

VOLUNTEER'S INSIGHT LEADS TO RECORD GRANT FOR NORRISTOWN THEATER COMPANY

PHILADELPHIA, PA - March 18, 2010 - Students of the mind assert that there are two sides of the brain: the left side is often associated with creativity and emotion while the right side tackles numbers, details and specifics.

In 2008, the artistic directors of Theatre Horizon in Norristown had plenty of left-brain thinking but knew they were sorely lacking on the right side. Their solution: a Business Volunteer for the Arts who turned out to be Carolyn Ashburn of Gladwyne.

Theatre Horizon's Co-Artistic Director Erin Reilly explains.

When we approached the Arts & Business Council of Greater Philadelphia, "Theatre Horizon was an upstart company with a part-time staff of four that was operating out of the basement of a board member's house. A year later, with Carolyn's support, the theatre has moved into a performance space with an office, expanded to a staff of six and increased our production output by 30 percent."

In recognition of this contribution, Carolyn will be honored as the Business Volunteer for the Arts at this year's annual Awards Luncheon of the Arts & Business Council on Tuesday, April 27 at the Pennsylvania Convention Center.

By day, Carolyn is the manager of employee relations and compliance for Temple University Health System. And it was these HR and organizational skills that she gave to the team at Theatre Horizon: job descriptions, a company-wide calendar system, streamlined weekly staff meetings and post-project evaluation procedures.

"I don't think we as artists were aware that we even needed these things until Carolyn suggested them," Erin says.

"Then when we applied for a grant, we included a lot of documentation that Carolyn initiated. Sure enough, the grant we received from the William Penn Foundation at the end of our official relationship with Carolyn turned out to be the largest single grant that Theatre Horizon has ever received from a private foundation," Erin explains.

"The awards Luncheon is sponsored by PNC Arts Alive, a five-year \$5 million grants initiative that supports the arts in the region, ," says Bill Mills, regional president of PNC for Philadelphia and southern New Jersey.

"The arts play an integral role in our region's economy and we are glad to support the arts through PNC Arts Alive and in particular through the Arts & Business Council's Awards Luncheon," Mills adds.

About the Arts & Business Council of Greater Philadelphia

The Arts & Business Council of Greater Philadelphia, an affiliate of the Greater Philadelphia Chamber of Commerce, develops relationships between business and the arts for the mutual benefit of both and in support of the advancement of the Greater Philadelphia Region. For more information, visit www.artsandbusinessphila.org or call 215.790.3620.