School of Dance Celebrates Black History Month
Guest Instructors Share Lessons of Influence & Inspiration

Students from Generations of Steppaz Dance Crew and Oglebay Institute’s School of Dance participated in a hip hop workshop with professional dancer and choreographer Nijesuwon Matthews February 5 at OI’s dance studios. Pictured above, left to right, are Jordan Jackson, Britney Williams, Abryanna Bambio, Nijesuwon Matthews, Daniella Truong, Laura Tigue and Natasha Wood.
A Message from the President

The early months of 2017 have been very full at Oglebay Institute as we develop a rich and expanded schedule of programming to entertain, educate and inspire in the year ahead.

Some exciting capital projects are underway as well. The Stifel Fine Arts Center’s porte-cochere is being reconstructed, and the 30+ year-old, failing air conditioning at Towngate Theatre is being replaced. Community donations along with grants from the WV Division of Culture and History (WVDCH) and the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) made these projects possible. As you may have seen in the news, the future of arts funding at both the federal and state level is uncertain. This is concerning because it is only through the Competitive Arts Grant Program within the WVDCH that OI accesses State support. These grants annually contribute 2-3% of operating support and help provide funding for educational programs and capital projects, many of which could not be addressed through the confines of our regular operating budget. The Competitive Arts Grant Program makes up $726,000 of the WVDCH budget, funds that must receive matching funds from the NEA. These funds also require a local match of 50% from contributions to help leverage support from the local community.

Over the last few weeks, I have asked our representatives for their continued support of the WV Commission on the Arts, the State Historic Preservation Grant Program, the NEA, the National Endowment for the Humanities and the Institute for Museum and Library Services. All of these agencies advance our work at Oglebay Institute in some way. I have been encouraged by the accessibility and support of our legislators. During these uncertain times for public funding for the arts, I am energized by the loyal support of friends like you. Your patronage and contributions make our work possible. I respectfully ask for your continued support and that you join me in communicating the important role that the arts play in strengthening our communities, our state and our nation.

Sincerely,

Danielle Cross McCracken
Oglebay Institute President

Effective January 1, 2017, Martin Maness is the new chair of the Oglebay Institute Board of Trustees, having served the past two years as vice chair under J. Milton Gutman. Since joining the OI Board in 2009, Maness has served on the Fundraising Committee and the Museums Sub-Committee. He currently serves as chair of the Buildings & Grounds Committee and the Environmental Education Sub-Committee.

President of Maness Contracting, Inc., in Wheeling, Maness is a member of the Wheeling Area Chamber of Commerce, the East Wheeling Business Council, the City of Wheeling Affordable Housing Task Force and BBB West Virginia Advisory Council. He is a former director of the Wheeling Area Training Center for the Handicapped (WATCH), an instructor for the Community Homebuyer Investment Program, past president and trustee of the Fraternal Order of Police Associates #38, and general partner of Springhouse Group LLC White Sulphur Springs Real Estate Development Company. Martin has received honorable mention from the American Institute of Architects and has periodically ranked in the top 500 remodeling contractors by Qualified Remodeler Magazine.

Coming onboard as new members of the OI Board are Cheri A. DeBlasis, senior vice president of Main Street Bank; Walker Holloway, financial advisor at Hazlett, Burt & Watson; and Will Turani, director of operations and sustainability at Orrick. They join current OI Board members Mike Boldrick, district manager, Cabelas; Saun Capehart, board member, Harmony House; John D. Culler, board chair, Marketing Media, LLC; Patrick Felton, Felton CPA; Anthony Gentile, market president, United Bank; Gary Glessner, president, Glessner & Associates; J. Milton Gutman, president, Gutman Advertising; Anne Harman, partner, Dinsmore & Shohl, LLP; James B. Kepner, co-president, Kepner Funeral Homes; Anne Madarasz, vice president, Museums Exhibits & Collections, Senator John Heinz History Center; Kris Molnar, financial consultant; John W. Moore, Jr., retired human resources executive; Donald A. Nickerson, Jr., special counsel, Bowles Rice, LLP; Tom Paree, president, Paree Insurance Centers; Elsie Reyes, board member, Community Foundation for the Ohio Valley; Cheryl Dean Riley, U.S. District Court, Northern District of W.Va.; Justin Seibert, president, Direct Online Marketing; Kathy Shapell, executive director, Augusta Levy Learning Center.
First Folio’s Visit to Wheeling Documented in Folger Exhibit

Oglebay Institute director of museums Christin Byrum and curator Kelsy Sinelnikov traveled to the Folger Shakespeare Library in Washington, DC in November for the opening of the exhibition “First Folio! Shakespeare’s American Tour.”

