

2026 National Conference Agenda—Youth Orchestra Division

All times below are Eastern Time. Agenda content 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

1:00pm-2:30pm Constituency Meeting Block 1

1:00pm-1:30pm Welcome, Annual Meeting, and Voice Your Hot Topics

*Moderator: **Lindsey Nova**, Executive Director, Three Rivers Young Peoples Orchestra*

1:30pm-2:30pm YOD at 50: Celebrating, Connecting, and Looking Ahead

As the Youth Orchestra Division celebrates its 50th anniversary, this session offers an opportunity to check in on anniversary initiatives, share updates, and ask questions. Join colleagues from across the field to exchange ideas, discuss current projects, and learn what youth orchestras are doing in their communities.

- **Composing Our Tomorrow** (commissioning new works)
- **The Betty Utter Community Impact Award** (celebrating local change makers)
- **Spotlight on Youth Orchestras** (social media campaign)

*This session will be moderated by the members of the Youth Orchestra Division at 50 Committee: **Rebecca Calos**, Executive Director, Empire State Youth Orchestra; **Helen H. Cha-Pyo**, Artistic Director & Principal Conductor, New Jersey Youth Chorus, New Jersey Youth Symphony, Paterson Music Project, Performing Arts School; **Colleen Hood**, Vice President and COO, PYO Music Institute; **Juan Felipe Molano**, Music Director, Seattle Youth Symphony Orchestra; **Rachel Schultz**, COO, Hawaii Youth Symphony; **Carter Simmons**, Artistic and Music Director, Milwaukee Youth Symphony Orchestra; **Allen Tinkham**, Music Director, Chicago Youth Symphony Orchestras*

Tuesday, June 2, 2026

3:00pm-5:00pm Embedding Change through Design Thinking

Learn how to use Design Thinking as an inclusive tool to identify, ideate, align, and spark change within your organization.

*Speakers: **Jessica Phillips**, Musician, Metropolitan Opera; Educator, The Juilliard School, Consultant, 11A Collaborative, Board Director, League of American Orchestras; and **Julian Chender**, Founder and Principal Consultant, 11A Collaborative*

Wednesday, June 3, 2026

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

11:15am-12:15pm Hot Topics

In this fast-paced, interactive session, your most pressing questions and challenges will facilitate a dynamic exchange of perspectives. We will crowdsource the topics, vote on what matters most, then hot potato them around the room for rapid-fire ideas, insights, and solutions.

12:15pm-12:45pm Final Reflection 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? What topics do we want to explore in future programming? We will identify strategies to keep the momentum on our path and deepen relationships that will fulfill us as we return home.

*Moderator: **Lindsey Nova**, Executive Director, Three Rivers Young Peoples Orchestra*

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](http://www.americanorchestras.org) for more information, available at www.americanorchestras.org.