

## Nominee's information

Information about the person you are nominating for the award

### Nominee's name \*

First and last name

Bob Gregory-Bjorklund

### Address of nominee

[Redacted]

### Phone number of nominee

[Redacted]

### Email of nominee

[Redacted]

## Lead nominator's information

### Your name \*

First and last name

[Redacted]

### Address

[Redacted]

### Phone number

[Redacted]

### Email \*

[Redacted]

## Co-nominator 1 information

### Name of co-nominator 1 \*

[Redacted]

### Address of co-nominator 1

[Redacted]

### Phone number of co-nominator 1

[Redacted]

### Email of co-nominator 1

[Redacted]

## Co-nominator 2 information

### Name of co-nominator 2 \*

[Redacted]

Address of co-nominator 2

[REDACTED]

Phone number of co-nominator 2

[REDACTED]

Email of co-nominator 2

[REDACTED]

## Reasoning for nomination

Please limit your answer to 250 words or 1500 characters per question.

### **What is/are the nominee's area(s) of expertise and what is the general nature of the nominee's contribution to the arts and/or culture? \***

Bob Gregory-Bjorklund is a highly respected theater teacher, director, and performer. He has contributed significantly to the cultural landscape of the community by directing numerous school/community theater productions that showcase his skill in storytelling, staging, and character development. He has inspired countless students to explore the performing arts, providing them with a strong foundation in voice, drumming, acting, stagecraft, and theater appreciation.

Over nearly 30 years of arts and culture contributions he has taught theater and art, directed and performed with the Northfield Arts Guild, introduced countless students to theater through the Young People's Theater Workshop, directed plays and musicals at Northfield High School, was vocal director for Rock 'n Roll Revival, taught and coordinated arts at ARTech/Arcadia, did elementary school residencies, brought drummers to various community events, and was the founder of the Spirit Voices at First United Church of Christ.

He is known for creating an inclusive and supportive environment where students of all backgrounds can discover and develop their talents. Bob's impact on Northfield's arts community is profound; he has fostered a love for theater in the community, nurtured future artists, and strengthened the community's appreciation for live performance. His dedication makes him a well-deserving candidate for the Living Treasure Award, as his work has enriched Northfield's cultural life for many years.

### **Why do you believe the nominee's contribution to the state of arts and/or culture in Northfield specifically, and/or to its quality of life, and/or to Northfield's identity, qualifies the nominee for this award? \***

Bob Gregory-Bjorklund's contributions to Northfield's arts and culture scene have been transformative, making him a standout candidate for the Living Treasure Award. His work as a theater teacher and director has shaped Northfield's identity as a community that values creativity, inclusivity, and the performing arts. By guiding students through the creation of powerful, well-crafted productions, Bob has made theater accessible and compelling to audiences of all ages, fostering a vibrant local arts culture that brings people together and enhances community spirit.

Through decades of dedicated work, he has cultivated a sense of belonging and personal growth among students, allowing them to explore their creative potential in an environment that prioritizes self-expression and collaboration. His influence has also strengthened Northfield's cultural life, with his productions serving as a hub for local families and theater lovers to connect, celebrate, and support young talent. Bob's longstanding commitment has elevated Northfield's reputation as a place that champions the arts, making it a more dynamic and inspiring place to live, work and visit. His legacy, built through the countless lives he's touched and the community he's enriched, truly qualifies him for recognition as a Living Treasure.

**What are the three most interesting, unusual or unique features of the nominee's work, accomplishments or contributions? \***

**Innovation:** Bob is known for his creative teaching methods, which go beyond traditional theater instruction. He incorporates a wide array of theatrical techniques, from improvisation and movement to experimental staging, encouraging students to engage deeply with their roles and push creative boundaries. His dedication to making theater an explorative experience allows students to develop skills in areas like character development, physical expression, and emotional depth as well as tech and costuming, making his program uniquely impactful.

