

# Why We Serve

Orchestral boards of directors draw widely from the community, bringing professionals with varied backgrounds together in the service of volunteer governance. Here, five board members talk about why they serve, what skills and talents they bring to their work, how their investment in time or financial resources has advanced the orchestra's needs, and where their orchestra fits in their region's cultural ecosystem.

by Chester Lane

## Reveta Franklin Bowers On the board of: Los Angeles Philharmonic

"I've been passionate about music my whole life," says Reveta Franklin Bowers. "As a child I studied piano and cello, there were professional musicians in my family, I went to Los Angeles Philharmonic



Reveta Bowers

Los Angeles Philharmonic

concerts at the Shrine Auditorium and the Hollywood Bowl. And as an educator, I have always understood the power of music to connect students and children and parents and families in ways that are sometimes not possible in other mediums." Bowers recently stepped down, following a 40-year tenure, as Head of School at the Center for Early Education, an independent school in West Hollywood serving preschool through

sixth-grade students. She joined the Los Angeles Philharmonic's board of directors in January 2018, having been recruited by the chair of its Governance Committee—her friend Jane Eisner, whom she had known since their days together on the board of the Walt Disney Company in the 1990s.

Bowers brings to the Philharmonic board not only extensive background in school administration, but in identifying and launching the careers of other leaders: for sixteen years she was lead faculty member for a program of the National Association of Independent Schools called the New Heads Institute. "One of the things I taught was governance: the critically important need for executive directors to understand the partnership with the board, and the duality of leadership needed to advance the institution's mission," she says. Bowers has wide experience in board governance; in addition to her new duties at the LA Phil she currently chairs the Board of Councilors at USC's Rossier School of Education and the National Board of Directors at Com-

mon Sense Media, and serves as a director at numerous educational nonprofits as well as the for-profit videogame company Activision Blizzard.

"I came on the Los Angeles Philharmonic board at a time when the orchestra was thinking seriously about the place of music in a large urban center," she recalls. "After a series of meetings with Board Chair Jay Rasulo and our wonderful new CEO, Simon Woods, I was asked to chair a task force on board engagement. How can we continue to engage with board members who represent differ-

**"Board service is not a passive experience, it has to be activist. Each of us brings certain skills to the board, and we need to capitalize on them in the interest of serving the organization."**

—Reveta Bowers

ent generations, different backgrounds, different tastes? How do we engage in conversations not only about what the music should be, but what it could be in the future? As generations evolve and cultures expand, as access becomes in some instances less affordable, how do we bring this music into people's lives? Music can connect cultures, connect races and classes, connect age groups. How do we use it to bring communities together?"

Bowers, who now chairs the LA Phil's Board Engagement Committee, says that



League of American Orchestras

In July, Reveta Bowers co-led a session at the League of American Orchestras' Essentials of Orchestra Management seminar titled *The Twin Roles of Governance* at USC Thornton School of Music. Longtime orchestra executive Bruce Coppock, at left, co-led the session.

the orchestra's centennial season, being celebrated in 2018-19, means that there will be "an unusually high level of activity for the board this year. Board service is not a passive experience, it has to be activist. We need to put on our fiduciary hats, our strategic hats, our generative hats. Each of us brings certain skills to the board, and we need to capitalize on them in the interest of serving the organization."

**Debbie Hand**  
**On the board of:**  
**El Paso Symphony Orchestra**

Debbie Hand studied piano as a child growing up central Texas, but her appreciation for live orchestral music really began in Atlanta, where she went to pursue studies in medical technology following a bachelor's degree in microbiology and chemistry.



Debbie Hand

El Paso Symphony Orchestra

Both she and her husband were avid fans of the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra, she says, and "when we relocated to El Paso in 1994 one of the first questions we asked of people in the community was, 'Do you have a symphony here?'" The answer, of course, was "Well, yes, we do!"

Hand's active involvement in the El Paso Symphony Orchestra began not with the governing board but with the Symphony Guild, one of the orchestra's affiliated support groups. "At that time the guild was sponsoring a debutante ball," she says. "I got involved in the guild because my daughter was a debutante and the ball supported the symphony. Later I became president of the guild, and that gave me a place on the symphony's board of directors. After two years, the board asked me to stay on as a full member." Before long she was elected to a two-year term as board chair. Hand has been in and out of that post for the past eighteen years, and currently serves as secretary of the board's Executive Committee.

