

Christina Littlejohn

CEO, Arkansas Symphony Orchestra



Christina Littlejohn is a transformational leader whose professional career includes starting and building the Mobile Symphony (AL), launching The Cleveland Orchestra's Miami Residency, and navigating the Arkansas Symphony Orchestra from near bankruptcy in 2009 to an artistically and financially healthy orchestra that puts service to its state first. The Arkansas Symphony is in the final stages of an \$11.75M capital campaign to build the ASO Stella Boyle Smith Music Center, a radically welcoming hub of musical activity for all Arkansans. During the Pandemic, the ASO reached over a million people in over thirty countries with its "Bedtime with Bach" series, kept all full-time musicians and staff employed, and continued its education programs and even expanded them to serve more students across the state. Christina was recently recognized by the state with the 2023 Governor's Arts Award for Community Development.

Christina believes strongly that creating a culture of listening, strategic risk taking, fun, and professional development is critical to retaining staff so you can change the world and reach your aspirations. Christina has successfully led professional orchestras for over 25 years and earned her Associate Certified Coach (ACC) certificate through the International Coaching Federation and National Arts Strategies in 2021 to better coach professional arts administrators at all stages of their career. A cellist, she earned a BA from Furman University and an MBA and MA from the University of Cincinnati/Cincinnati Conservatory of Music. She has enjoyed leadership development training at the business schools of Stanford University, University of Michigan and Harvard through National Arts Strategies.

In 2017, she gave a TedX talk titled "Transform a Symphony, Change a Community," and is a frequent speaker on the topics of Governance and Leading through Change.

(Photo courtesy of Christina Littlejohn)