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Directors of Cleveland’s leading performing arts institutions and Jewish organizations to be featured as panelists in two new ‘Great Institutions of Cleveland’ programs

Series presented by Siegal Lifelong Learning at Case Western Reserve University offers rare opportunity to collectively learn about their organizational visions, challenges and new programs

CLEVELAND—Northeast Ohio’s performing arts institutions consistently rank among the world’s finest, but it’s rare to have their directors collectively discuss their organization’s mission, vision, challenges and new programs.

But audiences will be able to learn all of that and more in panel discussions presented by Siegal Lifelong Learning at Case Western Reserve University—the first of two “Great Institutions of Cleveland” series planned for 2026.

The first series will host leadership from many of the region’s foremost performing arts organizations including:

FRIDAY, APRIL 10 | 10:30 a.m.

André Gremillet, President & CEO, The Cleveland Orchestra
Rachel Fink, Managing Director, Cleveland Play House
Larry Goodman, PhD, President & CEO, Cleveland Ballet

FRIDAY, APRIL 17 | 10:00 a.m.

Raymond Bobgan, Executive Artistic Director, Cleveland Public Theatre
Brian Barasch, Executive Director, Great Lakes Theater
Aulbrie Kitson, Executive Director, Maltz Performing Arts Center

FRIDAY, APRIL 24 | 10:00 a.m.

Craig Hassall, President & CEO, Playhouse Square
Tony F. Sias, President & CEO, Karamu House

“Great Institutions of Cleveland: Performing Arts” will be presented on Fridays, from April 10–24, as a three-session series. The panel discussions will be moderated by John Grabowski, Case Western Reserve professor of history and editor of *The Encyclopedia of Cleveland History*. He is also historian and senior vice president for research and publications at the Western Reserve Historical Society.

The second series, “Great Institutions of Cleveland: Jewish Organizations,” will be held June 9, moderated by Sean Martin, PhD, Associate Curator for Jewish History at the Western Reserve Historical Society. This special session will highlight the contributions and contemporary visions of leading Jewish cultural and

community institutions in Northeast Ohio, including the Jewish Federation of Cleveland, Jewish Education Center of Cleveland and Mandel Jewish Community Center.

The new sessions build on the strong community response to the program's inaugural season, "Programs like 'Great Institutions of Cleveland' exemplify Siegal Lifelong Learning's mission to foster dialogue that connects scholarship to community," said Siegal's Executive Director Ted Evans. "By spotlighting the leaders who shape this region's cultural fabric, we are proud to offer experiences that are both intellectually rich and deeply rooted in place."

Both sessions offer options for in-person and remote participation, continuing Siegal Lifelong Learning's commitment to accessible, community-engaged programming. Registration and additional details are available at case.edu/lifelonglearning/lectures/great-institutions-cleveland.

The announcement follows the success of the inaugural "Great Institutions of Cleveland" series last year that brought together leaders from some of the region's most treasured cultural organizations for engaging live discussions.

This rare opportunity to hear directly from top executives about their institutions' founding missions, evolving roles and future direction featured distinguished leaders from organizations such as Cleveland Museum of Art, Great Lakes Science Center, Rock & Roll Hall of Fame, The Children's Museum of Cleveland, Western Reserve Historical Society, Holden Forests & Gardens, Maltz Museum, Museum of Contemporary Art Cleveland, and Cleveland Museum of Natural History.

Attendance exceeded expectations, drawing strong engagement from community members and lifelong learners across the region and generating regional media coverage. Participants praised the series for its depth and accessibility, while panelists highlighted the collegial atmosphere and meaningful dialogue fostered throughout the program.

For more information visit case.edu/lifelonglearning or contact Siegal Lifelong Learning at lifelonglearning@case.edu or (216) 368-2091.

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