GRANTS AND SCHOLARSHIPS SOAR!
Grant Recipient Niklas Malacinski

INTRODUCING THE YOUNG LEADERS BOARD
Word from the President

**Hyvät Ystävät:**

The challenging year 2020 is behind us. Despite all difficulties and obstacles, we are actively steering Finlandia Foundation toward the future. With new optimism, we are ready for all opportunities and proceeding with plans for a busy and exciting year ahead.

We are continuously strengthening relationships and improving connectivity that will serve FFN well, as we enter our 68th year as a leading, independent organization fostering Finnish culture and Finland across the U.S.

I am especially proud of the formation and launch of the FFN Young Leaders Board (YLB) to work alongside the trustees. This is imperative, in order to attract younger people who will get to know, love and nurture this organization for the future. YLB has enthusiastically embraced the challenge and initiated projects. You’ll meet our impressive panel of charter members on pages 4-5.

Financially, we ended 2020 on a strong note, exceeding our fundraising goal of $100,000, which was matched by the Paloheimo Foundation. Going forward, we must substantially increase that goal to ensure FFN stability and growth. We see the interest and need for more dollars to support our scholarship and grant programs. Our virtual *Finnposium,* largely available on the FFN YouTube channel, has been well received. Even as we look forward to the return of in-person touring performers and lecturer presentations, we know that online programming will continue, and we are exploring several exciting possibilities.

We also know that we require the tools to produce quality products, from our webinars and videocasts to e-marketing and the website. We have had to invest in equipment and expertise to ensure professional results, and those demands will continue.

While acknowledging that technology is great, I do hope that in the coming year I will have a chance to travel and meet our members. Nothing compares to sitting down with a cup of coffee for a face-to-face (or mask-to-mask) chat.

Throughout this issue you will read about our efforts and accomplishments. I hope you’re as excited about where we are today and the potential we see.

Best wishes for a wonderful summer.

**By Tim Nurvala, FFN Trustee**

**THIS IS THE ADVICE ELSA BRULE GIVES YOUNG PEOPLE MAKING THEIR WAY IN THE WORLD TODAY. IT’S ADVICE SHE HAS TAKEN TO HEART THROUGHOUT HER BUSY AND IMPACTFUL LIFE.**

In December of last year, Elsa demonstrated this by making a big gift of $25,000 to Finlandia Foundation National, and another of $200,000, to help forge a new partnership with the Sibelius Academy in Helsinki. This will enable Finlandia Foundation to offer increased opportunities to students and encourage cultural ties between the Academy and the United States.

Her interest in this effort grew from a recent project through the Sibelius Academy Global Music program that linked Sámi musicians of Finland with the...
In its first month, the Finlandia Foundation Young Leaders Board launched two initiatives: Young Finnish Americans on LinkedIn: A space for young Finnish Americans to connect and network. 

linkedin.com/groups/13959445/

FFN YLB Finnish Favs on Spotify: A curated playlist of favorite Finnish bops.

https://open.spotify.com/

Find more information at the YLB webpage at FinlandiaFoundation.org.
GRANTS

By Katariina Lehtonen, FFN Trustee and Grants Committee Member

In 2021, the Finlandia Foundation grant applicants focused on creating new and exciting projects in the wide-ranging areas of construction of a park, documentary films, streamed music and comedy shows, festivals, screenplays, conservation of art, research, art exhibits, preservation of oral stories and production of a Finnish-American radio show. We were also excited to receive requests from two winter sport athletes.

FFN received 38 grant applications requesting a total of $164,320, from all over the U.S.—California, Colorado, Washington, Oregon, Michigan, Minnesota, Pennsylvania, Florida, Illinois, Texas and Wisconsin—as well as from Finland and Denmark.

Congratulations to 33 applicants who received awards totaling $125,000. The 2021 Grants Committee, chaired by Richard Ahola, consists of Jacqueline Harjula, Katariina Lehtonen, Anita Smiley and Päivi Tetri.

The next grant application deadline is January 17, 2022. Find information at FinlandiaFoundation.org.

Specific funds that support several of the awards are noted.

Arts

Torni-Tower by Sari Nordman
Torni-Tower is an interdisciplinary installation work utilizing sculpture, video projection, archiving and community participation in Brooklyn, New York. The projects reflect on climate change and the biblical story of the Tower of Babel—the story of greed and value of cultural differences.

Glimmers on the Archipelago
Post Doom Romance will trace historic, symbolic and environmental contexts of the Finnish archipelago using edited field recordings based on specific geolocations. The project offers multiple ways to access the final sound/video compositions via an Augmented Reality app that viewers can use while at physical sites within the archipelago, or through pointing the lens at postcard-like images of the locations. The purpose is to evoke the watery depths of a timeless human consciousness that is at once specific to the Finnish archipelago and bound to earth in general.

Among Forests and Lakes: Landscape Masterpieces from the Finnish National Gallery
From May 6-October 17, 2021, The National Nordic Museum in Seattle will host 50 works that examine how Finnish artists have depicted the landscape of their native country in the 19th, 20th and 21st centuries. The exhibition is organized by the Ateneum Art Museum, the Finnish National Gallery.

History & Archives

Recognizing Finnish Co-op Buildings in Brooklyn
In the early 1900s, Finnish immigrants introduced the concept of non-profit cooperative ownership in the U.S. by building co-op apartments in Brooklyn, New York’s “Finnstown.” Two of the best known are Alku (Beginning) and Alku Toinen (Beginning II). New York attorney Robert Saasto, who has roots in Finnstown, is leading the effort to fund plaques to identify 27 former Finnish co-op buildings surrounding Sunset Park.

Astoria Nordic Heritage Park
This public space along the Columbia River in Astoria, Oregon, is being constructed “to honor the contributions of the Nordic immigrants who were plentiful in the Pacific Northwest and contributed immensely to the local community. It will serve as a permanent reminder to their descendants who maintain their heritage and traditions today, and be culturally informative to new residents and visitors.”