Her experience with other nonprofits

in El Paso—including service as president of the local YWCA, as a board member of the Center Against Sexual and Family Violence, and as a volunteer at Children's Hospital and the Center for Children, which assists foster children and teenage runaways—has taught Hand that it's "so much easier to make the 'ask' when it's children or the homeless; people will give to that. But the symphony is just as important to our city, because it supports our quality of life, it's important in our lives and communities. I really feel that music helps a child grow up." She's especially proud of El Paso Symphony's youth orchestra program, its in-school activities, and the El Paso Symphony-sponsored "Downtown Kidspalooza" that happens each spring, reaching thousands of kids

**"One of the big areas I'm concerned about is having a varied musical program that can appeal to different parts of the community."**

**—Debbie Hand**

with symphony concerts, dance performances, rides, and art exhibits.

As for the adult audience, Hand says, "One of the big areas I'm concerned about is having a varied musical program that can appeal to different parts of the community. There's so much more to the symphony than 'classical' music, which does not fill the seats or pay the bills. We've added pops concerts—usually we have three a year—and they've helped us to survive financially."

Hand's professional training led to work at the Centers for Disease Control and in research labs, and also to jobs in teaching and microbiology sales—people-oriented activities that resonate with her work at the symphony. "I really like being around people," she says. "It throws me into other directions. And in El Paso it's super easy to get involved in the community. People welcome you with open arms, for whatever your talents are. And that just makes you want to do more."

**Maurice Holloman**  
**On the board of:**  
**Greater Twin Cities Youth**  
**Symphonies**

As executive vice president of IMRIS, a Minnesota-based firm that designs and installs hybrid surgical suites for medical facilities, Maurice Holloman brings 30 years of business experience to his volunteer role at the Greater Twin Cities Youth Symphonies. How does Holloman's background in for-profit operations and management relate to his board responsibilities at one of the largest youth orchestra organizations in the U.S, a nonprofit institution with nine orchestras serving more than 800 students in the Minneapolis-St. Paul area?



Maurice Holloman

Greater Twin Cities Youth Symphonies

"It's about organizing, creating a strategic vision, getting people to align to that vision, and putting the plans in place to achieve it," he says. "It's also about financial

**"It's about organizing, creating a strategic vision, getting people to align to that vision, and putting the plans in place to achieve it. The big challenge is always fundraising."**

—Maurice Holloman

management. The big challenge is always fundraising, and then to have those funds support the mission of the organization." As Holloman sees it, the youth orchestra's mission is "using classical music as an avenue to teach children life skills. It's about teamwork, collaboration, perseverance, achievement. While the kids produce great music, they also have a lot of fun and get to travel. As they grow and develop and practice, they move up in the organization. In the top ensemble, the Symphony, they actually get to do some touring."

Though he's a self-described music lover with a special affinity for classical music, Holloman—also a board member of the Minnesota Orchestra—came to



El Paso Symphony Orchestra

El Paso Symphony Orchestra board member Debbie Hand, at far right, with, from left, Kacy Spivack and Arlene Carroll. All three have served as board chair at the orchestra.

serve on the Greater Twin Cities Youth Symphonies board two years ago not because of any experience as a performer, or even as a youth orchestra parent. "I was recruited specifically because my kids did not have that experience, or any affiliation with the organization," he says. "It was to bring a different perspective." As a member of the African American community, he represents a constituency that is underrepresented in youth orchestras, and in the orchestra world in general. "At this youth orchestra, we have a very directed and strategic effort to recruit people from diverse backgrounds," he says, "and we're looking at ways to do that—tuition assistance, scholarships, help with getting instruments, finding practice venues in different areas." And with his specific responsibilities on the Governance Committee at GTCYS, Holloman aims to achieve diversity not only in the student population, but on the board as well.

**Mary Carr Patton**  
**On the boards of:**  
**Jacksonville Symphony Orchestra (honorary director), League of American Orchestras, New York Pops**

Though she was raised in Jacksonville, Florida, Mary Carr Patton first heard her hometown Jacksonville Symphony Orchestra only as a young adult, "at the invitation of friends who thought I would appreciate the concert." Four years later, she says, "I was a passionate member of the Jacksonville Symphony Orchestra's board."



