
June 9-11 in Baltimore

Five Orchestra Musicians to Receive League’s New Ford Musician Awards for Excellence in Community Service and Participate in Session on Fostering Exemplary Community Engagement

New York, NY (May 12, 2016) – The League of American Orchestras’ 2016 National Conference in Baltimore, June 9-11, will focus on orchestra diversity and inclusion, offering expert speakers from within the field and beyond, as well as a series of plenary and elective sessions on diversifying orchestra musicians, boards of directors, audiences, and the workplace. The Conference will welcome orchestra managers, musicians, staff, trustees, and volunteers from across the U.S.; it is the first League Conference to take place in Baltimore.

Hosted by the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra, an organization itself deeply committed to increased diversity and inclusion, the 2016 National Conference will include live performances, a conducting master class with BSO Music Director Marin Alsop, social and networking events, and an assortment of sessions highlighting diversity, artistic innovation, creative fundraising, audience development, technology, financial sustainability, and more.

“Diversity, and in particular the place of race and ethnicity, is an urgent national issue, and the League must seize its role to focus attention and help orchestras find pathways, individually and collectively, to take action,” said League of American Orchestras President and CEO Jesse Rosen. “At this conference, we’ll examine the diverse nature of our communities through multiple lenses: artistic, civic, audience-building, fundraising, mission, governance, and more. We’ll explore the ways that today’s orchestras reflect
and respond to their communities, increase their value to the public, connect with new audiences, and invigorate their artistry.”

“The Baltimore Symphony Orchestra is delighted to host the League’s 2016 conference,” said BSO President and CEO Paul Meecham. “The theme of diversity is one our orchestra takes very seriously, and is a conversation we know is happening at every other orchestra as well. We all benefit and learn from one another when we discuss topics important to the field. We welcome our colleagues from all across the country to experience our diverse city and to be inspired by our orchestra.”

The Conference Opening Plenary kicks off on June 9 with celebratory performances by the Baltimore Youth Symphony Orchestra and members of the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra’s OrchKids program, as well as a keynote speech by Earl Lewis, president, The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. A panel discussion around diversity initiatives will follow, featuring Lewis; BSO Music Director Marin Alsop; Jamie Bennett, ArtPlace in America executive director; and Phoenix Symphony principal clarinet Alex Laing.

Association of California Symphony Orchestras (ACSO) executive director Kris Sinclair, who is retiring after more than thirty years at the organization’s helm, will receive the Gold Baton at the Luncheon and Annual Meeting on June 10. The League’s highest honor, the Gold Baton has been bestowed annually since 1948 for distinguished service to America’s orchestras.

The event will also include the presentation of the League’s new Ford Musician Awards for Excellence in Community Service, to be awarded to Penny Anderson Brill, viola, Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra (Music and Wellness Program); Shannon Orme, bass clarinet, Detroit Symphony Orchestra (Neighborhood Residency Initiative); Jeffrey Paul, principal oboe, South Dakota Symphony Orchestra (Lakota Music Project); Brian Prechtl, percussion, Baltimore Symphony Orchestra (OrchKids); and Beth Vandervennet, cello, Oakland Symphony (Music for Excellence Program [MUSE]).

June 11’s Closing Luncheon and Plenary will focus on identifying key actions orchestras can take, individually and collectively, to help our institutions and art form become more responsive to and reflective of the diversity and dynamism of 21st century America. It will feature Jamie Bennett as moderator. Dr. Monique M. Chism, deputy assistant secretary for Policy and Programs, Office of Elementary and Secondary Education, U.S. Department of Education; DeRay Mckesson, organizer, activist, and educator; and Jesse Rosen will give short remarks, to be followed by a discussion with panelists Marin Alsop; Alex Laing; Anne Parsons, president and CEO, Detroit Symphony Orchestra; and Gayle S. Rose, chair, Memphis Symphony Orchestra.

Conference delegates will enjoy musical, social, and networking events, including an evening performance on June 10 by the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Music Director Marin Alsop, of Copland’s Appalachian Spring (performed with its original Martha Graham
choreography by the Baltimore School for the Arts Dancers), Thomas Adès’ *Polaris* (BSO Premiere), and Ravel’s *Daphnis and Chloe* Suite No. 2. The Conference will also feature a conducting masterclass Alsop on June 11, an all-delegate Tune-Up Party at the Columbus Center on June 10, and a social event for young professionals on June 9.

Plenary, Elective, and Pre-Conference sessions specifically covering inclusion and diversity include:

- Opening Plenary
- Closing Luncheon and Plenary
- Developing Your Diversity Plan
- Opening the Door to Diversity: Lessons Learned from 30 Years of Orchestra Fellowship Programs
- Resourcing Diversity Work
- Coffee Conversation with Marin Alsop
- Diversifying Your Board of Directors
- Engaging Diverse Audiences – Tactics, Challenges, Success
- Inclusive Leadership
- Music Unwound: Connecting Underrepresented Communities to Orchestras through the Humanities
- Education and Community Engagement (EDCE) Pre-Conference Convening
- Pre-Conference Diversity Forum: Increasing Participation by Musicians from Underrepresented Communities

Additional Conference Elective Sessions on June 10 and 11 will cover topics including community engagement, artistic programming, digital innovation, audience development, philanthropy, governance, orchestra sustainability, and recruiting and retaining staff. Highlights include:

- Leveraging Creative Connections, a panel with Music Alive composers and their partner orchestras on building new audiences and fortifying relationships
- Exemplary Community Service: Ford Musician Awardees in Action, featuring the five orchestra musicians who received new League Ford Musician Awards for Excellence in Community Service in a session on fostering community connections
- Music Education for All, a panel deconstructing ESSA, the new Every Student Succeeds Act.
- The Future of American Orchestras, featuring Amy Webb, founder and CEO, Future Today Institute

Other Pre-Conference sessions will cover the following topics:

- Foundations of Collective Bargaining
- Seminar for New Executive Directors
• Digital Strategy and Planning for Impact
• Getting Your Board on Board with Donor Development and Fundraising
• Optimizing Contributed Revenue: From Millennials to Boomers and Beyond

For a full Conference schedule, including online registration, hotel accommodations, and travel discounts, visit [http://americanorchestras.org/conference2016/](http://americanorchestras.org/conference2016/)

The League of American Orchestras leads, supports, and champions America’s orchestras and the vitality of the music they perform. Its diverse membership of more than 2,000 organizations and individuals across North America runs the gamut from world-renowned symphonies to community groups, from summer festivals to student and youth ensembles, from conservatories to libraries, from businesses serving orchestras to individuals who love symphonic music. The only national organization dedicated solely to the orchestral experience, the League is a nexus of knowledge and innovation, advocacy, and leadership advancement. Its conferences and events, award-winning Symphony magazine, website, and other publications inform people around the world about orchestral activity and developments. Founded in 1942 and chartered by Congress in 1962, the League links a national network of thousands of instrumentalists, conductors, managers and administrators, board members, volunteers, and business partners. Visit [americanorchestras.org](http://americanorchestras.org).

# # #