Photo property of the Finnish National Gallery
utilizing the art of traditional Finnish Log Sauna Construction in Calumet, Michigan high school industrial arts teacher Robert E. Rohlsen is leading projects utilizing the art of traditional Finnish construction. Their first was a wood rowboat. Next, they will construct a log sauna using building methods from the 18th century.

Music

Speechless
The fourth solo album from Finnish-American vocalist Eeppi Ursin (below) combines American song tradition with jazz, soul and Finnish sounds. FFN funding will cover part of the album’s production costs. Joulusauna
The traditional Finnish brass septet Amerikan Pojat celebrated its 30th anniversary in 2020. The group plans to make a recording of Finnish Christmas music, and hopes to perform concerts to observe the Christmas performances they missed last year.

International Piano Competition and Festival
A high-profile Rachmaninoff event in spring of 2022 in California will feature 24 contestants from around the world and an international panel of jurors (funds will support a member from Finland). The festival program will include a Master Class/ Lecture about piano music by Finnish composers. Smiley Hakkila Fund

The Cosmopolite Music Project
The U.S.-based Bowery Trio has commissioned works from four young composers in Finland, which the musicians will perform during U.S. and Finnish tours from fall.

2021 to spring 2022. They challenged the composers to create music that considers Finland’s growing diversity, and to imagine a new Finnness that is inclusive of the country’s collective histories, from immigration, refugees and Sámi peoples. Smiley Hakkila Fund

Bridge Cultures Through Music
The contemporary Helsinki-based AEKI ensemble will present concerts and workshops at the International Clarinet Festival in Fort Worth, Texas in July. They will premier works by Finnish composer Olli Moolanen and others from diverse backgrounds. The program aims to bridge cultures through music between Finland and the U.S. Smiley Hakkila Fund

New Finnish Percussion
Percussionist Kalle Hakosalo will present three concerts of newly commissioned, Finnish multidisciplinary solo percussion music in the San Diego area. His goal is to reach new audiences to reduce prejudices about modern art.

Research

Repatriation As Reparation
How the Sámi and Nordic States are Setting the Precedent for Global Indigenous Relationships
“This research will examine Finland’s relationship with the Sámi as well as recent successful domestic and international repatriations of ancestral human remains and cultural items from Finnish museums,” explains Amanda Sky. She will research how the reparative efforts from Finnish museums and government agencies can be looked to as a successful standard for relationships between Indigenous and Western nations. Helin/Korpela Social Sciences Fund.

One Thing Leads to Another
A photography and narrative by University of Denver Associate Professor Roddy MacInnes (above) highlights connections that exist between communities in three geographical regions: North Dakota in 1882, Finland; Michigan’s Upper Peninsula; and Savo Township, South Dakota. The primary dynamic connecting the regions is the migration of a family from Finland to Michigan in 1880, and then to South Dakota in 1882. The project illuminates additional personal and universal themes of community and interconnection. Helin/Korpela Social Sciences Fund.
Preservation

A Place for Us: A Museum for Finnish-America
Joanna Chopp of the Finnish-American Heritage Center at Finlandia University in Hancock, Michigan, explains, 'As the FAHC becomes the guardian of an ever-increasing number of historical artifacts and museum worthy collections, the need is dire for a Finnish-American Museum. Finlandia University will hire museum professionals, identify an appropriate site and design it to showcase items that highlight the diversity and history of Finnish America.'

Conservation of a Unique Work of Art
Grant funds will help in conserving a double-sided painting by Finnish-American artist Reima V. Ratti (1914-1945). Ratti was born in Waukegan, Illinois to Finnish immigrants, and came of age during the Great Depression when he labored as a rock-crusher with the Civilian Conservation Corps. The conservation of Portrait of a Young Woman (above) and City at Night in the Moonlight will expand public access to the work of the important Finnish-American artist at the Bess Bower Dunn Museum in Libertyville, Illinois, which holds the largest public collection of Ratti’s works.

Movement–Forest and Finns
Saidlamp Finnish Language Village aims to preserve a pristine Finnish log cabin from Osage, Minnesota, by relocating it to its site on Turtle River Lake near Bemidji. The moving and repositioning is the first step in pioneering a new educational focus on the Finnish-American experience and how it informs many villagers, ages 5-95, as they acquire Finnish language skills and cultural understanding. The authentic Finnish log structure will be a catalyst for new endeavors including responsible forestry, environmental studies, sustainability and broader cultural understanding.

The Scandinavian Music Festival
Now in its 15th season, this series of three, free outdoor concerts on Sundays in June features works by Scandinavian composers performed by members of the New York Symphony, Dori Matson, conductor. A diverse audience hears the music of Finnish composers and experiences Scandinavian culture and heritage at Fort Tryon Park in Manhattan.

Midnight Sun Festival 2022
The three-day event attracts some 10,000 visitors from near and far at Bryant Park in Lake Worth, Florida. The festival celebrates strong Finnish culture and heritage with entertainment, food, events and activities for children.

Virtual Kantele Classes
The Evergreen Livakat Kantele ensemble, the only such group in the Pacific Northwest, will host a series of kantele classes over Zoom by Anu Alviola, Master of Music, Sibelius Academy Folk Music Department, and a leading kantele teacher from Lahti, Finland.

Entertainment & Events

Streamed Comedy Shows
Actors Petteri Lassila (left) and Miska Kajanus will live-stream improvised and interactive comedy shows in Finnish, in which the performers create original material based on audience suggestions and stories of Finnish communities in the U.S. The shows will also be subtitled in English.

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The Flowershop
Beata Harju of Los Angeles will produce a film of a play about a small corner store in Helsinki, and the community it brings together—and separates. It will be shared online.

Radio /TV/Film

Finnish-American Radio Show
Marja Kaisila will produce a weekly, one-hour program for broadcast on any number of the 2,450 LPFM stations in the U.S. It will bring awareness of Finland and recognition to Finnish-American organizations, businesses and individuals.

