

# SUPPORTER SPOTLIGHT

By Devin van Holsteijn



**HARD WORK • INTEGRITY • EXCELLENCE**



If you've been to downtown Cedar Rapids, you have seen the GreatAmerica Financial Services building. One of the most physically visible companies in the area, this national commercial equipment finance company is dedicated to helping manufacturers, vendors, and dealers be more successful and keep their customers for a lifetime. Though humble regarding his accomplishments, Tony Golobic, the Chairman and CEO of GreatAmerica, created this thriving company culture based on extraordinary service to its customers and the entrepreneurial spirit. Mr. Golobic has made a big mark on both the local business community as well as the local non-profit community. As presenting sponsor of *The Rite of Spring* through their donor-advised fund at the Greater Cedar Rapids Community Foundation, GreatAmerica will again impact local and state-wide arts audiences in a major way. Mr. Golobic was kind enough to share some of the driving factors behind GreatAmerica's support of the arts as well as about *The Rite of Spring* in particular.

## **How has the Greater Cedar Rapids Community Foundation changed the way you give back to the community over the years?**

*The Foundation has been very helpful in evaluation and prioritizing of numerous funding requests that we receive every year. Many times we are not very knowledgeable about organizations requesting financial support and/or the projects for which funding is requested are not well described. Foundation's assistance in these matters has been very valuable to us.*

## **Why does *The Rite of Spring* appeal to you particularly?**

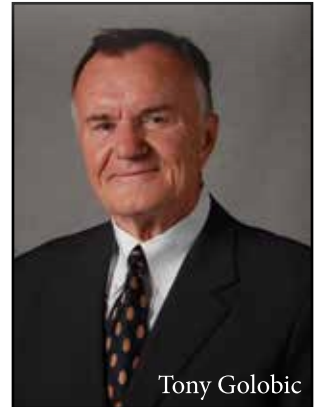
*There are two aspects of *The Rite of Spring* that particularly resonate with me. First, I feel an attachment to my Slavic roots and, as its subtitle denotes, *The Rite of Spring* was meant to depict a snapshot of pagan Slavic rites... at least in Igor Stravinsky's interpretation. Second, when the work first premiered in Paris in 1913 in front of a packed audience, the music and choreography were truly avant-garde for those times and created what was variously described as almost a riot in the theatre. In much the same way as Vincent van Gogh's paintings disturbed and actually caused revulsion in some of the art world in his time due to its avant-garde nature and today his works are much admired, Igor Stravinsky's piece had a similar impact and is today much esteemed.*

## **What is your favorite moment in *The Rite of Spring*?**

*Though it would be a gross misrepresentation to present myself as knowledgeable in classical music, I do enjoy it very much. I may disappoint you by not picking a single moment. I would say that *The Augurs of Spring*, *The Evocation of the Ancestors* and *Dance of the Earth* are my favorite movements because of what they portray quite ably; rebirth of life, the notion that we are nothing but a link in a long chain of generations, and being one with the Earth – which, by the way, are some of the basic elements in the Slavic pagan beliefs.*

## **What led you to initially support Orchestra Iowa? Was there a particular moment that really spoke to you?**

*I really don't think that it was any particular moment that influenced us in our support. I have always felt strongly that the long-term success of any business is not due to any particular single person, but rather to many factors besides leadership, such as employees, customers and the community where the business is*



Tony Golobic

*located. These are all the stakeholders who should be owed a great deal of loyalty by business ownership. We at GreatAmerica have been very fortunate to continue to enjoy success over the past 21 years. As a dividend payment on our success, we allocate an annual budget to support various cultural, educational and social institutions in the Cedar Rapids area.*

## **The effect of your gift has doubled through allowing us to perform outside of the community with our partner, Ballet Quad Cities. Does Orchestra Iowa's commitment to bring cultural art from this community to rest of the state inform your support?**

*I think that Orchestra's outreach to communities outside of Cedar Rapids is just wonderful. Along with other local organizations, such as BruceMaree, the Czech and Slovak Museum and TCR, Orchestra Iowa is doing a nice job of reaching beyond the borders of Linn County to present programming and involving visitors in a more concerted arts tourism effort. It makes me feel good that we can play a small part in this worthy undertaking.*

## **As one of the community's most successful business leaders, how do you hope other leaders will give back to the community?**

*Of course, giving back to the community means not only monetary support, but also volunteering one's time. We, in Cedar Rapids, are very fortunate that quite a good portion of our business community believe in the notion of giving back. Many of us understand that a vibrant cultural life plays a very important factor in community's quality of life and therefore in attracting high quality work force. We know that without financial support many cultural institutions would not be able to survive. Giving back to the community is not only expressing our appreciation of our community, but is also in any business' self-interest. The stronger the cultural life is in the Corridor, the more we will be able to attract a high quality work force, as those people consider community's cultural life as an important component in their quality- of- life definition.*