their sponsor role, they brought flight attendants to walk the DFS “Red Carpet” and offered a unique screening of BLAH AIRLINES 101, their counter-intuitive marketing film, with post-discussion by the filmmakers. Moreover, the DFS is currently partnering with Virgin America to showcase films from DIFF and a 2015 DIFF Highlight Reel on their in-flight entertainment, further promoting DIFF and the DFS.

MEDIUM – 50 TO 500 EMPLOYEES

NorthPark Center

Nominated by Dallas Symphony Orchestra – *Jonathan Martin*

This year, thanks to a substantial gift, the first annual Nancy A. Nasher and David J. Haemisegger Family SOLUNA International Music & Arts Festival was presented. SOLUNA garnered national and international attention, representing a significant step forward in developing Dallas and the Dallas Arts District as a major cultural center. NorthPark Center has been a champion of arts organizations in Dallas for many years and regularly supports the Dallas Symphony Orchestra (DSO). Throughout this relationship, NorthPark has been instrumental in helping to fulfill the DSO’s mission through sponsorship of the DSO’s Christmas Concert Series in previous years, the annual ARTsPARK event and much more.

SMALL – LESS THAN 50 EMPLOYEES

Beyond the Horizon

Nominated by Undermain Theatre - *Katherine Owens*

In 2013, Beyond the Horizon (BTH) donated countless hours of service and attention to the Undermain Theatre (UT) as a pro bono project that implemented a cloud-based system to combine ticket sales and donor management in to a single platform. Today, BTH has assumed an on-going administration role with UT, including all IT systems. Additionally, BTH has migrated UT's data to the cloud

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and integrated data and processes across UT's operational functions. The donor management and ticketing capability has expanded in to grants management, marketing and membership management. Now, with all data consolidated, UT can readily see an individual patron or donor and see all of the activities and engagements with that person, a task that was not possible before migration. These benefits were derived while actually decreasing UT's on-going operational expenditures for technology.

ARTS PARTNERSHIP AWARD CATEGORY (Partnerships of more than 3 years)

LARGE – MORE THAN 500 EMPLOYEES

Spec's Wine, Spirits and Finer Foods

Nominated by University of North Texas, College of Music - *Dr. James C. Scott, Dean*

Since 2000, Spec's Wine, Spirits and Finer Foods has supported the One O'Clock Lab Band and the University of North Texas, College of Music (UNT) with endowments, scholarships, and operational support totaling well over \$1.3 million. The impact of these contributions can be seen in the Lab Band's two 2001 Grammy nominations, their four day experience with guest artist Bobby McFerrin and the Lab Band's second half performance at the Cancer Blows event. More recently, Spec's has requested UNT's College of Music to perform for special occasions at their locations throughout the DFW area.

MEDIUM – 50 TO 500 EMPLOYEES

Neiman Marcus Willow Bend

Nominated by North Texas Performing Arts & Plano Children's Theatre - *Sara Egelston Akers*

Since opening in 2001, the Neiman Marcus Willow Bend (NMWB) location has been dedicated to supporting local arts and community organizations in the North Texas area. The store gives via monetary and in-kind donations and regularly hosts arts organizations in the store for events. Annually, NMWB hosts a holiday "pop-up" shop with a percentage of proceeds benefiting a local arts organization. In 2014, NMWB selected the Plano Children's Theatre as the beneficiary of this shop and garnered the third largest donation of the companies 41 stores. Moreover, NMWB has a long standing relationship with the Chamberlain Performing Arts and Junior League of Collin County organization, serving as a production sponsor of their ballet program for more than 5 years.