Kalevala Puppet Pageant
This New York Mills, Minnesota event is a large-scale street theater play based on stories from the Finnish national epic poem, the Kalevala (left). Each year, an original play features community members of all ages. Artists lead participants in two weeks of workshops preceding the performance, developing the play and building new props and puppets to add to their collection of larger-than-life Kalevala characters.

ScanFair Festival
ScanFair Festival is an annual tradition supported by Nordic Northwest in Portland, Oregon, that celebrates the sights, sounds, tastes and traditions of the holiday season including Joulupukki, the Finnish Santa.

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Midsummer in Hollywood
This Finnish film event targets industry professionals in Los Angeles including Golden Globe and Academy Award voters, and will mix traditional Nordic customs with LA Cool. The mission is to make Finnish filmmakers better known in LA, and bring Finnish movies to people who truly appreciate the world of cinema. It will show the Finnish Golden Globes and Oscar film selections, followed by a networking meeting.

Sports

Support for Nordic Combined Skier
The grant will assist Finnish-American Niklas Malacinski (cover photo) of Steamboat Springs, Colorado with expenses related to his USA national team annual fee, his equipment and travel to Europe for camps, Continental Cups, World Cups and junior and adult World Champions of 2021-2022.

Jaakko Tuominen Memorial Sports Fund
Support for Nordic Combined Skier
Grant funds will assist Finnish-American Niklas Malacinski (left) of Steamboat Springs, Colorado with expenses related to his USA national team annual fee, his equipment and travel to Europe for camps, Continental Cups, World Cups and women’s World Champions of 2021-2022.
Committee members remarked on the high caliber of applicants for both programs. All bode well for the future of the U.S. and Finland.

The committee and the FFN Board of Trustees voted to award the largest ever scholarship budget: $57,000 to 25 students in a variety of fields, including aerospace engineering, biology, fire science, music composition, print making, medicine, intellectual property and human rights. Individual awards range from $1,000 to $3,000. There are five Americans, four Finns and 16 dual U.S./Finnish citizens.

The Scholarship Committee is chaired by FFN member Pirjo Kujansuu Schulbach with members Ellen Harju, Sata Lehto, Marjo Northup, Turto Turtiainen and FFN Trustee Hanna Wagner. Finlandia Foundation National and the committee congratulate the 2021 recipients.

The next application deadline for scholarships is February 1, 2022. If you are interested in supporting FFN’s Scholarship Fund, please find details at FinlandiaFoundation.org.

Specific funds for several scholarships are noted.

1. **JORI CARTER** will be a senior this fall at the University of Washington. He is pursuing majors in Civil Engineering and Environmental Studies, as well as a minor in Finnish language. Jori was born to a Finnish mother and American father in Seattle. Currently working for a hydrology research lab, Jori is the team’s web developer and has the privilege of working with snow scientists and hydrologists overseas, including participation from scientists in Finland. In the future he hopes to pursue a master’s degree in civil engineering and would like to work on sustainable water infrastructure.

2. **KAITJA ERRINGER** was born in Santa Barbara, California. The maternal side of her family lives in Finland, and she values the connection to her heritage that she has always had. She studies Fisheries and Wildlife Science at the University of Minnesota Duluth, and wants to go to veterinary school after graduating. She’s involved with the Finlandia Foundation Columbia-Pacific Chapter and hopes to inspire young people to learn about and celebrate their Scandinavian heritage. Aune E. Koski Scholarship

3. **ISABELLE HAYSZIP** is enrolled at Florida International University, where she is majoring in International Relations. Isabelle grew up in the United States but has also spent time with her mother’s family in Finland. She has dual citizenship, and is fluent in Finnish. Growing up with a combination of Finnish and American cultures has led Isabelle to develop an interest in the importance of cultural preservation in national worldviews and their impact on international cooperation. She is planning to continue her education in Finland with a master’s degree specializing in human rights and peace studies. Finlandia Foundation Florida Scholarship Fund

4. **KAYLEIGH KARINEN** is pursuing a master’s degree in Linguistic Diversity at the University of Helsinki. She is interested in promotion of marginalized languages, multilingualism and heritage languages. This year Kayleigh will conduct sociolinguistic field research on the role of sports in the promotion of Basque language. Her long-term goals are to pursue a Ph.D. and work to provide solutions to encourage people’s linguistic well-being in our increasingly diverse global world. UFB&S Lodge #1 of SF Fund for Scholars

5. **HEINI KATRIINA KORHONEN** is an undergraduate student at Rhode Island School of Design with a major in illustration and a concentration in scientific inquiry. “I am so incredibly grateful for the opportunities that receiving this scholarship has opened up for me, including the exciting possibility of spending my next semester abroad with RISD’s European Honors Program. Peering into the future, I am hoping to attend graduate school in Helsinki and eventually work as an illustrative designer and educational researcher. And, of course, continue to wave the Finnish flag up high wherever the road may lead!”

6. **AADA KUNTO** has been an active member of the Finnish community of San Diego since she moved there with her family. Aada is a junior at the Anna Maria College Fire Science program. She exudes determination and strength by maintaining her position on the Dean’s List while playing soccer at the collegiate level. Aada is passionate about helping others and has great pride in Finland. At the moment she is studying from Finland as her classes are virtual and it is possible to complete them from anywhere. Her motto: “You miss 100% of the shots you don’t take.” (Wayne Gretzky)

7. **DEBRY LEHTOLA** is a sophomore at the University of Minnesota, pursuing a degree in Kinesiology with a minor in Finnish. Upon achieving her undergraduate degree she plans to enter the Occupational Therapy graduate program to continue her studies. Before starting college Debby studied abroad in Finland, further sparking her interest in the language and culture. Outside of school she enjoys volunteering, creating music, traveling and hiking in the mountains. Jean E. Salmin-Nolan Scholarship Fund

8. **CHARLOTTE LOUKUSA** is a dual citizen of the U.S. and Finland. She studies at the Cenovus and Institute of Chemistry with Professor Riya Kalra. Her major is Violin Performance, and she’s pursuing a minor in Business Management at Canisius Western Reserve University. Charlotte has placed in multiple international competitions, including solo and chamber music. She completed high school in Finland and studied at the Sibelius Academy Youth Department for six years with Merit Pahaj.

