

2026 National Conference Agenda—Volunteers

All times below are Eastern Time. Agenda subject to change.

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The following agenda describes sessions specifically designed for the above-mentioned constituents. For a full listing of Conference events and larger sessions, please visit <https://leagueconference.org/full-schedule>.

Monday, June 1, 2026

8:00am-8:30am Coffee and Networking

8:30am-9:00am Introductions and Welcome

*Speakers: **Darlene Clark**, President, League Volunteer Council; **Simon Woods**, President & CEO, League of American Orchestras; **Mark Hanson**, President & CEO, Baltimore Symphony Orchestra; **Adeline Sutter**, Senior Director of Patron Experience; **Paula McReynolds**, Conference Chair, Volunteer Council*

9:00am-12:00pm Gold Award Presentations

Houston Symphony League: Driving impact through Sponsorships; Driving Revenue Through Membership Dues

*Speaker: **Leslie Nossaman**, Houston Symphony League*

Kansas City Symphony Alliance: Designer Showhouse Internship Program; The Power of Volunteer Hours

*Speaker: **Kellie Sullivan**, Kansas City Symphony Alliance*

Friends of the Annapolis Symphony Orchestra: Pictures at an Exhibition

*Speaker: **Paula Abernethy**, Friends of the Annapolis Symphony Orchestra*

Illinois Symphony Guild of Springfield: New Electronic Newsletter-The Guild Gazette

*Speaker: **Donald Tallman**, Illinois Symphony Guild of Springfield*

Richmond Symphony League: 54th Annual Concerto Competition

*Speaker: **Susan Fourness-Ewell**, Richmond Symphony League*

1:00pm-2:30pm

Constituency Meeting Block 1

1:00pm-1:30pm

Networking

Meet fellow volunteers during this interactive networking session focused on connection, idea-sharing, and getting to know one another.

*Speaker: **Kent McNeil**, Saint Louis Symphony Orchestra and Membership Chair, Volunteer Council*

1:30pm-2:30pm

Membership Strategies: Recruitment, Retention and How to Avoid Burn Out

Volunteer organizations rely on passionate individuals—but without the right systems, that passion can lead to burnout. This interactive session explores practical strategies to strengthen recruitment, share leadership, and create sustainable volunteer engagement. Through guided exercises and peer discussion, participants will identify burnout risks, redesign volunteer roles, and leave with actionable steps to build a stronger, more resilient volunteer program.

*Speaker: **Paula Floeck McReynolds**, Waco Symphony Orchestra League*

Tuesday, June 2, 2026

3:00pm-5:00pm

Constituency Meeting Block 2

Building Strong Relationships: Tuning up Teamwork to Support the Symphony

Working with symphony volunteers means bringing together individuals who share a passion for music, community, and supporting something larger than themselves. Alongside that shared purpose comes a wide range of personalities, experiences, and perspectives—and that's both the beauty and the challenge of volunteer organizations.

In this session, we'll explore practical tools you can take back to your volunteer group to help strengthen your team and create a more harmonious and effective environment. We'll also look at the behaviors that naturally emerge within groups—those that help your organization thrive, as well as those that can create discord.

Together, we'll discuss how to amplify the positives, navigate challenges with confidence, and approach difficult conversations in a way that builds trust, respect, and collaboration—so your organization can continue to support your orchestra with unity and purpose.

Speaker: **Kellie Sullivan**, University Health Behavioral Health and
Kansas City Symphony Alliance

Wednesday, June 3, 2026

11:15am-12:45pm Constituency Meeting Block 3

11:15am-12:15pm **Right-Sized Marketing: Strategies for Volunteer Organizations of Every Scale**

Volunteer-led orchestra organizations operate with varying budgets, staffing structures, and community footprints yet all are tasked with building visibility, driving attendance, and strengthening member engagement. This session explores how to design marketing strategies that are appropriately scaled to your organization's capacity and size.

Participants will examine practical, resource-conscious approaches to branding, audience communication, digital presence, and community partnerships. The session will focus on aligning marketing tactics with volunteer bandwidth, clarifying messaging, leveraging board and member networks, and prioritizing efforts that deliver measurable impact. Attendees will leave with adaptable frameworks and actionable tools to implement immediately within their volunteer organizations.

Speaker: **Kristina Wrenn**, Brand and Marketing Strategist

12:15pm-12:45pm **Final Reflections and Staying Connected**

As we leave Conference, what will we choose to take with us? How do we stay connected and energized by what we've learned? We will identify strategies to keep the momentum and deepen relationships that will fulfill us as we return home.

Notice: It is important to keep in mind antitrust rules governing competition that apply to this group discussion. While the agenda for this group includes discussion of a variety of issues that are crucial to orchestras' planning and strategies, the goal is not to agree on a single approach to these issues. With the benefit of analysis and discussion, each orchestra will be able to decide independently what course of action is best for its own organization. We ask you to avoid comments that relate to your orchestra's current or future plans for ticket or event pricing (actual ticket prices, discount amounts), bargaining (including collective bargaining agreements or with vendors), or compensation. Please consult the [League one-page Antitrust Overview](#) for more information, available at www.americanorchestras.org.