The exhibition documents the travels and experiences of the 18 original First Folios that traveled to all 50 states, Puerto Rico and Washington, D.C. in 2016 to celebrate the 400th anniversary of Shakespeare’s death.

Oglebay Institute’s Mansion Museum served as West Virginia’s stop on the national tour. An original 1623 First Folio was on display from May 9 – June 12, 2016.

The First Folio’s visit to Wheeling is documented in the exhibition, which is the largest ever display of First Folios in a single venue.

Known to the Folger Shakespeare Library as First Folio number 59, the First Folio that traveled to Wheeling also visited Cleveland, Ohio and Providence, Rhode Island. It traveled 1,547 miles and was experienced by 10,562 people, 3,469 of them in Wheeling. It inspired 137 special events – 45 in Wheeling.

Thompson Appointed Director of Performing Arts

Longtime OI employee Tim Thompson was promoted to director of performing arts, replacing Kate Crosbie who retired in October after 42 years of service.

Thompson served as OI technical director from 1988–1992, returned to serve as OI youth theater director in 2004 and was promoted to the director of Towngate Theatre in 2011. He holds a bachelor’s degree from Bethany College and a Master of Fine Arts degree in acting from West Virginia University.

During his tenure at OI, Thompson has cultivated a successful youth theater program engaging hundreds of students each year in both in school, after school and community theater programs. Some of his initiatives have included the development of the successful Fall Play Tour, expanding the creative dramatics program in several Ohio Valley Schools, the introduction of a children’s theater season and the formation of acting classes and summer camps. He also established and continues to facilitate and coach the “Crazy 8s” a youth improv troupe, and the adult improv troupe the “Left of Centre Players.” Thompson also developed the Towngate Second Season, which enhances Wheeling’s arts landscape with literary programming, poetry, theatrical readings, improvisation and musical performances. Most recently, he has collaborated with the visual arts team to create The Gallery at Towngate.

Longtime Performing Arts Director Crosbie Retires

Oglebay Institute director of performing arts Kate Crosbie retired in October after 42 years of service. Serving as a steadfast supporter, cultivator and advocate for theater and dance, Crosbie has dedicated her life to helping people of all ages enrich their lives through the arts.

She was honored at a celebration at Towngate Theatre, which featured a slideshow chronicling her career as both a performer and an arts administrator. Invited guests enjoyed refreshments and mingling in the Towngate social room before filling the theater for an onstage tribute. A number of speakers, including OI president Danielle McCracken and retired longtime Towngate artistic director Hal O’Leary, saluted Crosbie for her stellar accomplishments. As a special surprise, a film tribute, produced by Crosbie’s son and his wife, was shown on Towngate’s big screen. After Crosbie spoke and offered her thanks, the audience gave her a well-deserved standing ovation.

See photos on page 6.
Above, Lorraine Graves discusses her career path as a dancer as well as her challenges and influences with students of Oglebay Institute’s School of Dance.

Special guests from the Dance Theatre of Harlem and the Joffrey Ballet School taught workshops and led a discussion on the challenges, changes and influence of African American dancers since the 1950s.

In 2015, Misty Copeland made history when she became the first African American female principal dancer with the prestigious, and historically white, American Ballet Theatre. Like with all barrier-breaking “firsts,” there is a long and illustrious line of people who paved the way for this historic moment.

“Misty Copeland is amazing and has become a household name. But she is not the first black professional ballerina. Many other African American women had trailblazing careers despite the racism they faced. Their accomplishments helped open the door for future dancers like Misty,” said Oglebay Institute director of dance Cheryl Pompeo.

One of those women is Lorraine Graves. Graves is a former principal ballerina and current master teacher with the legendary Dance Theatre of Harlem. She has performed around the world and for American presidents Ronald Reagan, George H. W. Bush and Bill Clinton as well as Nelson Mandela and Mikhail Gorbachev.

Graves was a special guest at Oglebay Institute’s School of Dance in February as part of the School’s Black History Month celebration. She taught a ballet workshop and led a discussion on the challenges, changes and influence of African American dancers since the 1950s.