Mary Carr Patton

She threw herself into activities serving two critical institutional needs: securing a proper concert venue for the orchestra and selecting a new music director. "At the

time I came on the board,” she recalls, “the orchestra was performing in three different venues in downtown Jacksonville, none of them ideal, and it was rehearsing in yet another space. After several other options had not materialized, the board took the lead in raising money for the design, engineering, and construction of a dedicated concert hall within the city’s existing Civic Auditorium. I served on the Steering Committee for that capital campaign.” The resulting venue, Robert E. Jacoby Symphony Hall in the Times-Union Center for the Performing Arts, opened in 1997 and has been the orchestra’s home ever since. Equally dedicated to the organization’s musical side, Patton served on the Music Director Search Committee that ultimately led to the appointment of Fabio Mechetti as artistic leader beginning in 1999. “I think the committee had twelve or fourteen members; four were musicians, the rest were board members,” she recalls.

“In each of these jobs, I enjoyed meeting so many people who were giving their

**“I understand the importance of continuing the canon of classical music, not allowing it to become an artifact of the past.”**

—Mary Carr Patton

time, talent, and treasure to the organization, and the many bright, talented musicians who live in that world. When Skitch Henderson came to Jacksonville to guest conduct, it happened that I was sponsoring the JSO’s pops series. Skitch asked if he could have lunch with the sponsor; it was the beginning of a warm and wonderful friendship. And after I bought an apartment in New York City, he invited me to serve on the board of his own orchestra, the New York Pops. When Skitch passed away some five years later, I ended up chairing the Search Committee that resulted in bringing in Steven Reineke as music director of the New York Pops. But the key to that search was the tremendous leadership of James Johnson: as the orchestra’s executive director he was a



Greater Twin Cities Youth Symphonies

Maurice Holloman, board member of Greater Twin Cities Youth Symphonies, with a student in the organization’s El Sistema-inspired Harmony program. Harmony students gave board members mini-lessons on the violin during a GTCYS board meeting.

terrific thought partner, and supportive of me in every possible way.”

Six years ago Patton was asked to take the lead once again, in finding a successor to Mechetti at the Jacksonville Symphony. “I agreed to chair the Search Committee with the understanding that there would be four musicians, three active board members, one young member of the Jacksonville community not involved in the symphony, and myself. We had many energetic discussions, brought various viewpoints to light, and after 28 months we unanimously recommended Courtney

Lewis.” He began his tenure in 2014.

Patton, now an honorary member of the JSO board as she continues to serve at the New York Pops, has recently taken on a new role in the cultural life of Jacksonville: as sponsor of a new artistic post at the orchestra called the Mary Carr Patton Composer-in-Residence. “I understand the importance of continuing the canon of classical music, not allowing it to become an artifact of the past,” she says. “Courtney Lewis told me he was looking for a resident composer, and I felt this was a vital thing for the orchestra. When

## League Resources for Board Members

The League of American Orchestras’ online Noteboom Governance Center offers a comprehensive range of support, strategies, and programs designed to strengthen governance practice in orchestras. Visit [www.americanorchestras.org/noteboom](http://www.americanorchestras.org/noteboom) for governance information and resources including the League’s Diversity and Inclusion Resource Center, case studies, guidelines, the *Music Director Search Handbook*, and more. Be sure to check out *Orchestra Boardroom*, the League’s quarterly newsletter filled with news, insights, best practices, and essays about nonprofit governance—essential reading for everyone on an orchestra board. If you’re serving on the board of an orchestra that is a member of the League, contact [member@americanorchestras.org](mailto:member@americanorchestras.org) if you didn’t receive the August 2018 issue of *Orchestra Boardroom*.

# Thank you to everyone who helped make our 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual *League Giving Day* a success.

