

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 Strengthening Member Engagement: Sized Marketing Strategies for Volunteer Organizations of Every Scale

The first in a 4-part Volunteer Council series on Sized Marketing Strategies.

Volunteer-led orchestra organizations operate with varying budgets, staffing structures, and community footprints yet all are tasked with strengthening member engagement, building visibility, reinforcing branding and driving attendance. This session explores how to design marketing strategies that are appropriately scaled to your organization's capacity and size. It will focus on tactics to renew and reengage members by prioritizing efforts, clarifying messaging and leveraging board and member networks that deliver measurable impact. Using practical, resource-conscious approaches to digital presence, audience communication, branding and community partnerships, attendees will leave with suggestions for adaptable frameworks and actionable tools to strengthen member engagement within their volunteer organizations.

*Speakers: **Co-Chairs Marketing & Communications for the League's Volunteer Council: Venise Stuart**, former President Dallas Symphony Orchestra League (DSOL), Dallas Symphony Orchestra Executive Committee and **Kristina Wrenn**, former Women's Symphony League of Tyler Presentation Production and DSOL Board Member, 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.