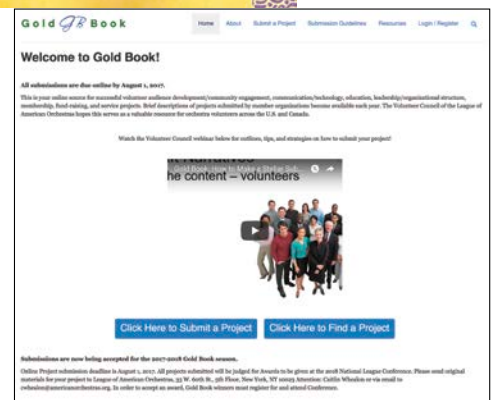
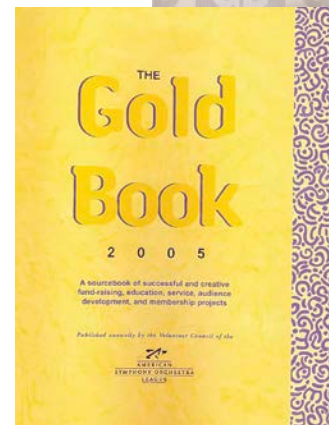
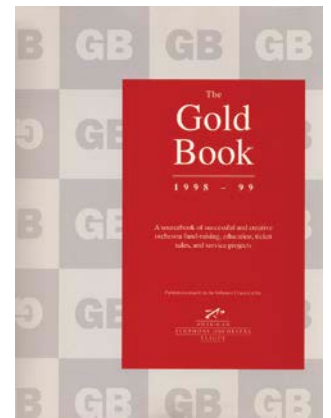




# Unsung Heroes

As the League of American Orchestras marks its 75th anniversary this season, we’re sharing important parts of our history. Here, we celebrate the myriad contributions of orchestra volunteers, who exercise their passion for classical music and formidable skills to provide vital support. The League formally recognized their contributions in 1962, when it awarded the Gold Baton to “the Women’s Associations of Symphony Orchestras in the in the United States and Canada, for their extensive work in support of symphony orchestras.” One measure of America’s changing social mores: in 1980, the League’s own Women’s Council, which brought together volunteers from orchestras nationwide, was rebranded as the gender-neutral Volunteer Council. In 2013, the League bestowed a Gold Baton to the Volunteer Council for “50 years of strengthening orchestras by championing the invaluable work of America’s orchestra volunteers.”

Below: One of the Volunteer Council’s best-known projects is the *Gold Book*, created in 1976 to highlight volunteer organizations’ activities and provide innovative examples for other volunteer groups. After decades as a print publication, in 2005 the *Gold Book* moved online to <http://www.goldbookonline.org>, making this valuable resource more accessible—and free of charge.



Volunteers have long played central roles at the League’s National Conference. Clockwise from above: displays at the 1970 Conference showcase outstanding volunteer projects at orchestras across the country; at the 1978 Conference in Chicago, composer Aaron Copland and Sonia Wilson, vice president of the Volunteer Council; at the 1981 Conference in Dallas, Juanita Jackson holds a certificate of excellence from the Volunteer Council recognizing the Albany Symphony Orchestra’s “Signature Quilt” project.