

25TH ANNUAL (SILVER ANNIVERSARY)



TUESDAY, MAY 12, 5:00 P.M.

RSVP BY FRIDAY, APRIL 24 AT
DEPOTFOUNDATION.ORG



Artist Award
Kelly Schamberger



Historic Preservation Award
Mark Poirier



Community Enrichment
Lake Superior Railroad Museum
North Shore Scenic Railroad



Glensheen's
Concerts on the Pier



Lifetime Artist Award
Tim Cleary



Lifetime Achievement Award
General Ron Hein

A MESSAGE FROM THE FOUNDATION



Jason Young
Executive Director

Donor Heroes.

You are a hero. Your values include giving and supporting great organizations, like the Depot Foundation. As a result, your gifts have supported \$8.5 million in grants to amazing art and culture programs and projects within the historic St. Louis County Depot, through 47 years of the Depot Foundation's grant program. None of this would have been possible without you.

Individual donors in the United States have been declining for decades, making you (the hero) and your gifts more important

than ever. While total charitable giving reached a record high in 2024 (\$592.50 billion), the number of individual donors continues to decline. Donor participation dropped by 4.5% from 2023 to 2024. This decline is not new, but it is accelerating, signaling a continuing shift in which fewer donors are giving more dollars. (Giving USA 2025 Report) Corporations and Foundations have steadily increased their giving, but fewer individual people are participating. This reminds us how important it is to show appreciation and gratitude for every gift we receive.

Your gift matters. **Thank you.**

A MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD



Bob Fischer

A Foundation Built for the Next 50 Years

As the Depot undertakes its largest building upgrade in 50 years—an estimated \$16.5 million investment over 24 months—it feels like the right time to pause, look back, and remember why the Depot Foundation exists in the first place. This moment is about much more than brick and

mortar; it is about protecting a symbol of Duluth and ensuring the Depot continues to welcome new generations with the same pride and possibility it has represented for decades.

The Depot Foundation was created to provide steady, long-term support for the Depot—helping fund projects and improvements that keep the building vibrant, functional, and cared for year after year. From the beginning, the Foundation has focused on practical needs and lasting impact: the kind of behind-the-scenes work that visitors may not always notice, but that makes everything else possible.

For my family, this mission has been personal. I've had the privilege of seeing the Foundation's story through a family lens—one that begins at the start and continues today.

My uncle, Bob Fischer, served as the Depot Foundation's first Treasurer. In those early days, the Foundation's resources were

modest—about \$38,000 in assets—but the purpose was clear: start building a reliable way to care for the Depot and invest in what it needed.

Our first grant in 1980 set the tone for what the Foundation has always done—fund the practical tools and improvements that help the Depot operate well. Some of the first purchases included a power sweeper and a typewriter: simple items, but meaningful investments in keeping the facility running and the work organized.

My father, Dick Fischer, first joined the board in 1993 and rejoined in 2008. By that time, the Foundation had grown dramatically—reaching approximately \$3.1 million in assets—reflecting decades of community support and careful stewardship. That growth meant something important: the ability to do more, and to plan further ahead.

Over the last 47 years, the Depot Foundation has awarded more than \$8 million in support of the Depot. Through these grants, enhancements of all sizes have been supported, maintaining the building's safety and hospitality while upholding its suitability for the events it accommodates.

In 2022, I joined the board—proud to carry on a family tradition of service and grateful to work alongside others who care deeply about this landmark. Today, the Foundation holds more than \$8 million in assets and, over the last 10 years, has

averaged over \$500,000 per year in grants. That consistency is what enables the Depot to stay strong through changing times.

• Today: More than \$8 million in assets, averaging over \$500,000 per year in grants over the last decade.

Impact snapshot

- 1980: First grant awarded; early purchases included a power sweeper and a typewriter.
- Early years: Approximately \$38,000 in assets.
- By 2008: Approximately \$3.1 million in assets.
- 47-year impact: More than \$8 million granted to support the Depot.

Now, as the Depot begins this next chapter of renewal, the Foundation will be there to support the work ahead and help ensure the results endure. This \$16.5 million, 24-month upgrade is a rare opportunity to strengthen the building for the future—while honoring everything it has meant to our community. **Thank you** for being part of the story, and for supporting the Depot as a place that remains at the core fabric of Duluth.

FIVE FUNDS TO SUPPORT!

YOUR CHOICE TO SUPPORT A FUND THAT IS MOST MEANINGFUL TO YOU.

Depot Preservation and Enhancement Fund - Newest Fund!

The Depot Preservation and Enhancement Fund supports projects for the much-needed maintenance and enhancement of the Depot building, in direct consultation with St. Louis County. Donations to the Depot Preservation and Enhancement Fund will be held and disbursed for the benefit of the entire physical structure of the building. Grants from this Fund may be combined and coordinated with grants from the Depot Foundation Fund.

Depot Foundation Fund

The Depot Foundation Fund is our undesignated fund that supports a multitude of opportunities, including our grant program. Depot Foundation grants fund exceptional programs and projects that make the St. Louis County Depot a more vibrant forum for the arts and culture in our community.