SMALL – LESS THAN 50 EMPLOYEES

The Dallas Weekly

Nominated by Dallas Black Dance Theatre - *Zenetta Drew*

The Dallas Weekly has provided media sponsorship to Dallas Black Dance Theatre for nearly 20 years. Over the last few years, this sponsorship included more than a dozen quarter-page weekly print ads, digital banner ads, and monthly e-blasts. As possible, the newspaper also tries to provide editorial coverage of performances and other activities throughout the year. The Dallas Weekly values their support annually at \$9,367. The print ads typically run the week before and during DBDT's multitude of performances and enable DBDT to advertise not only its home season in the Wyly Theatre at the AT&T Performing Arts Center but also

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its popular Dancing Beyond Borders series, with performances in Richardson and Fort Worth. Moreover, James Washington, publisher of The Dallas Weekly, also serves on DBDT's Board of Directors, helping to provide fiduciary oversight.

ARTS EDUCATION AWARD CATEGORY (ONE AWARD GIVEN ANNUALLY)

Atmos Energy Corporation

Nominated by WaterTower Theatre - *Greg Patterson*

Atmos Energy has been a corporate sponsor of WaterTower Theatre (WTT) for over 10 years. Their support has been instrumental to the growth of WTT's education programs. In the last four year, Atmos' sponsorship has enabled WaterTower Theatre to produce a highly successful Student Matinee program where more than 4,000 children and young adults. This program provides a two-prong benefit to the students in the community; giving them the opportunity to understudy and perform with professional actors as well as to experience a live performance. Student Matinee program performances include All My Sons, The Grapes of Wrath and this year, The Lord of the Flies.

ARTS LEADERSHIP AWARD CATEGORY (ONE AWARD GIVEN ANNUALLY)

Stephen Waldman - Waldman Bros

Nominated by Dallas Holocaust Museum – *Mary Pat Higgins*

Stephen Waldman has served on the Dallas Holocaust Museum board for 11 years; acting as the board chair for the past two years. In addition to his contributions through sponsorship of programs and other regular donations, Stephen allows the museum to utilize his business resources for projects, hires contractors to help clean for the staff after major events and purchases tables at other charitable events for Museum staff to attend, expand their network and raise the Museum's profile. Additionally, he gives of his personal time through attending numerous fundraising appointments, board meetings, strategic planning sessions and the majority of Museum functions, often serving as emcee. Stephen is also active in the community through board membership in a number of other non-profits. Under his leadership, Waldman Bros participates in more than forty charity events yearly through sponsorships, donation and volunteer participation.

OUTSTANDING LEADERSHIP ARTS ALUMNUS (ONE AWARD GIVEN ANNUALLY)

Edwin Cabaniss - The Kessler Theater

Nominated by Steve Roth

Edwin Cabaniss (Leadership Arts Class of 2010) refurbished one of the last art deco movie theaters built in the U.S. prior to World War II. Nestled on West Davis Street in Dallas, Texas, The Kessler is more than a concert venue and restaurant. The Kessler is a slice of history that anyone with a thirst for great music, or a love for architecture, can enjoy. In 2014, it was named "Best Live Music Venue" at the Best of Dallas Awards. In addition the Kessler, has been named "Best Music Venue and the Dallas A-List along with winning countless other "Best Music Venue" or "Best Performing Arts Center" in 2013, 2011 and 2010. Not only does Edwin, through the Kessler, provide high-quality entertainment for Texans and help to nurture native musicians, but he also donates the theater to promote important social and medical causes.

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OUTSTANDING NONPROFIT PARTNER

Booker T. Washington School for the Performing and Visual Arts

Nominated by Neiman Marcus Group

Booker T Washington High School for the Performing and Visual Arts has long been a tremendous asset for the City of Dallas and an artistic shining beacon. Similar to many corporations, Neiman Marcus has enjoyed an extensive and mutually beneficial partnership. In early 2015, the partnership grew when BTW stepped up to the plate with a unique opportunity from the Neiman Marcus' marketing and creative group. They whole-heartedly embraced our challenge to have a competition resulting in a student-designed charm to be featured on Neiman Marcus packaging and in our national holiday publication of *The Book*. Neiman Marcus benefitted from an emblematic design and the student received a cash award, publicity and a mentoring meeting with a professional artist, who helped to turn her 2-D design into 3-D.