“Lorraine is a legend and a pioneer. She was the first African American dancer to dance on stage with a Caucasian dancer. In the 1950s this was unheard of,” Pompeo said. “Not only is she an incredibly talented dancer and teacher, she has been instrumental in breaking down barriers in the world of dance.”

Dance Theatre of Harlem, where Graves began her career, is the oldest black classical company in continuous existence, was instrumental in lowering the color bar in ballet and continues to carry the torch for racial inclusion.

Continued on page 5.
Internationally traveled master instructor Nijawwon Matthews joined Graves in the discussion and also taught a hip-hop workshop. Matthews is a resident teacher and choreographer for the Joffrey Ballet School in New York City as well as a teacher and dancer for TOKYOtheCOMPANY.

“Nijawwon engaged the students in learning and understanding hip-hop dance, which originated in New York among predominately African American artists,” Pompeo said, “He is amazing, and the students learned so much from him.”

Nearly 40 students from OI and other dance programs participated in the programs.

As part of OI’s community outreach program, underserved and at-risk students took part in the events through funding from the Hearst Foundation.

Pompeo organized the events as a way to honor and reflect on the accomplishments of African American dancers who have significantly impacted the American dance scene as well as illustrate the power of dance to bring people together.

“Dance has the power to reveal common bonds of the human experience.”

- School of Dance director, Cheryl Pompeo

Specialty workshops like these are available regularly at OI’s School of Dance and provide opportunities for dance students to study, train and be mentored by master teachers from around the globe.

Gathered after a hip hop workshop are students from Generations of Steppaz Dance Troop and Oglebay Institute’s School of Dance. Pictured, left to right, are: Noriashia Green, Alexis Hoffman, Neveigha Bush, Britney Williams, Emma Peterson, Kaylee Huntley, Kylah Florio, Gia Starkey, Daniella Truong, Jennifer Barry, instructor Nijawwon Matthews, Natasha Wood, Laura Tighe, Abby Milborn, Anne Nettles, Brooke Sansone, Diana Irvin, Abryanna Bumbico and Jordan Jackson.
Kate Crosbie Retirement Celebration
Towngate Theatre

Retiring performing arts director Kate Crosbie was honored for 42 years of service at Oglebay Institute with a retirement celebration October 25 at Towngate Theatre.

Above, next to Crosbie, is longtime colleague and Towngate Theatre founder Hal O’Leary with current director of performing arts Tim Thompson, tech director P.D. Gregg and retired assistant director of performing arts Sandy Talbert.

Kate Crosbie with friends Doug Allen, right, and Deb and Bob Troeger.

Above, Oglebay Institute Board of Trustees chair Milt Gutman speaks on Kate Crosbie’s influence on the performing arts in Wheeling. Below, celebrating Crosbie’s retirement are veteran Towngate actors Rick Call, left, and John Reilly.

EI in Photos
For many families, participation in the arts at Oglebay Institute is generational, especially during the holidays. As the following pictorial illustrates, young artists, actors and advocates shape much of the programs OI presents throughout the year. Furthermore, we can’t forget those volunteers and sponsors whose support fosters this participation.

The Festival of Trees adorned Oglebay Park’s Pine Room November 12-19, during which time lavish trees, wreaths and other items decorated by area individuals were sold to benefit Oglebay Institute.

Thanks to tree sales, and the generous support of sponsors First Choice America Community Federal Credit Union, Glessner & Associates, Paree Insurance Centers, Paull Associates and Premier Bank & Trust, the event raised more than $13,000.

Above, at the opening reception, are Ivan Myles, Jenny Seibert and Cheryl Dean Riley.

Pictured, left to right are John & Mary Fahey, Lisa Breiding and Rodd Haller.
Sponsored by Panhandle Cleaning & Restoration, nearly 40 volunteers participated in Holidays at the Mansion, the annual tradition of lavishly decorating the Mansion Museum’s period rooms with holiday-inspired themes.

Pictured above at the November 11 opening reception are Oglebay Institute members Martha Wright, Peter Junkersfeld and David Miller.

Above, decorator Donna Freter with husband, John. Below, “Nana, Tell Me a Story,” was the theme in the Victorian Bedroom, decorated by Judi and Tom Tarowsky of the West Virginia Storytellers Guild.

The tapas tasting series is an intimate dining experience featuring traditional and non-traditional tapas prepared by Wheeling’s finest chefs. The most recent tasting was November 14 and featured WHISK & Avenue Eats chef Lara Graves.

