

Candidate for Recording Secretary: Alice S. Pratt



Biography:

Winner of the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra's Music Educators Award and multiple year inductee in Who's Who Among America's Teachers, Alice S. Pratt taught elementary vocal music for the Rochester City Schools for 33 years. Currently teaching at the Hochstein School of Music and on the faculty of Nazareth College, she serves AOSA as member of the Diversity Committee. Her past AOSA leadership roles include National Conference Co-Chair for the 2011 and 2014 conferences, Region V Representative, and chapter president. She was also column coordinator for OPUS: Orff Programs in Urban Schools, a regular feature in AOSA's quarterly newsletter, Reverberations. Alice is a frequent presenter for AOSA, Canada Orff, and the New York State School Music Association.

CANDIDATE FORUM

1. What do you see as the role of Orff Schulwerk in music education today?

As one of the major forces in American music education for children and the training of their teachers, AOSA has a critical role. By listening and watching to the trends and needs in today's schools and taking what we know as valuable in the tradition of Orff Schulwerk, we can carry the torch of what is special about Orff Schulwerk and blend it with the current applications of teaching and learning. We must be forward thinkers while staying steadfast to the basics of Orff Schulwerk. While staying true to the older membership, we must speak to younger and newer teachers using their communication methods. By reaching out and showing them the most exciting way to educate and connect with their students, we foster the creation of beautiful, meaningful music with them. We must be a pathway to the educational excellence of the past and present, while taking students into a larger horizon of aesthetic education. With that, we make a lasting impression on the mind, character and soul of the student. By fortifying the nation's teachers with high quality, affordable and reachable teacher training, as well as quality workshops and conferences, we are an invaluable part of the growth of a teacher and his or her practice.

2. What are your leadership strengths, and how do you think they would contribute to the work of AOSA and promoting Orff Schulwerk?

Perseverance is the word that comes to mind as a leadership strength. Somehow, I keep at the

task at hand, looking at a bigger picture and keep the work moving, even during difficult times. I am a willing learner, and I connect with others, listening to them and storing information "in my brain" as to what they might need, bringing those things to the leadership table in my work with other leaders. I am a promoter of diversity, and try to be sensitive to the needs of those who are under-represented while keeping what is important in the foundations of AOSA. I feel those are important contributions to AOSA, as we move towards a more diverse organization, while providing substance for the current educational trends,

3. What is the role of the National Board of Trustees as it relates to the general membership and how would you fulfill this role?

I do feel that listening to our membership is critical. We do this by dialogue with chapter presidents and chapter members and by being "people watchers". By that I mean that we can pay attention to postings on social media, talk to people face to face at conference or when we give or attend local workshops, and by paying attention to what is happening in other music education organizations and in general education in our states and country.

I also feel that the NBT needs to tend to all aspects of the organization so that it moves forward and meets the needs of its membership. With astute overseeing of teacher training courses, chapter concerns, submissions in our journal postings on our website, fostering research, providing scholarships and grants, and continuing to hold conferences, we make the organization one that truly makes it better for its membership. We must maintain international relationships and relationships with other music education organizations as well. Lastly, we must make sure that head quarters has what it needs, both in personnel and in working conditions to run at its best on our behalf.

4. What is your vision for AOSA and Orff Schulwerk in the future?

What was stated in the first question sums up my vision and how I feel we should proceed in the future. I am most interested in fostering connections with our new teachers, ascertaining the needs of current education in America, and blending it with what we know and treasure in the basics of Orff Schulwerk. Hanging on to the solid foundations while shaping them to fit the needs of today's educational landscape is critical. At the same time, we must look forward and look for ways to continually improve our practices as an organization. I support the fostering of diversity in all aspects of our organization. Lastly, I feel it critical to pass down this amazing way to teach and learn, so that long after we are gone, the organization is still there as an amazing tool for teachers and the artistic awakening of children.