



CARTHA™

Educational 501(c)(3) nonprofit since 2006

Cultivating Collaborative Doers for Humanity

Tax ID: 20-5547610 / www.cartha.org

CARTHA: COLLABORATIVE ARTS IN RESEARCH TRANSLATION FOR HUMAN ADVANCEMENT

Founded in 2006, CARTHA (doer in Sanskrit) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit with the mission of Cultivating Collaborative Doers for Humanity. Focused on Social Innovation, Fusion Philanthropy, and Healthfulness, we design Fellowships and Glocalizer dialogues to incubate community collaboratives that bridge high-aspiration innovators across disciplines, sectors, regions, and ages. Speaking engagements and sheer word-of-mouth keep robustly attracting well-wishers and volunteer teams of scientists, physicians, writers, artists, and students to our work.

Recent Glocalizers have been on topics such as using music and poetry to address unresolved grief; coping skills required to deal with loneliness, including during end-of-life phases; etc. Loneliness being a public health epidemic, our *Iowa Corridor Sangeet* community collaborative introduced joyful South Asian music (with 100-400 attendees) for learning of art forms and new friendships.

The Singing Nook concept in our Musicality in Parks initiative (described on the next page) is a Social Innovation in Urban Planning. Singing Nooks can bridge humans and thus help communities reimagine park space utilization and collective healing solutions with community partners. Please help make our dream a reality:



IOWA CAN BECOME A LAND OF A HUNDRED MUSICALLY DIVERSE PARKS!



Dear Friends: Given the extent of pandemic-driven grief burdens, especially upon younger children and caregivers, it is imperative for each of us to thoughtfully propose and find new strategies to reduce the level of unresolved grief and increase coping skills in our communities, everywhere. Your gesture of support to CARTHA's new Musicality in Parks programming vision and work—in whatever form and at whatever level—will help us make a bigger difference in a caring and empowering, yet daring and everyday sort of way. Whether as a partner, donor, volunteer, ambassador, or interested community member, we look forward to working with you! Thank you!

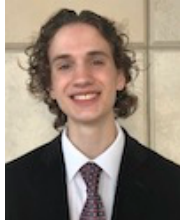
Usha R. Balakrishnan, Founder & CEO, CARTHA

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2022 CARTHA FELLOWS:

TESSA MUSA, SAM STRATHEARN, TEJAS GURURAJA



CARTHA Board of Directors

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MUSICALITY IN PARKS: COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS FOR HEALING & COPING SKILLS

Based on her unique personal experience of singing, upon request, to hundreds of strangers on the phone since December 2008, CARTHA Founder Usha Balakrishnan conceived the Musicality in Parks initiative. In 2018, she shared her dream with the City of Iowa City Manager and Parks Director: *Could a “Singing Nook” be built in a local park?* City officials asked her to share her aspirational design ideas with the city’s park consultants. They have made Usha’s dream now a beautiful reality: A Singing Nook at Willow Creek Park in Iowa City!

SINGING NOOKS ARE A SOCIAL INNOVATION IN URBAN PLANNING

With the success of the first pilot Singing Nook, Usha began reaching out (to over 500 individuals since October 2021) to design intentional programming partnerships focused on enhancing accessibility of parks and broadening healing/coping/grief-relief platforms within communities.

Usha and Tessa Musa (CARTHA Fellow) stood in a circle with twelve 12-year-old girls in October 2021 at the Singing Nook at Willow Creek Park in Iowa City.

Responses of these children to the question “What does music mean to you?” helped CARTHA design novel *Inspiring Creativity* educational workshops for school-age children.

To foster thoughtful approaches and design solutions to the inclusion of diverse musical elements within parks and programming, we began organizing, with CARTHA Ambassadors (Trevor Harvey and Jerry Anthony) academic-practitioner Glocalizer dialogues under a partnership with **Humanities Iowa**. We also designated new CARTHA Fellowships. CARTHA sponsored field trips (**The Village Community of West Branch, The Family Folk Machine, TAKO**) and conducted programs with nonprofits and raised awareness through public presentations. A brief write-up titled [*Songs of Healing and Community*](#) appeared in the Jan. 2023 issue of *Voices from the Prairie*.

- **Neighborhood Ctrs of Johnson County** – *Inspiring Creativity/Coping Skills* Workshops for children of Sudanese and Congolese refugees. (~20 children in 10 sessions; 2 hours each in 2022.)
- **Univ. of Iowa MA-level Course** (Prof. J. Anthony) – Presentation/Student Project, Feb. 2022.
- **Univ. of Iowa World Music Course** for Undergrads (Prof. T. Harvey), Feb. 2022.
- **Rotary District 6000 & 5970** – Conference Session (~60 people) & Table Display, Apr. 2022.
- **Tipton Rotary Club** – Presentation (~10 people) and Drive-thru tour of city of Tipton, Jul. 2022.
- **Camp Courageous** – Singing program with persons with disabilities, accompanied by their caregivers at Rotary Music Park-Monticello, Aug. 13 (~25 people) & Oct. 2 (~50 people).
- **Open-Air Karaoke event** with Iowa City Noon Rotary (~40 people) at Singing Nook, Sep. 2022.
- **India Association of Iowa City Area** - Music Memory-Sharing program (~50 people), Oct. 2022.

Our overall aim is to encourage cities to consider the inclusion of musically-diverse Singing Nooks to foster the development of coping skills, creativity, and healing platforms by connecting people intergenerationally and cross-culturally through music and memories. Each new pilot could be a unique design based on the collaborative vision of local cities, organizations, and volunteers of different ages and backgrounds. New programs are already underway for launch in 2023. Please join us in this journey! Thank you for your support!