We gratefully acknowledge the generosity of the following donors, who made contributions on *League Giving Day*:

Burton Z. Alter	Ms. Vanessa A. Gardner	Yvonne Marcuse	David & Julie Scott
Amaranth Foundation	Andrew Giacobone	Leslie Marks	Pratichi Shah
Tiffany Ammerman	Gary Ginstling & Marta Lederer	Alan Mason	Elizabeth Shribman
Alberta Arthurs	Marian A. Godfrey	Ed Matthew	Mrs. Priscilla Slaughter
Caleb Bailey & Sara Baker-Bailey	Stanley M. & Luella G. Goldberg Family Foundation	Mattlin Foundation	Mr. David Snead
Megen Balda	William A. Goldstein	Maybell McCann	David R. Snyder
Elizabeth Baroody	Raul Gomez	Anthony McGill	Peggy Springer
David Beauchesne	Caroline Greenberg	Robert & Heather McGrath	Natalia Staneva, in honor of Jesse Rosen
Christopher Bell	Daniel B. Grossman	Debbie McKinney	Lourdes Starr-Demers
Aubrey & Ryan Bergauer	Craig Hall	D'Ante McNeal	Barrie Steinberg
Dr. Susan B. Betzer	Debbie Halye	Paul Meecham	Dr. Amanda Stringer
Beth Boleyn	Jennifer Harrell	Jo Frances Meyer	J. Annette Szulc
Leni Boorstin	Byron Harrison	Jack Millman	Manley Thaler, Thaler/Howell Foundation, Inc.
Steven Brosvik	Scott Harrison & Angela Detlor	Jean H. Moffitt	Marcia H. Thalheimer
Sylvia J. Brush	Iris A. Harvie	Jennifer Mondie	Matt Thueson
Sue Buck	Betsy Hatton	Bonnie Monhart	Jack C. Tomascak
Benjamin Cadwallader	Jennifer Hicks	Alfred P. Moore	Shirley & Carl Topilow
Robert Campbell	Yoo-Jin Hong	Amos Moore, Jr.	Martin Ungar
Rosina Cannizzaro	Mary Kay Howard	Catherine & Peter Moye	Samara Ungar
Roberta Carpenter	Benjamin Hoyer	Sara Mummey	Jacqueline Kerrod & Marc Uys
Elaine C. Carroll	Inner City Youth Orchestra of Los Angeles	Anne Catherine Murray	Alan D. & Jan Valentine
Elaine Cederquist-Stolpe	James M. Johnson	Nailah Muttalib	Penny & John Van Horn
David Chambers & Alex Steffler	Alan & Karen Jordan	Robert Naparstek	Jeffery R. Verney
Judy Christl	Emma (Murley) Kail	Joan Katz Napoli	Charlie Wade
Amy Chung	Carol Fuchs Kassoy	Mark Neville	Robert Wagner
Melanie Clarke	Alyce Katayama	Kim C. Noltemy	Kelly Waltrip
Jeff Collier	Sarah E. Kelly	Heather Noonan	Jason Bennett Ward
Caitlin Daly	Sarah E. Kelly	Lowell & Sonja Noteboom	James Weidner
Gloria dePasquale	Sarah E. Kelly	Lorcan O'Connor	Sandra Weingarten
Pamella Der	Carolyn Keurajian	Becky & Mark Odland	Kathleen Weir Vale
Carol Dunevant	Elizabeth M. Koester	Mary Palmer	Linda & Craig Weisbruch
Daniel & David Els-Piercey	Eska Koester	Steve Parrish	Jeffery D. Williams
Scott Faulkner & Andrea Lenz	Arthur & Annelies Kull	Anne Parsons & Donald Dietz	Christopher Wingert
Sandy Feldman	Alex Laing	Mary Carr Patton	Sonja Winkler
Leslie Fink	Jere Lantz	Raymond & Tresa Radermacher	Theodore Wiprud
David Fisk	Mark Larsen	Patricia A. Richards	Elizabeth Wise
Drs. Aaron & Cristina Stanescu Flagg	Joann Leatherby	Jesse Rosen	Bernhard W. Witter
Rachel Ford	Andrew Leeson	Peter Rubardt	Simon Woods & Karin Brookes
Bridget Fraser	Tania Leon	Phil & Sara Salsbury	Victoria Young
Catherine French	Marilyn A. Leprich	Rachel Salter	Herman Zwirn
	Kelly G. Levenstein	Robert S. Sandla	Anonymous (2)
	Dr. Hugh W. Long	Mrs. Cynthia Sargent	
	Ginny Lundquist	Michael & Jeanne Schmitz	
	Elisabeth Madeja	Susan M. Schwartz	

Thank you for supporting the League of American Orchestras' commitment to advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion within the orchestral field.

