



League of American Orchestras
Rachelle Schlosser
Director of Media Relations and
Communications
rschlosser@americanorchestras.org
646 822 4027
@OrchLeague

Ford Motor Company Fund
Todd Nissen
Director of Communications
tnissen@ford.com
313 322 4898

NEWS

**League of American Orchestras to Honor
Five Orchestra Musicians with
Ford Musician Awards for Excellence in Community Service**

**Award Recipients to Participate in the
League's 72nd National Conference in Detroit, June 6-8**

New York, NY (May 18, 2017) – Five orchestra musicians will receive **Ford Musician Awards for Excellence in Community Service** from the League of American Orchestras for their important work in hospitals, correctional facilities, schools, museums, and more. The League program, made possible by Ford Motor Company Fund, celebrates orchestra musicians and the inspirational work they do in their communities.

The musicians will be presented with their awards at the League of American Orchestras' 72nd National Conference in Detroit, June 6-8, and will discuss their work at an elective session for Conference delegates.

The five musicians and their orchestras are:

- **[Mark Dix](#)**, viola, Phoenix Symphony (AZ):
Mind Over Music, B-Sharp Music Wellness, A W.O.N.D.E.R. Project Alzheimer's Initiative (educational and health and wellness programs)
- **[Michael Gordon](#)**, principal flute, Kansas City Symphony (MO):
Community Connections (free musical events in the community, including performances for the incarcerated at Lansing Correctional Facility via the Arts in Prison program)
- **[Diane McElfish Helle](#)**, violin, Grand Rapids Symphony (MI):
Music for Health Initiative (a program engaging the healthcare community and introducing live music into music therapy sessions for patients)

League of American Orchestras

- [Eunsoon Lee-Corliss](#), assistant principal violist, Knoxville Symphony Orchestra (TN):
Music and Wellness Program (live musical performances enhancing the healing process and benefiting patients, visitors, and staff in healthcare settings)
- [Peter Zlotnick](#), education manager/principal timpani, Greensboro Symphony Orchestra (NC):
Keep Kids in Tune education series, including Beginning Strings and OrKIDStra (music education and social programs which reach 50,000 children, including Head Start students, in four counties)

“These five musicians are national leaders in demonstrating the transformative power of music,” said Jesse Rosen, League of American Orchestras’ President and CEO. “We thank Ford Motor Company Fund for their support of this program, which recognizes the vital role of orchestra musicians in their communities -- both on and off the stage.”

“We’re proud to recognize these talented musicians and their generous outreach into the community to help improve people’s lives,” said Jim Vella, president, Ford Motor Company Fund. “Orchestras are an essential thread in the rich cultural fabric of our communities and a joyful musical experience for people in all walks of life.”

The musicians were selected by a panel of peer professionals through a competitive nomination process to receive the awards, which include a \$2,500 grant to each musician, as well as an additional \$2,500 grant to the musician’s home orchestra to support professional development focused on community service and engagement for musicians.

This work takes place in schools, hospitals, retirement homes, places of worship, and wherever people gather for civic, cultural, and social engagement. Those served may include low-income/at-risk populations, homebound elderly, immigrants, veterans, prisoners, and students of all ages, as well as members of the general public who may not otherwise have access to orchestral music.

The Ford Musician Awards for Excellence in Community Service mark the second year of the League’s second partnership with Ford Motor Company Fund, which was previously the title sponsor of Ford Made in America, the largest commissioning consortium in the country’s history. 2016 award recipients included 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 Precht, percussion, Baltimore Symphony Orchestra (OrchKids); and Beth Vandervennet, cello, Oakland Symphony (Music for Excellence Program [MUSE]).

[Information on the Conference session featuring the award recipients](#)

[Information on how to register for the League's National Conference](#)

About Ford Motor Company Fund and Community Services

Ford Motor Company Fund and Community Services – the philanthropic arm of Ford Motor Company – works with community and global partners to advance driving safety, education and community life. Ford Motor Company Fund has operated for more than 67 years with ongoing funding from Ford Motor Company. Ford Driving Skills for Life is free, interactive, hands-on safety training focused on skill development and driving techniques, while addressing inexperience, distractions and impaired driving. Innovation in education is encouraged through Ford Blue Oval Scholars, Ford Driving Dreams, Ford Next Generation Learning and other innovative programs that enhance high school learning and provide college scholarships and university grants. The Ford Volunteer Corps enlists more than 30,000 Ford employees and retirees each year to work on local projects that strengthen their communities and improve people's lives in more than 40 countries around the world. For more information, visit <http://community.ford.com>.

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.

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