Pictured in the Stifel gallery are Jane Kryston (left) and Nikki Kryston from Property Maintenance Services, Inc., the corporate sponsor for the 2016-17 tapas tasting series.

Holidays at the Mansion
Mansion Museum

Holiday Art Show & Sale
Stifel Center & Schrader Center

More than 50 regional artists, crafts people and gourmet food producers exhibit at Oglebay Institute’s annual Holiday Art Show & Sale – a unique shopping experience where local residents can shop hundreds of handcrafted gifts at the Stifel Fine Arts Center and Schrader Center in Oglebay Park. The Holiday Art Show & Sale is part of the Stifel Fine Arts Center’s exhibit season sponsored by United Bank.

Pictured above, left to right, are Sally Schmalz, exhibiting artist Jim Lawther and Marlene Lawther.

Above, Jean Och (left) with exhibiting artist Sarah Wood. Below, United Bank branch manager Nathan McKeen with wife Gini.

Oglebay Institute’s Towngate Theatre hosted slam poetry with The Prosers November 19. The event featured slam poetry followed by an open mic session. Pictured, left to right, are: Maya Huggins, Sara Fincham, Claudell Whetstone, Samantha Pearl, Gabrielle Marshall and Whitney Healy.
The annual Children’s Day at the Mansion is a free event for OI members and features a personal visit with Santa, arts & crafts, gift shop, ice sleigh, magic show and theatrical performance.

Each year, volunteer “elves” help with the children’s gift shop. Above, left to right, are: Reese Moores, Lexi Irwin, Campbell Hughes, Harper Moores and Lydia Riddle.

Oglebay Institute’s Youth Ballet Company production of the holiday classic The Nutcracker delighted audiences with performances at two historic locations – Towngate Theatre and the Mansion Museum in Oglebay Park.

Picture above are snowflakes. Front row, left to right: Katherine Carson, Kelsey Glessner and Summer Toland. Middle row: Sierra Martin, Sydney Glessner, Natasha Wood and Carly Stewart. Back row: Jacie Baker, Laura Tighe, Ally Carson, Daniella Truong and Maddie Crawford.

Above, left to right, Nutcracker cast members Jennifer Barry, Lexie Kosanovic, Garrett Czapp and Peter J. Lim

Below, Madison Taylor and Kelsey Weaver.

Busy parents took advantage of the Stifel Fine Arts Center’s Holiday Art Camps December 22 & 23 while children created a variety of season-themed projects.

Pictured above, left to right, with "Dr. Seuss Trees" are Olivia Albrecht, Autumn Cerklefskic, Avery Sadlowski and Noah Seivertson.
Fellow actors, colleagues and friends of Hal O’Leary gathered at Towngate Theatre on December 17 for a reading of original works from his recently published book “For What They’re Worth: Poems of Wit and Wisdom.” The event was sponsored by Fitzsimmons Law Firm.

Pictured above with O’Leary are Tom Stobart (bottom left) and Arlene Merryman. Back row, left to right, are OI director of performing arts Tim Thompson, Michael Ramsey, OI president Danielle McCracken and Anne Reisbeck.

EQT Foundation representative Ellen Rossi, second from left, presents a check in the amount of $10,000 to Oglebay Institute in support of the Rural Arts Collaborative. Through this initiative, OI will provide art education to schools in Wetzel and Tyler counties beginning with the 2017-18 school year. With Ms. Rossi are OI development director Kathryn Kelly, OI president Danielle McCracken and Stifel Fine Arts Center director Rick Morgan.

Towngate’s Crazy 8s Youth Improv Group use their imaginations to turn audience suggestions into entertaining and amusing shows of narrative stories. Their most recent performance was January 21.

Pictured above, front row, left to right are: David Gaudio, Elle Artman and Adam Marquart. Back row, left to right: Dailey Ward, Amelia Harder, Tim Thompson, Blake McNeely and Mary Prather.

Oglebay Institute Memberworks | Winter 2017
In Wheeling the name Hal O’Leary is synonymous with community theatre. A member of the Wheeling Hall of Fame, O’Leary has spent a lifetime in the theater as actor, director and designer. He founded Oglebay Institute’s Towngate Theatre and served as its artistic director for 43 years. Since his retirement in 2008, O’Leary has immersed himself in a world of poetry, writing more than 200 poems and essays, which have been published in 15 countries.