**Inclusivity:** Bob has created a theater program that welcomes students from all backgrounds and abilities. His productions are known for celebrating diversity and fostering a supportive, collaborative environment. By prioritizing inclusivity, Bob has made theater accessible and relevant to the broader community, bringing people together and creating a sense of belonging that is truly unique in school theater.

**Legacy and Cultural Influence:** With decades of dedication, Bob has become an institution in the Northfield arts community, mentoring generations of students who continue to be inspired by his passion and creativity. His influence extends beyond the stage, as many of his former students remain active in the arts or credit him with instilling a lifelong love for creative expression. This lasting impact on both students and the broader community exemplifies the unique, enduring quality of his contributions to local culture and the arts.

**How does the nominee promote understanding of the nominee's field of expertise or to the values of arts and/or culture? \***

Bob Gregory-Bjorklund promotes an understanding of theater and the values of arts and culture by making theater an immersive, consequential experience for his students and the wider community. He does this by guiding his students to appreciate the depth and discipline of the craft, teaching not just acting skills but the full spectrum of theater production, from set design to character analysis and emotional expression. Bob's commitment to this holistic approach helps students gain deep appreciation of what it takes to create impactful theater, nurturing respect and passion for the art form.

Moreover, Bob instills values of empathy, collaboration, and resilience through his work. By casting students in challenging roles and pushing them to explore different perspectives, he fosters a deep sense of empathy and understanding, showing how theater can bridge gaps and open minds. His productions often resonate with universal themes, allowing audiences to connect with characters and stories that reflect their own lives and struggles, ultimately broadening community appreciation for the power of storytelling.

In everything he does, Bob demonstrates that theater is more than performance—it's a means of building connections, fostering self-discovery, and celebrating shared human experiences. His approach helps both his students and the broader community embrace the values of the arts as essential to personal growth and communal understanding.

**Please list any additional special recognition, awards, or media recognition not listed elsewhere. \***

2011 HCI Making a Difference Award: Bob and Ann Gregory-Bjorklund were awarded the award that celebrates those groups and individuals in the community who have a positive influence on Northfield youth (<https://patch.com/minnesota/northfield/bp--ann-bob-gregory-bjorklund-are-making-a-difference>).

2012 ARTech (Arcadia) Teacher of the Year and Minnesota Teacher of the Year candidate (<https://patch.com/minnesota/northfield/three-northfield-teachers-nominated-for-minnesota-teaeb2d3b9466>).

2017 Northfield Rotary Good Neighbor Award: The annual "Good Neighbor" award was presented to Bob by Northfield Superintendent of Schools Matt Hillmann, in recognition of his long history of providing performing arts opportunities in theater and music. His contributions are most evident as a teacher and advisor at Arcadia, but Bob also has also worked with St. Olaf, Young People's Theatre, seniors and church groups to name a few venues. (<https://northfieldrotary.org/stories/2017-good-neighbor-award-winner>).

**Supporting documentation**

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**Upload a letter of support from each co-nominator\***

No more than 250 words or 1500 characters

BGB.Laura.pdf	14.4KB
BGB.Mary.pdf	15.35KB
BGB.Shari.pdf	26.65KB

**Optional: At least one but no more than three pieces of supporting documentation that highlights their artistic and/or cultural contributions to our community**

i.e., portfolio, newspaper articles, photographs, video clips no longer than 3 minutes, etc.

BGBArticles.pdf	4.62MB
BGBPhotos.pdf	89.69KB
BGBQuotes.pdf	28.5KB

**Agreement**

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As the lead nominator for this application, by signing below I certify that:

- o The nominee has been informed about the intent to submit a nomination.
- o The nominee has agreed to be nominated.
- o The nominee agrees to serve the community as outlined in the criteria above according to their abilities, if selected.
- o The co-nominators have agreed to support this nomination.
- o The application contains accurate and complete information to the best of my knowledge.
- o If the nominee is not selected, the application may be kept on file for up to five years. I understand that I may update it each year it is on file.

**Signature\***



**Today's Date\***

11/09/2024