9. **HANNAH LOUKUSA** is studying mechanical engineering at St. Cloud State University. She plans to combine her engineering skills with her passion for human biology to invent life-changing medical devices.
15. **Isabella Piritta Morrell** is a Finnish-American student and award-winning composer born and raised on the coast of Oregon. She currently attends Western Oregon University as a Music Composition major, and her goal is to write for a wide variety of performing groups as well as film and other media. She has visited Finland to see her family many times, and the beautiful country has inspired her to write music as both a composer and performer.

16. **Riai Pulakka** was born and raised in Nokia, Finland. Riai’s ambitions are to explore, feel, create, learn and grow. Her dream is to leave her mark on the world by being an important part of children’s growth, and creating works of art that inspire people. She will soon get her BA in Dance and Early Childhood Education at Hunter College in New York City.

17. **Jack H. Raisanen** is an environmental and sustainability expert, advocate, activist and entrepreneur. In the master’s program in Atmospheric Sciences at the University of Helsinki, Jack is deepening his understanding of climate change, air pollution and biogeochemical cycles. He has pursued extensive education and training throughout the Nordic Region and in his home state of Michigan. Jack is active in service to the community. His goal is to thrive, live fully, and thrive for all within planetary boundaries. (Photo by Mats Engblom)

18. **Elisa Räsänen** is pursuing a doctorate in Natural Language Processing at the University of Jyväskylä Centre for Applied Language Studies. Her dissertation research focuses on foreign language learners’ independent language use. The results can be used to develop foreign language pedagogy to better correspond with learners’ actual needs in the target language. Elisa is also working at the Indiana University Department of Central Eurasian Studies, where she has taught Finnish language and culture for five years as a lecturer.

19. **Emma Theisen** is pursuing her Ph.D. in neuroscience at Stanford University. Her interest in neuroscience began in high school, inspired by her psychology and biology teachers at Turku International School. Emma’s career goal is to become a professor of neuroscience. Her dream is to one day run a laboratory at a Finnish university. In pursuing this goal, Emma plans to promote neuroscience in Finland. **Jean Ellen Sainio-Nolan Scholarship Fund**

20. **Oona Toussaint** was born and raised in Finland, and moved to New York in her early 20’s. She completed her undergraduate studies in Communication, Arts and Disorders at the City University of New York, and was recently accepted to the high-achieving Speech Language Pathology Bilingual master’s program at Long Island University. Her passion is to serve the multilingual population, and as an aspiring researcher to specialize and better serve the population in need.

21. **Amanda Vainio** is a rising junior at University of Massachusetts Dartmouth majoring in criminal justice studies with a focus on law career. She feels grateful to have the support of the Finlandia Foundation and other Finnish-American groups. In her spare time, she enjoys meeting friends and staying active.

22. **Oskari Yaksi** is a second-year aerospace engineering undergraduate studying for his bachelor's degree at the University of California, Los Angeles. Oskari has aspirations of being part of the greater movement to build space-facing rockets that explore distant planets such as Mars. Additionally, he plans to move up in the industry and hopes to reestablish Finland’s place on the global stage as an exporter of highly qualified engineers and scientists.

23. **Cristina Youngren** is a Minnesota of Finnish ancestry. After completion of her bachelor’s degree in chemistry with a minor in Finnish-American Studies at the University of Michigan, in the early spring of 2021, she intends to continue her studies in analytical chemistry at a master’s program at the University of Helsinki. She is a board member of Finnish American Cultural Activities (FACA), FinnSource and Suomi 100 Choir, as well as a volunteer at the 612 Sauna Society.

**Perinatal health care and how the U.S. may learn from its successes. Her goal is to train as an OB/GYN and work toward improving maternal health outcomes in the U.S.**
Teuvo Pulkkinen Honored by Finland

In December 6, 2019, Teuvo Pulkkinen was recognized with an order of merit, the Knight of the Order of the Lion of Finland (Suomen Leijonan ritarimerkki). On April 22, 2021, Consul General of Finland Stefan Lindström of the Consulate in Los Angeles traveled to San Diego to present the honor to Teuvo on behalf of Finland’s President Sauli Niinistö.

The commendation acknowledges those who make significant contributions in advancing the interests of Finland. Teuvo and his wife, Marjut, both natives of Finland, moved to California in 1992. He established the Finnish American Chamber of Commerce in San Diego and was its first president (2013–2015). He has been actively promoting and developing business relations between Finland and San Diego, and currently serves as FACC vice president.

Teuvo served on the board of FinnFest USA in San Diego, and in 2015 founded the Finlandia Foundation San Diego Chapter. Among his volunteer responsibilities as a trustee on the board of Finlandia Foundation National, he coordinates the FFN musical programs by cellist Jussi Makkonen and pianist Nazig Azezian. While the duet’s U.S. tour has been suspended due to COVID-19, Teuvo has created a series of “Coffee Concerts” from Nurmes, Finland, by Jussi and Nazig especially for the FFN YouTube channel.

KURTTI RETIRES
Jim Kurtti, a familiar presence at FFN chapters, FinnFests and other cultural events, is hanging up two of the (at least) four Finnish-American hats he’s worn for decades in and around Hancock, Michigan and at Finlandia University.

The director of the Finnish American Heritage Center and editor of the monthly Finnish American Reporter is stepping away from those duties, but will remain active with the Finnish Theme Committee/Finnlandia Foundation Copper Country Chapter and as the region’s Honorary Consul of Finland.

Finlandia University President Philip Johnson said in a tribute in the April issue of the paper, “Jim Kurtti’s legacy, after 21 years as the director of Finlandia’s Finnish American Heritage Center, will be one of passionate leadership marked by a single-minded determination to make Finlandia the leader in the preservation, interpretation and dissemination of the Finnish-American story.”

Finlandia University is accepting applications for Director of the Finnish American Heritage Center.

Find details at finlandia.edu.