Circle of Friends Fund

The Circle of Friends Fund directly supports our annual Circle of Friends Arts and Culture Awards Celebration. This signature event shines a much-needed light on the immense art and culture talent we have in our community. The Circle of Friends is free and open to the public.

Depot United Campaign

Once a year, tenants of the Depot come together to support each other through the Depot United Campaign. There are few campaigns that combine separate organizations for the common good. The Depot United Campaign equally supports each tenant in the Depot.

Arts for All Scholarship Fund

Established in 2021, the Arts for All Scholarship helps strengthen financial opportunities for youth and young adults pursuing art and culture activities, primarily through our Depot partners. There are few opportunities like this in our community. The Arts for All Scholarship application is open year-round and in high demand.



THANK YOU TO THESE ORGANIZATIONS THAT SUPPORT THE ARTS FOR ALL SCHOLARSHIP:



JUNIOR LEAGUE DULUTH





1st Place Upper Division Winners
P'town Beat Down

DEPOT FOUNDATION ESTABLISHED 1979

TWIN PORTS CORNHOLE

FROZEN BAGS CORNHOLE TOURNAMENT 2026

Did you know cornhole, or bags, is the most played game in the country? This past February, we partnered with Twin Ports Cornhole to host the first cornhole tournament in the historic St. Louis County Depot. It was fantastic! 23 teams competed and over \$3,000 was raised to support our Arts for All Scholarship.



1st Place Lower Division Winners
Rough Riders

WE THANK OUR 2026 FROZEN BAGS PARTNERS

PRESENTING SPONSORS



TOURNAMENT SPONSORS

DOLLARS AND \$ENSE

Deduct your Donations!

New in 2026, if you take the standard deduction, you can deduct up to \$1,000 of cash charitable contributions (\$2,000 if filing jointly). These donations must be made to a qualified charitable organization (like the Depot Foundation), which excludes donor-advised funds (DAFs).

[source: Edward Jones]

GIVE SMARTER.
SAVE TAXES!

LEARN MORE SMART WAYS TO DONATE
AT DEPOTFOUNDATION.ORG
OR CONTACT JASON YOUNG AT
JASON@DEPOTFOUNDATION.ORG
OR CALL (218) 733-7592.



THE DEPOT FOUNDATION
A foundation you can trust!

SUPPORT THE DEPOT FOUNDATION TODAY!

Online: Depotfoundation.org
Check: Depot Foundation
506 W. Michigan St.
Duluth, MN 55802



OR SCAN OUR QR CODE!

THE DEPOT FOUNDATION BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Christine Melone, *Chair*
Bob Fischer, *Vice-Chair*
Jenny Miller, *Treasurer*
Erica Walli, *Secretary*
R. Craft Dryer
Elissa Husby
Kris Kapsner
Kyle Bosley

Rick Lubbers
Barbara Perrella
Jill Pinkney Pastrana
Pat Cutshall

Staff:

Jason Young, *Executive Director*
Shelly Vanneste, *Administrative Assistant*

CONNECT WITH US!

Facebook Instagram YouTube @TheDepotFoundation



CIRCLE OF FRIENDS

VOLUNTEERS

We thank the following individuals that helped with our 2026 Circle of Friends Arts and Culture Awards Celebration:

CIRCLE OF FRIENDS COMMITTEE

Elissa Husby, Co-Chair
 Barb Perrella, Co-Chair
 Dennis Lamkin
 R. Craft Dryer
 Jill Pinkney Pastrana
 Andrew Weisz
 Bob Fischer
 Kyle Bosley
 Christine Melone

CIRCLE OF FRIENDS AWARDS SELECTION COMMITTEE

Dennis Lamkin – Chair
 Wayne Gannaway
 Patty Mester
 R. Craft Dryer
 Annie Lepper
 Jill Pinkney Pastrana
 Adam Daoust
 Bob Fischer
 Milissa Brooks-Ojibway

2026 CIRCLE OF FRIENDS SPONSORS

We sincerely thank the following businesses that said YES to supporting local art and culture:

PRESENTING SPONSORS



SUSTAINING SPONSORS



DEPOT CONSTRUCTION UPDATE

The historic St. Louis County Depot is undergoing a significant, 2-year, HVAC replacement project. With demolition, comes surprises hiding in the walls. An ancient package of 1891 cigarettes (empty) was unearthed from the walls by one of our maintenance heroes, Simon Thill.

\$390,000+ GRANTS AWARDED



Photo credit: Ilir Rizaj

This year, we made a significant impact through our grant program. This would not have been possible without our donors and friends like you. Thank you.

These organizations help make our historic Depot the art and culture hub in our community.

2025-26 Grant Recipients Include:

- Arrowhead Chorale
- Duluth Superior Symphony Orchestra
- Dunbar Hofmann Productions
- Heartwood Music
- Lake Arts Project
- Lake Superior Railroad Museum
- Lyric Opera of the North
- MN Ballet
- Saint Louis County Depot
- Saint Louis County Historical Society
- Zeitgeist