O’Leary shared some poems from his recently published book “For What They’re Worth: Poems of Wit and Wisdom” during a poetry reading and reception in December at Oglebay Institute’s Towngate Theatre.

Despite the cold, snowy weather that evening, people of all ages, whose lives have been touched by O’Leary and his work, packed the Towngate social room to listen to the legendary thespian-turned-poet.

“It was wonderful to see Hal back at Towngate sharing his stories and points of view,” said OI director of performing arts Tim Thompson. “His voice and words of wisdom have been missed by many. You could hear a pin drop during the poetry reading. The audience was 100 percent engaged in his words.”

O’Leary received a standing ovation after the reading. A reception followed where he had an opportunity to greet and talk with friends, colleagues, fellow thespians and those he has mentored and inspired throughout his career.

Thanks to event sponsor Fitzsimmons Law Firm, all those in attendance received a free copy of O’Leary’s book.

“It was truly a magical evening. It gave me great joy to watch my teacher and mentor reminiscing about the past while, at the same time, sharing all of the beautiful, new work he has created,” Thompson added.

O’Leary’s love of poetry began at an early age. He wrote his first poem at age 16 for a teacher he loved. At age 20, after serving in the Army during World War II, he wrote his own epitaph. He wouldn’t write another poem until age 84.

“After I retired, I began to scribble a bit,” he said, engaging in poetry as a creative outlet in his “lifelong search for the purpose of human existence.”

“The arts are my religion, my education, my life,” he explained. “I believe it is only through the arts that we are afforded an occasional glimpse into the otherwise incomprehensible.”

### Featuring:
- Johnny Staats and the Delivery Boys
- Grand Ole’ Ditch
- Almost Famous
- Herb & Hanson
- Cabin Fever String Band
- Marsh Wheeling String Band
- Roadhogs
- Wheeling Park High School Bluegrass Band

Also...
- Vendor Market, Food & Drinks

**Wheeling Bluegrass Festival**

Presented by Oglebay Institute
Sponsored by The Hess Family Foundation and Yuengling

**September 9, 2017 • Stifel Fine Arts Center**

Visit WheelingBluegrassFest.com beginning April 3 for tickets.
Gift from Southwestern Energy to Support Summer Camps

Natural gas producer Southwestern Energy Company recently donated $25,000 to Oglebay Institute to benefit OI’s summer camps.

Currently the third largest producer of natural gas in the United States’ lower 48 states, including West Virginia’s northern panhandle, Southwestern Energy is an independent energy company primarily engaged in natural gas and crude oil exploration, development and production.

This gift will help underwrite costs associated with OI’s summer camps, with special emphasis on the Schrader Environmental Education Center’s Nature Camps.

Last year, Oglebay Institute served 586 individuals through its summer camp programs in nature, acting, visual arts, history, and dance.

Thanks to the generosity of Southwestern Energy, area children will continue enjoying the benefits of OI summer camps in the coming year.

Stifel Fine Arts Center Available for Business Meetings

Oglebay Institute’s Stifel Fine Arts Center is available for rental by OI Members at the Guild ($250) level and above, and by OI Business Members ($250 level & above). The facility is ideal with time slots open weekly for breakfast and lunch meetings.

Business meeting rental requirements, inclusion and fees:

• Available 8:30-10:30 a.m. for breakfast meetings and 12-2 p.m. for lunch meetings, Monday through Friday, September-May. Other times available as space permits.
• Fees are $100 for a two-hour time block for renting the ballroom. $75 for classrooms and dining room.
• A 50% non-refundable deposit must accompany signed rental agreement.
• Maximum room capacity is 100 for theater seating or 85 with tables.
• Televisions, PA system and erase boards are available for an additional $25 flat fee.
• Free WiFi & parking.

The Stifel Fine Arts Center provides a quiet, elegant location minutes from downtown Wheeling at 1330 National Road. Formerly the home of one of Wheeling’s most prominent families, it is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The Center also serves as a venue for concerts, wine tastings, wedding receptions, birthday parties and many other special events throughout the year.

Contact rental coordinator Kala Bassa at 304-242-7700 or stifelcustomerservice@oionline.com today for details and to plan your next event.
These programs are presented with financial assistance from the West Virginia Division of Culture and History, and the National Endowment for the Arts, with approval from the West Virginia Commission on the Arts.