FFN Performer of the Year

Starring as Manajardo, the love-struck protagonist, was Teuvo Tulio, who went on to become one of Finland’s greatest directors in the 1940s. Tulio’s good friend Valentin Vaala won his first critical acclaim as a director with this production. Permission was granted this duo to film some scenes in Gypsy villages, which included several Gypsies who were cast in the movie.

Kent initially thought he would not find enough Finnish music to fill the movie; but, in fact, he ended up having to make choices. As the movie contains colorful characters, complicated predicaments in love and friendship and an array of great scenes, he drew on Finnish music from various genres, including Mustalanen (written by Oskar Merikanto), Vanha häämarssi (Old Wedding Waltz), Savuke (The Cigarette), Tappelpokkka (The Fight Polka), Vinapokkka (The Wine Polka), and a Sibelius Romance.

The program will be a Zoom presentation, with a welcome and introduction to the movie and its music from Kent, explaining how he chose music to match the action and tone of the silent movie scenes. He provides clips of the various characters’ theme songs to help listeners find them tucked into the soundtrack. Following the hour-long film, Kent will conclude the Zoom session by answering questions.

Chapters may request this video program for their members; it will not be archived on YouTube. Kin-person programs become possible before the end of this year, Kent looks forward to visiting chapters to present the program live. Watch for information on viewing this very special virtual event.

SEEKING POY 2022

The term for the next FFN Performer of the Year will be January 1 to December 31, 2022.

The deadline for applications is September 1, 2021. For further information regarding the POY go to FinlandiaFoundation.org
In Ancient Greek times, the symposium was a gathering where men would eat, drink, sing and talk philosophy, politics and current events. Finlandia Foundation has adopted that spirit with its Finnposium, a virtual symposium at the FFN YouTube channel. Programming to date has included webinars, concerts, cooking demonstrations, a comedy show and two monthly interview shows.

The free, online programs reach members of Finlandia Foundation and a broader audience interested in Finnish-America and Finland. Finnposium features webinars on Tuesdays, interview programs on Thursdays and concerts and entertainment programs on Saturdays. Check the FFN Facebook page and the events calendar at FinlandiaFoundation.org for the latest information.

Go to Finlandia Foundation National YouTube and take a look. Subscriptions are free!

My American Dream
Host Michel Wendell chats with Finnish and Finnish-American entrepreneurs about their start-ups and paths to success in the U.S.

Michel is passionate about helping Finnish companies to grow and internationalize. He was among the first “Finnish techies” in Silicon Valley, and served as Honorary Consul of Finland for Northern California for 10 years, before he and his wife Kicka relocated to Austin, Texas. Michel is a trustee of Finlandia Foundation National.

Meet the Finn Cooks
Although Soile Anderson (in red apron) and Eleanor Ostman have been unable to travel to present their Lecturer of the Year cooking events, they are sharing favorite Finnish recipes with audiences via YouTube. Learn how to make the holiday rosolli salad, blueberry coffee cake and vappu treats. Their recipes are at the FFN website.

Musical Performances

From Soiva, With Love: Students in the U.S. and Finland who have attended Finlandia Foundation’s Soiva International Music Camp contributed a piece of music prefaced by their thoughts about the effect Soiva has had on their learning and lives. Soiva is based at Concordia College in Moorhead, Minnesota, with trips to Finland every three years.

To A Distant Star: Pianist Ruusamari Teppo and soprano Maria Männistö present a romantic program of music and love letters by composers to their beloved, accompanied by beautiful visuals.

Holiday Cheer: Christmas programs include music from Finland by cellist Jussi Makkonen and pianist Nazig Azezian, and by Finnish performer and songwriter Eeppi Ursin, (right) now of New York City.
FAHS members happily making pulla in Connecticut are shown. They are at the Finlandia Foundation at fahs-ct.org. It is also found on YouTube channel; access it at the chapter's Programming Playlist.

The Kalevala 2021 series is available at the chapter’s YouTube channel. Access it at fahs-ct.org. This is the Kantele. The story of “The Making of the Kantele” is told by Dr. Hilary Virtanen about the Kalevala. An expert on the Finnish epic, Hilary Virtanen is assistant professor of Finnish and Nordic Studies at Finlandia University in Hancock, and a trustee of Finlandia Foundation.

Musicologist Amber Broderick spoke to the Cape Cod Chapter about Finlandia and Sibelius (upper left). Saturday with a guest who addresses topics related to Finnish culture.

Traditionally an active chapter, the Finnish-American Society of the Midwest has carried on a lively program of activities despite not being able to meet in person.

On the first Sunday of the month, the Chicago area group turns to Zoom for Virtual Social Hours with themed presentations. The New Year’s Resolutions kick-off on January 5 was hosted by Julie Bade with accordion music by Oscar Forsman. Other topics include Shrove Tuesday/Laskiaisen, a crafts session making paper stars and himmelis and genealogy in May.

In lieu of their monthly in-person meetings, the Finnish-American Society of Cape Cod has launched Zoom meetings on the third Tuesday of the month.

Chapter president Stephen Trimble invites all FFN members to join the programs. To obtain the Zoom link contact: satcapedod@hotmail.com

Reino Tarkiainen was 15 years old when he and his sister traveled from Finland to the United States, where he intended to stay for six months. That was in 1952. Today, he is president of Finlandia Sauna, the largest privately owned sauna manufacturing facility in the U.S.

In Finns in the News, a new program produced for YouTube by the Finlandia Foundation Columbia-Pacific Chapter, host Kaija Perkiömäki talks with Reino and his wife Marilyn about the company they founded in Portland, Oregon, in 1964, and the challenge of introducing a true, Finnish sauna to the mass market in this country. The second program features Vaino Koskela, a 97-year-old veteran of the Winter War. Find Finns in the News at ffpc.info/finns-in-the-news/, or at the FFN YouTube channel Chapter Programming Playlist.

FFCPC President Greg Jacob reports that in April at Nordic Heritage Museum in Seattle, FFN President Torri Koskeniemi featured with Appelo Archives in Naselle, Washington to sell monographs about the stories of Finnish settlement in the area, and the activities committee is planning cooking classes and himmels and other workshops.

