

Mahathi Sompallae

2026 CARTHA Fellow

Mahathi Sompallae is a sophomore at Iowa City West High School.

Because of her interest in science, she is involved in student clubs such as Science Olympiad and serves as the Marketing Chief for STEM for Youth, a group of 30 students.

Mahathi plays the Western violin in her school orchestra and also sings in her school choir.

Since the age of 8, Mahathi has been captivated by South Indian Carnatic Classical music and has participated in several Carnatic competitions and festivals, locally and nationally. She attends the Annual Cleveland Thyagaraja Aradhana Festival, taking part in the performing ensembles. In the summer of 2025, Mahathi also started learning Kathak, an Indian Classical Dance form and continues her journey today.

Mahathi participates in service projects offered by the Rotary Interact 1440 Club in her school. During the summer, Mahathi volunteers at the Iowa Children's Museum.

In 2022, Mahathi, along with her younger brother (Gautam) and her parents (Ramakrishna and Krishnaveni), joined the CARTHA "Singing Nooks" Program held at the Rotary Music Park at Camp Courageous in Monticello, IA. The "Singing Nooks" Program was Mahathi's very first hands-on introduction to CARTHA's work, and she feels that she came away with a pleasant sense of place, being among other Carthans (Collaborative Doers for Humanity).

Now, as a CARTHA Fellow, beginning in July 2026, Mahathi is designing community dialogues with scientist-musicians to promote greater learning about how these scientists happened upon/developed their musical talents and/or how their musical experience continues to impact their professional work and collaborations as scientists. Mahathi also wants to create greater awareness of how music (and other art forms like dance) have been and are currently being utilized as a strategy for healthy coping/cooperating skill sets, including as a vehicle to aim for addressing public health dilemmas such as community loneliness, loss, and grief.

Mahathi's work as a CARTHA Fellow enriches CARTHA's ongoing programming series titled "Arts & Healthful Collaborations for Self-Care, Caregiving, and Intergenerational Resilience."