A special thanks to our **League Giving Day Ambassadors** who aided these efforts:

Aubrey Bergauer • Caroline Greenberg • Marian Godfrey • Vijay Gupta • Scott Harrison • Erin Horan • Jennifer Koh  
Yo-Yo Ma • Leslie Marks • Jonathan Martin • Anthony McGill • Alfred (Fred) P. Moore • Sara Mummey • Heather Noonan  
Tresa Radermacher • Andrea Reinkemeyer • Jesse Rosen • Daniel Bernard Roumain • Helen Shaffer • Pratichi Shah  
Samara Ungar • Dina-Marie Weineck • Sonja Winkler



Jacksonville Symphony

Mary Carr Patton, an honorary director of the Jacksonville Symphony's board, shares a moment with Music Director Courtney Lewis (center) and John Shaw. Patton also serves on the boards of the New York Pops and the League of American Orchestras.

he identified the New Orleans-born composer and pianist Courtney Bryan, and commissioned her to write a piece for our 2018-19 season reflecting the many bridges and divides and connections in our diverse community, I immediately offered to sponsor the position."

**Haruki Toyama**  
**On the board of:**  
**Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra**

Haruki Toyama, a resident of Milwaukee and a portfolio manager/financial analyst at Madison Investment Advisors in Madison, Wisconsin, says that when he was invited to join the Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra board some eight years ago, it was "hard to say no." He and his wife, Amy Blair, were both avid symphonygoers, and Toyama—who had studied piano as a child and gone on to Brown University to pursue a double major in music theory and economics—was keenly aware of both the power of



Haruki Toyama



Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra

Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra board member Haruki Toyama, center, with symphony supporter Elizabeth Meyer and, at right, Milwaukee Symphony cellist Peter Szczepanek.

music and the financial challenges facing nonprofit organizations. "Symphonies and other performing arts groups need a lot of help with things like fundraising, changing their business model, attracting younger audiences," he says. "The Milwaukee Symphony is such a great orchestra. So I thought I'd love to do my part. This was something I could do for the community."

**"I have a full-time job, but I think my younger daughter thinks I work for the symphony."**  
**—Haruki Toyama**

Toyama serves on the board's Finance Committee, and he chairs the Steering Committee overseeing a major project: the purchase and renovation of downtown Milwaukee's Warner Grand Theatre, an historic Art Deco movie palace that has lain dormant for two decades. The \$139 million project will convert the theater into a concert hall for the Milwaukee Symphony, with rehearsal and gathering spaces in an adjoining office building. "We have a large fundraising campaign to go along with that and with the orchestra's endowment," says Toyama. "What we're trying to do is secure the future of the orchestra." The new facility is scheduled to replace Uihlein Hall as the MSO's principal venue starting in the 2020-21 season.

The Milwaukee Symphony's mission, he says, is to "bring great art to the community, sustain and enrich everyone's lives, from the youngest to the eldest. It's really a shame what's happening to arts and music education in this country. I have two girls"—his fourteen-year-old plays violin, the ten-year-old has started on trumpet—"and I can see it in the local schools, where the amount of time and resources devoted to the arts, and certainly music education, has been cut and cut over the years. But the Milwaukee Symphony has this program called ACE that serves literally tens of thousands of kids each year. Before we bring them to the hall for a concert, our musicians go into a whole bunch of schools and work with teachers throughout the school year, do multiple classes based on the music the kids are going to hear. It's a really great program."

Toyama says the amount of time he commits to board activities at the MSO "goes up and down quite a bit. Because I chair the Steering Committee for our hall project, it could be ten to twenty hours a week. I have a full-time job at Madison Investment Advisors, but I think my younger daughter thinks I work for the symphony." **S**

CHESTER LANE is a classical music journalist, director of communications for Sciolino Artist Management, board president of New York City's Canterbury Choral Society, and the longtime former senior editor of *Symphony*.