FFCPC volunteers will be busy acting as hosts during the summer weekends at the historic Lindgren Cabin at Cullaby Lake near Astoria.

From Finnish yoga to Ystävänpäivä, Finlandia Foundation New York Metropolitan Chapter has hosted a variety of virtual events to engage and connect its members and the broader community on a monthly basis.

Following the online celebration of the 100th anniversary of Finland’s Independence on December 6, it was BYO champagne to the virtual New Year’s Eve Party featuring music by Johanna and Christopher Telander. A “Love Boat” concert by Eepi Uusin brightened Valentine’s Day, or Ystävänpäivä (Friends Day in Finland).

On International Women’s Day in March, New York-based yoga teacher Mikaela Soldan offered a complimentary session as an introduction to the yoga classes she conducts in Finland, and in April, art lovers took a guided virtual tour of the Finnish National Gallery, at the Ateneum in Helsinki.
We’re all in this together! With all five Nordic countries ranked within the top 10 of the world’s better life index as well as the world’s happiest countries (with Finland topping that list!), it makes sense for our organizations to work together.

As the committee discusses opportunities for partnerships with Nordic organizations, many different types and reasons for seeking this cooperation will be explored—to reach audiences that FFN currently does not address, or to gain additional technical capacity, or to gain efficiencies where programs or memberships could be complementary. Nordic cooperation is strong, and all can benefit from each other.

Keep watching the FFN Facebook page and Finnposium webpage at FinlandiaFoundation.org as other programs are posted.
Greetings to all of our Soiva Music Camp lovers! Although 2020 was not a year without challenges, we were blessed to produce a virtual video with nine of our talented Soiva students.

From their homes across the U.S. and in Finland, the students introduced themselves and commented on their Soiva experiences, and played a piece of their choosing.

The video includes a wide range of student ages and instruments, and was edited by Maria Mannistö of Seattle. Find “From Soiva, With Love” at the FFN YouTube channel, and please enjoy and share this wonderful showcase of Soiva student talent.

Soiva 2020 was cancelled and will not be business as usual in 2021 due to COVID-19. However, we will bring students and faculty together through the virtual power of Zoom. Although this method of teaching and learning does not compare to attending camp, we want to keep students aware of Soiva and camaraderie of being together in the not too distant future. Stay well and stay safe!

By FFN Trustee Dennis Anderson and Melodee Bohr, Soiva Co-Directors

Pent Up Demand for Salolampi

The Rahkonens, both Finnish natives, came to the United States in 1972 when Ossi joined the World Bank. His last position there was Chief of Board Operations, before he joined the Embassy of Finland as Counselor in 1990. Prior to the couple’s arrival in Washington, D.C., Ossi’s work had taken them to visit or live in numerous countries, including Denmark, Nigeria, Brazil, Indonesia, the Philippines, India, Pakistan, Thailand, Vietnam, Tanzania, Ethiopia, Zambia, Albania, Russia, Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan.

Because his work had little connection with Finland and Finns, both Ossi and Karin were keen to join the Finlandia Foundation National Capital Chapter (FFNCC) soon after arriving in Washington, D.C. He served on the board and as president of FFNCC, and for 17 years as a trustee of Finlandia Foundation National, including the position of president from 2013-2020. Among Ossi’s many contributions during that period, he guided FFN in its celebrations of the 150th anniversary of Jean Sibelius’ birth in 2015 and, two years later, Finland 100, marking the centennial of Finland’s independence.

On Finnish Independence Day, December 6, 2020, Ossi was recognized with Suomen Leijonan 1. Luokan Ritarimerkki, or Knight, First Class, of the Order of the Lion of Finland. It is one in a hierarchy of honors presented by the President of Finland to deserving military and civilian individuals for their contributions and achievements. This class of award ranks above the Knight of the Order of the Lion of Finland, which Ossi received in 2009.

Karin also was active in Finnish cultural activities, including Finn Spark, Inc., when the couple lived in the D.C. area. She was informed in February of 2020 that her contributions were recognized with the Suomen Väkisein Ruskus 1. Luokan mittali kultaristein, or Medal, First Class with Golden Cross, of the Order of the White Rose of Finland.

Ossi and Karin, who are dual Finnish-U.S. citizens, returned to live in Helsinki in the fall of 2020. The presentation of their awards will be formally made in Finland in 2021.

By FFN Trustee Eeva Syvanen, Salolampi Chair

Last year, when Salolampi Finnish Language Village in Bemidji, Minnesota, was forced to shift to an entirely virtual program, Finlandia Foundation had only one applicant for its financial support. We are happy to see that this summer’s Salolampi, with both online and residential sessions, has wind beneath its wings!

More than a dozen students have applied for FFN funds, and Salolampi reports that the on-site, two-week residential camps have sold out. Find details on FFN financial assistance for the remaining programs at FinlandiaFoundation.org.
When COVID-19 forced the Finlandia Foundation board to conduct its April 2020 meeting virtually instead of in Florida, as planned, no one knew that a year later the trustees would continue to meet via Zoom rather than in person.

Results of board actions approved at the Friday, March 26 meeting are found throughout this newsletter, from grants and scholarships awarded to initiatives designed to improve connectivity and visibility for FFN and the Finnish community in the U.S.

Members of the FFN Young Leaders Board (YLB) joined the meeting to introduce themselves and inform the board of their activities, plans and vision for the new council, which launched in February.

YLB members are working with FFN committees that align with their expertise and interests, and this was an opportunity for the YLB and trustees who chair those committees to “meet.”

FFN President Anne-Mari Paster had hoped that the board and YLB could convene in person this spring at a special meeting dedicated to discussing the short and long range future of Finlandia Foundation, but that strategy session will also be conducted online.

In addition to the spring and fall board meetings, individual FFN committees conduct their business virtually throughout the year.

Each member of the board serves on one or more of the organization’s 19 committees. These responsibilities include finance and investment, technology, fundraising, marketing, and all of the annual programs.

