Influential Women Recognizes Julie Poklewski: Creating Inclusive Lifelong Music Pathways Through Opus11 School Of Music

CAMPBELL, CA, UNITED STATES, September 23, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- A Classically Trained Pianist and Arts Leader Expands Access to Meaningful Musical Experiences For Students of All Ages, Abilities, and Learning Styles



Cambell, California – With more than 25 years of experience in music education, Julie Poklewski has dedicated her career to helping people discover the confidence, connection, and joy that can come from meaningful musical experiences. As a music educator, arts leader, pianist, and Founder and CEO of Opus11 School of Music, Julie has developed an inclusive approach to music education that reaches students across generations and learning styles.

Her philosophy is rooted in a lifelong relationship with music. Raised in a family of classical musicians, Julie grew up surrounded by piano, opera, and concert performance. Her parents, both pianists, met while completing their musical studies in the former Soviet Union in the country of Georgia, creating a musical environment that deeply influenced Julie from an early age. Today, she draws on those experiences as she works to give other families the opportunity to experience the values and sensitivity she discovered through music.

Julie holds a Bachelor of Music in Piano Performance from San José State University and a Master of Arts in Piano Pedagogy from Notre Dame de Namur University. She is also a member of the Music Teachers National Association, Music Teachers Association of California, and California Association of Professional Music Teachers.

Her own teaching journey began unexpectedly when she was young. While her mother was away

on a concert tour, she asked Julie to work with students who were preparing for examinations. That early experience introduced her to the rewards of teaching and eventually developed into a lifelong commitment to music education.

For two decades, Julie maintained a private piano studio, working directly with students while developing a deeper understanding of the role music could play in people's lives. Her experience eventually expanded beyond individual instruction and into arts leadership and advocacy. She served as Executive Director and a Board Member of the San Jose International Piano Competition, where she helped support opportunities for pianists and young musicians through performance and educational initiatives.

Through this work, Julie became increasingly interested in creating connections between accomplished artists, emerging musicians, students, and audiences. Her experience across both education and nonprofit arts leadership ultimately shaped the vision that would become Opus11 School of Music.

Founded in 2021, Opus11 was created as a more inclusive and expansive model of music education. What began as a single teaching studio has grown into a multi-location organization serving more than 300 students and families, ranging from young children to adults in their 80s. The school provides private instruction, group programs, ensembles, camps, performances, and adaptive music education.

A particular focus of Opus11 is welcoming neurodivergent learners and creating an environment in which students with different abilities and learning styles can engage with music in meaningful ways. For Julie, inclusion is connected to the broader belief that music should be accessible as a source of personal development, expression, and connection.

Julie attributes much of her success to her own sensitivity and her desire for others to experience music with that same depth. Growing up surrounded by classical music gave her an appreciation for the emotional and personal dimensions of the art form. She believes in sharing not only the technical aspects of music, but also the joy and values that accompanied her own upbringing.

That perspective has influenced the way she approaches both teaching and leadership. For Julie, meaningful education is not simply about preparing students for examinations or developing technical proficiency. It is also about creating experiences that can remain with people throughout their lives.

A pivotal piece of career advice helped Julie recognize how she could extend that impact. An elderly woman once encouraged her to consider changing her schedule and doing something different, pointing out that the traditional teaching schedule from 3 to 7 p.m. could eventually make it difficult to balance work and family life. The conversation prompted Julie to think about the limitations of operating a private studio alone.

She realized that if she continued teaching 15, 20, or 30 students herself, she could directly influence only that number of families. By scaling a business, however, she could reach many more people while preserving the values she wanted to share. In music, Julie describes this concept through the terms “crescendo or diminuendo”—a recognition that growth can create opportunities to extend one’s reach.

That realization changed the trajectory of her career and ultimately led to the creation of Opus11.

Today, Julie sees one of her greatest opportunities in continuing to grow a team of exceptional teachers. Finding educators who combine outstanding professional ability with warmth, engagement, and a genuine capacity to connect with students can be challenging. Yet when the right teachers join Opus11, Julie believes they strengthen the school’s community and allow its approach to reach more students and families.

Her leadership philosophy also reflects the personal values she considers essential: ethics, honesty, keeping her word, and respect. Julie places particular importance on maintaining alignment between what she thinks, what she says, and what she does. That consistency between thought, word, and action is fundamental to the way she approaches both her personal life and professional responsibilities.

For young women considering careers in music education or the broader arts industry, Julie encourages them not to be afraid of entrepreneurship or difficult challenges. She believes opening a business can create opportunities not only for financial growth, but also for meaningful community impact. Entrepreneurship can develop communication skills, create opportunities to work closely with people, and provide the satisfaction of seeing one’s work affect others directly.

Most importantly, Julie encourages young women not to let fear determine what they pursue. Her own career demonstrates how a willingness to take a difficult step can transform the scale and reach of a professional mission.

Through Opus11 and her continuing involvement in nonprofit arts leadership, Julie remains focused on creating connections between education and performance while expanding access to high-quality musical experiences. She also seeks opportunities for established artists to inspire and mentor emerging musicians, strengthening the relationship between generations of performers and learners.

At the heart of Julie’s work is a straightforward goal: to help more people experience music as something that extends beyond lessons and performances. She wants music to become a lasting part of people’s lives—a source of confidence, connection, expression, and joy.

By combining her background as a classically trained pianist with decades of teaching experience, arts leadership, and an entrepreneurial vision, Julie continues to shape an educational environment where students can discover their own relationship with music. Through Opus11, that vision is reaching hundreds of families while creating new possibilities for artists, teachers, students, and audiences to come together around the enduring power of music.

Learn More about Julie Poklewski:

Through her Influential Women profile, https://influentialwomen.com/connect/julie-poklewski or through Opus11, https://www.opus11.com/

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