

LEO MICHUDA AWARD FOR LIFETIME SERVICE TO THE ILLINOIS PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA

Presented at the 2014-15 IPO Season Finale on May 30, 2015

Honoree: Helen Silvia



Park Forest resident Helen Silvia has been a part of the Illinois Philharmonic Orchestra family since 1975 when she started with the orchestra (then the Park Forest Symphony) as a pianist. In 1978, under Helen's leadership, the orchestra was reorganized as a chamber group of 35 auditioned, paid performers. The new Park Forest Orchestra grew to 55 players by 1982, when it changed its name to better reflect its ever-increasing service area. At the time, the Illinois Philharmonic Orchestra actively sought to enhance the cultural image of the south suburban area by providing, as one newspaper critic of the time put it, "that downtown sound on suburban ground."

Over the many decades of growth, transition, expansion and change, Helen Silvia was instrumental in shaping, leading and supporting the orchestra, running the organization out of her dining room for more than two decades and doing every kind of task imaginable, from ordering the music to finding musicians to writing the press releases.

"She always kept us guided in the right direction," says longtime IPO board member and Friends of the IPO President Dory Machtinger. "The IPO wouldn't be here without her."

To that end the Illinois Philharmonic Orchestra Board of Directors is pleased to present Helen tonight with the inaugural Leo Michuda IPO Award for Lifetime Service to the Illinois Philharmonic Orchestra, which is awarded to recognize a member of the IPO family for his or her sustained, outstanding contributions and exemplary service to the orchestra over a period of a decade or more.

The qualifications include: **Excellence in Leadership** such as an officer or an executive of the Board of the Illinois Philharmonic Orchestra or of the Friends of the Illinois Philharmonic Orchestra or a musician directing or playing in the Illinois Philharmonic who has taken an extraordinary leadership role in advancing the orchestra as an organization; the **Securing of Resources** vital to the success of the Illinois Philharmonic Orchestra; and/or the **Application of Extraordinary Efforts** to enhance the image or promote the artistic mission of the Illinois Philharmonic Orchestra in the Greater Chicago Metropolitan Area. Helen Silvia has gone above and beyond in all of these areas, continually, yet humbly, advancing the work of the orchestra over the past 40 years and making her the perfect choice for the Leo Michuda IPO Lifetime Service Award.

Congratulations, Helen! May the Illinois Philharmonic Orchestra continue to reap the benefits of your dedication and devotion for many decades to come.