A new committee is responsible for seeking ways to build cooperation between FFN and similar organizations related to other Nordic countries (see story on page 23).

You may find the list of FFN committees and their members at FinlandiaFoundation.org.
Continued from page 3

Native American students at what is mutually valued in added to the appreciation of The vast difference in climate shared joy in creating music. similar in both cultures. The use practical! says Elsa. every time he visited and advise, “He had a lot of common sense. Her grandfather was a strong influence in her childhood. He was enthusiastic about helping similar projects, such as facilitating the Finlandia Foundation’s partnership with the Sibelius Academy to expand the opportunities. She credits her positive outlook and her boundless energy to her Finnish heritage. Elsa grew up in Michigan’s Upper Peninsula, where Finnish culture is part of everyday life. Her mother and grandmother were both born in the United States but their Finnish heritage carried its way forward through their outlook as well as in the marvelous art of baking pulla. Elsa has memories of making cardamom bread later in life, and likes nothing better than sharing it with others. Her grandmother was a strong influence in her childhood. He emigrated from eastern Finland to the United States when he was 18 years old and was being drafted into the Czar’s army, and made his way to the copper mines of the Upper Peninsula. He eventually owned a “biergarten” in Hancock, Michigan. “He had a lot of common sense. He would give us, his three grandchildren, a dollar bill every time he visited and advise, ‘Now, put that in the bank. ’ To describe a Finnish proverb, I’d use practical!” says Elsa.

But, it was as a teenager that she remembers seeing a quote from famed humanitarian, Dr. Albert Schweitzer, that helped influence her love of philanthropy and making a difference in the lives of others. The quote is: “I do not know what your destiny will be, but this I do know. You will always find happiness if you seek and find a service. ” This idea has helped fuel much of the impact that Elsa has made for so many others.

“There is nothing better than making a gift and watching it grow,” she says. Much of her philanthropic focus has been on literacy, in building and restoring school libraries, here in the U.S. and abroad. A recent project was the creation of one of the first community libraries in Cambodia, housed in a former buddhist pagoda.

“Everyone could learn from what the Finns have done in these areas,” says Elsa. “The Finnish education system is among the best in the world. The new Oodi Library in Helsinki is an extraordinary model for how significant a library can be for a community.”

Making a big difference is something Elsa has done throughout her life. On a trip to Rwanda, she and Erika Sauer (the spouse of the former Finnish Ambassador to the United Nations) learned of a hospital that desperately needed a playroom for its hospitalized children. Seeing the need and the big impact it could have on their lives, the two women went to work creating an amazing playroom in just one day (above). It’s the positive “can-do” spirit that has characterized Elsa’s outlook throughout her life.

To the Finlandia Foundation she says, “I’m glad you’re here!” Elsa is quick to point out that she is a proud American, but that “we need to take the opportunity to be ambassadors for this wonderful country of Finland, our mother country, which is doing so many great things. The Finnish appreciation of education, culture, reading and literature, as well as music, has played such an important part in their success.” She celebrates Finland for being so innovative in such a competitive world.

The true realization of her own Finnish connection wasn’t complete until she made a moving and transformative trip to Finland over 20 years ago, to meet her mother’s family for the first time. Elsa was amazed by how familiar it was: the warm, well-cooking spirit, the humor, the stalwart and positive attitude, the food—even though she’d never been there before. Now, she goes to Finland as often as she can. On a lighter note, Elsa also loves to draw and has developed a series of delightful renderings of toustis, Finnish elves!

She identifies having Finnish character as her strength to get through any challenges she faces. It is a reminder that we are part of something bigger than ourselves, with a heritage honed on resilience, hard work and dedication to doing what is right. Her grandson wisely reminded her one day, “What good is it if you don’t use it?”

Whether it is hospitals in Rwanda, libraries in Cambodia, schools in New York City or musical partnerships with the Sibelius Academy, Elsa is making a big impact.

What does the future hold for Elsa Brule? She is not ready to make any public announcements yet, but she is working on a new endeavor that will have a meaningful and lasting effect on many people’s lives. Rest assured, she is taking her own advice and “DREAMING BIG!”

Honored Loved Ones with a Special Finlandia Foundation Tribute

The names of Finlandia Foundation members and friends below are followed by those who have remembered with a Centennial Honor Gift to FFN. Add the story and photos of your loved ones to the Finlandia Family Tree. For more information or make a charitable gift, visit FinlandiaFoundation.org.

GIFT OF $300
Paul & Susan Helme
Omar & Sasina Helme
Lenette/Pearl Lindal & Carollyn (Pearl) Wills
Pais/Panta Families
Perry Lindal
Consul Jarl Lindal
Kari Erkki Peron
Halmi Ketelamper Pierson
David & Jeanette Sharp
Ruth Viola Marjorie Sharp
Anita Smiley
Jack & Ide (Lilliquist) Hakkila

GIFT OF $8270
Michael & Elaine Anula
Halmi Costerious-Taipale
Michael & Elaine Anula
Taani Elsa Mikkoen
Anna Leena Christensen
Alma (Luomol) & Matti Luijkoenen
Kristi Forsman Nordin
Donald Frentzen
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Kjell Goksol & Emma Domars
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Alie Kastikainen

Prio Kujupeusk Schulbach
Olii Elisab Kujupeusk
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Isaac & Anna Uistiulo
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Finnish Grandparents & Father

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Mark Andström
Karen Andström LalBinta
Elisabeth Herbert Andström
Roger & Karen Aashenfelter
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Jeffrey & Louise Clarke
Halmi Turkiosken Laito
David Erikkila
Irene Lahi Erikkila
David Erikkila
Reino J. Erikkila
Lindsay Gwyther
Eve Herv
Krista Harrison
Grace & Eilaikin Mek Mason
Louise Hartung
Kati Maria Hill
Andrew & Debora Npekosi
Hulda Npekosi

Johan Hollander
Hiima Hollander
Richard Kolka
Ruth Kolka
Asi & Anita Larson
W. W. Topola
Charles & Judith Larson
Charles Wilfred & Lille Larson
Allan Leppe
Gurteide Lopp
Tuukki Loring
Nilly Taylor
Betsy Norgard
Doris Ann-Mari
Gronlund Robbins
Marazilla Rajala
Jack Rajala
Betty Rinal
John A. Rinal
Albert Ripp
N. Jean Ripp
David & Sandra Scheel
Laina Kehui Lamp
Susan & Ray Sutherland
Edith & Ervin Sivula
Ruthann Swanson
Jack W. & Hilma S.
Ilippolii Rintala
Ruth Ann Swanson
Martin & Kay Sivula
Arne Elizabeth Waski Hill
Eva Wathroo
Swen Wathroo

Finlandia Foundation appreciates the gift of a camera from GoPro. This will assist FFN in developing content for virtual presentations, according to Operations Manager Maria Voltaire.

