



*Engaging Minds, Enriching Lives*

## 2022 Alumnae Award

Honoring  
**Nina Kraus**

Hugh Knowles Professor  
Communication Sciences, Neurobiology and Otolaryngology  
Northwestern University

Wednesday, October 26, 2022  
The Allen Center, Northwestern University

The Alumnae of Northwestern University's Alumnae Award  
is presented annually to an outstanding alumna  
who has made significant contributions in her field  
and who has attained national recognition.

**Award Committee Chair:** Michele Bresler

**Committee:** Sheila Gideon, Gail Joy, Elaine Kisisel, Marjo Kraft, Della Rae Moore,  
Sandy Riggs, Mary Schuette, Greta Sims, Susie Stein, Katy Sutter, Amy Van Gorp

# Nina Kraus

Nina Kraus, High Knowles Professor of Communication Sciences, Neurobiology, and Otolaryngology, is a biologist and amateur musician, focusing on the relationship between sound and brain health. Through her diverse partnerships, her work on the effects of music experience on the nervous system has targeted African American and Latino children living in low-income areas. Her research on HIV takes place in under-resourced communities in China and Tanzania.

Her latest book, *Of Sound Mind- How our Brain Constructs a Meaningful Sonic World*, which was written for the intellectually curious, has received international recognition. When talking about her book, Kraus notes in the *Evanston Round Table*: “This is my love-letter to sound, how sound connects us, its biological impact on making us *us*, and how it affects the world we live in. Sound is an underrecognized, powerful force in our lives. The hearing brain engages what we know, our emotions, our movements and every sense.” A *Wall Street Journal* review of the book notes: “*Of Sound Mind* offers a deeply scientific yet often poetic look at the hearing brain and provides an in-depth narrative about why such explorations are important.”

In her deep examination of sound and the brain, Kraus makes the case for the far-reaching impact of sound, showing how hearing engages how we think, feel, move and combine our senses. Through auditory neuroscience, she discovered how the sounds of our lives engage our neurological health for better (musicians, bilinguals) and for worse (concussion, language disorders, poverty).

Kraus has more than 400 books and articles in peer-reviewed publications. Her diverse partnerships encompass: community partnerships, partnerships with education, partnerships with athletics, and partnerships with the arts, among other areas.

She runs a far-reaching lab website (<https://brainvolts.northwestern.edu>) and enjoys regular media coverage (e.g., *New York Times*, BBC, NPR, *Time*, *Nature*, *Science* and *Scientific American*). She embraces podcasts and interviews to communicate the science of sound *through* sound. Unscripted and spontaneous, these exchanges build empathy with an audience, capitalizing on sound’s ability to connect us. She holds five patents, with three pending, for assessment of sound processing in the brain.

# **Alumnae Award Program**

4 p.m. (CST)

## **Welcome and Introduction of Special Guests**

***Carol Willis***

President, The Alumnae of Northwestern University

## **Speakers**

***Sumit Dhar***

Associate Provost for Faculty, Office of the Provost  
Northwestern University

***Ann Bradlow***

Abraham Harris Professor of Linguistics  
Weinberg College of Arts and Sciences  
Northwestern University

***E. Patrick Johnson***

Dean, School of Communication  
Northwestern University

## **Remarks**

***Nina Kraus***

2022 Alumnae Award Recipient

## **Award Presentation**

***Carol Willis, Michele Bresler***

**PAST WINNERS OF THE ALUMNAE AWARD**

- 1976 Lee Phillip, television personality
- 1977 Joan Beck, journalist, columnist
- 1978 Carole Kamin Bellows, attorney, Illinois Bar Association President
- 1979 Olga Jonasson, physician, Cook County Hospital chief of surgery
- 1980 Patricia Neal, actress
- 1981 Georgie Anne Geyer, journalist, author, columnist
- 1982 Ardis Krainik, Lyric Opera director
- 1983 Mabel Smythe, ambassador, educator, author, lecturer
- 1984 Maria Cominou, civil engineer
- 1985 Barbara Uehling, University of Missouri chancellor
- 1986 Lois Wille, Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist
- 1987 Neena Schwartz, professor of neurobiology and physiology
- 1988 Wendy Lee Gramm, Commodity Futures Trading Commission chair
- 1989 Sherry Lansing, Hollywood film producer
- 1990 Nancy Dussault, actress, singer, talk show host
- 1991 Nan Robertson, Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist, author, columnist
- 1992 Sondra Gair, National Public Radio personality
- 1993 Phyllis Elliott Oakley, State Department spokesperson
- 1994 Lynn Nesbit, literary agent, partner at Janklow & Nesbit Associates
- 1995 Jeanette Wagner, Estee Lauder International President and CEO
- 1996 Geneva Overholser, *Washington Post* newspaper executive
- 1997 Grace Bumbry, opera star
- 1998 Founding members and professors, NU Alumnae Continuing Education
- 1999 Mary Zimmerman, playwright and MacArthur "genius" grant recipient
- 2000 Augusta Read Thomas, Chicago Symphony Orchestra composer in residence
- 2001 Barbara Gaines, Chicago Shakespeare Theater founder and artistic director
- 2002 Laura S. Washington, columnist, editor and publisher
- 2003 Lois Weisberg, City of Chicago Commissioner of Cultural Affairs
- 2004 Martha Lavey, Artistic Director, Steppenwolf Theatre Company
- 2005 Carole Browe Segal, Chief Executive Officer, Crate & Barrel
- 2006 Christine Brennan, award winning journalist
- 2007 Nancy Gustafson, opera star
- 2008 Teresa K. Woodruff, Dean The Graduate School
- 2009 Marie Arana, author and editor
- 2010 Sandy Neville Haggart, international charity founder
- 2011 Bonnie Anderson, Emmy winning journalist
- 2012 Marg Helgenberger, actress
- 2013 Johnnetta Betsch Cole, educator and humanitarian
- 2014 Kelly O'Donnell, journalist and television news anchor
- 2015 Gwynne Shotwell, president and chief operating officer, SpaceX
- 2016 Lisa M. Franchetti, Rear Admiral, U.S. Navy
- 2017 Alicia Boler Davis, executive VP, General Motors Mfg., engineer
- 2018 Maria Carrillo, Chief Science Officer, Alzheimer's Association
- 2019 Susan Page, journalist
- 2020 Heather Headley, singer, songwriter and actress
- 2021 Roslyn Brock, health policy advocate, Chairman Emeritus, NAACP
- 2022 Nina Kraus, neuroscientist