Help FFN with AmazonSmile

Your online shopping through AmazonSmile can benefit Finlandia Foundation National. Amazon will direct .5% of your qualifying AmazonSmile purchases to FFN. To get started, sign up at: https://smile.amazon.com/ch/95-6098250.
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National Chapters: Year affiliated with FFN and president/chairman

Find more information about the chapters, including websites and Facebook pages, at FinlandiaFoundation.org

ALASKA
Anchorage Suomi Finland Club 2015 Hanna Ekland

ARIZONA
The F-A Club of Tucson 2007 Tommi Koskinen
Finns and Friends of Phoenix 2010 Joy Dorvinen

CALIFORNIA
Finlandia Club of Sacramento Valley 2006 Chad Riding
FF Berkeley Chapter 2016 Kaj Rekola
FF Los Angeles Chapter 1974 Sirvo Wiemero
FF San Francisco Bay Area Chapter 1956 Elina Fahlgren Hanna Peltonen
F-A Home Association Sonoma 2005 Markku Ratilainen Salla Vaerma-Jadlos
The House of Finland-San Diego 2015 Timo Luostarinen

COLORADO
FF Colorado Chapter Denver 1993 Kirsi St. Marie

CONNECTICUT
F-A Heritage Society Canterbury 2011 Steven Bousquet

DELWARE
Delaware Valley Finnish-Americans Newark 2017 Roy Palu
New Sweden Alliance Yorklyn 2017 Affiliated Member Sheila Romine

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
FF National Capital Chapter 1959 George Elliott

FLORIDA
FF Florida Chapter Lantana 1954 Kaarina Langeland
FinnsConnect South Florida Miami-Dade-Broward Counties 2017 Paivi Kaufman

GEORGIA
Atlanta Finland Society, Inc. 1975 Minna LeVine

IDAHO
FF Inland Northwest Chapter 1970 Don Heikkila

ILLINOIS
F-A Society of the Midwest Chicago area 1997 Lisa McMahon

MAINE
F-A Heritage Society of Maine West Paris 2012 Karen Bennett
Finns Farmers Club Monson 2012 Inez Goodine
Finnish Heritage House South Thomaston 2007 Jacqueline Harjula

MARYLAND
FF Baltimore Area Chapter 1974 Yolanda Messi de Prado-Slack

MASSACHUSETTS
Cape Ann Finns 2017 Rob Ranta
FF Boston, Inc. 1955 Sirkku Konttinen
F-A Society of Cape Cod 2012 Stephen Trimble
The Finnish Center at Saima Park, Inc. Fitchburg 2005 Linda Byrne
The Finnish Heritage Society - Sovittaja Rutland 2006 Barry Heiniluoma

MICHIGAN
FF of Michigan Royal Oak/Detroit area 2012 Frank Gottberg
F-A Society of West Central Michigan Coopersville 2007 Marie Godell Fowler
Finnish Center Association Farmington Hills/Detroit area 2004 Mary O’Brien
Finnish Theme Committee of Hancock - FF Copper Country Chapter 2006 James Kurtii
FF National, Lake Superior Chapter Marquette 2006 Ron J. Hill

MINNESOTA
Northland Chapter of FF Duluth 2010 Amy B. Hietapelto
FF Twin Cities Chapter 1994 Betsey Norgard
Finnish-Americans and Friends-Hibbing Chapter 1998 Edward Pajunen
Kaleva Building Corporation Virginia 2017 Art Maki
Red River Finns Moorhead 2011 Ellen Liddle

MONTANA
FF Montana Missoula 2017 Jenni Rohrbach
Finn Club of Helena 2007 Marjorie Peura Reilly
Red Lodge Knights and Ladies of Kaleva Roberts 2011 Claudia Morley

NEW YORK
Finger Lakes Finns Spencer 2006 Restina “Rusty” Wigg
FF New York Metropolitan Chapter 1954 Eero Klipi

OHIO
F-A Heritage Association of Ashtabula County 2003 Linda Sippola Riddell
Finnish Heritage Museum Fairport Harbor 2015 Lasse Hiltunen

OREGON
FF Columbia-Pacific Chapter Portland 2001 Greg Jacob

PENNSYLVANIA
FF Pittsburgh Chapter 1990 Seija Cohen
F-A Society of the Delaware Valley Philadelphia 2006 Marja Kaisla

SOUTH DAKOTA
Frederick Forward - FF Dakota 2012 Heidi Marttila-Losure
Sons and Daughters of Suomi Deadwood 2015 Larry Rantapaa

TEXAS
Dallas/Fort Worth F-A Society 1991 Jeremy Martin
Finnish Language School of North Texas Dallas 2018 Leila Jaamuru

UTAH
FF Utah Chapter Provo 2016 Tiina Watts

VIRGINIA
FF Tidewater Virginia Chapter 1979 Rikkka Mohorn

WASHINGTON
FF Seattle Chapter 1968 Mikko Männistö
FF Suomi Chapter Bellingham 2010 Tapio Holma
F-A Folk Festival Naselle 2011 Jennifer Ullakko Boggs
Swedish-Finn Historical Society Seattle 1981 Bill Carlson