



League
of American
Orchestras

Impact Report 2023



Craig T. Matthew, Matthew Imaging

President's Message

Dear Friends,

We are pleased to share our 2023 Impact Report highlighting many areas of the League's work in support of orchestras — all made possible through your generosity. Your support fuels our mission “to champion the vitality of music and the orchestral experience, support the orchestra community, and lead change boldly.”

*The League's new **Vision, Mission, and Commitments** reflect the organization's dual role as a membership association supporting the field and as a leadership organization advocating for continuous evolution. Our commitment to the work of equity, diversity, and inclusion continues to flow through everything we do, reflecting its central importance to justice, to creativity, and to orchestras' long-term ability to realize their missions in their communities.*

We are inspired by the creativity taking place in orchestras around the country and appreciate the opportunity to serve nearly 650 member orchestras and their dedicated staff, musicians, board members, volunteers, and all who work to make the music happen. Thank you for being part of the League's philanthropic community!

With gratitude,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Simon". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Simon Woods
President & CEO

Advocacy

The League partnered with the Small Business Administration to guide orchestras through completion of the Shuttered Venue Operators Grant program; 340 orchestras in 48 states received more than \$267,000,000 in essential COVID-19 relief and continue to receive guidance from the League on **complete access to all forms of COVID-19 relief**.

The League also led an unprecedented dialogue across the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, State Department, Immigration Services, Customs and Border Protection, and arts stakeholders to advance urgent improvements to the **U.S. artist visa process**, and helped orchestras obtain visas through our direct assistance and dedicated website, www.artistsfromabroad.org. Advocacy with national partners resulted in a **message from the U.S. Congress to the U.S. Department of Education**, calling for immediate action to support equitable access to arts education for students nationwide. Orchestras have tapped the League's **Music Education Advocacy tools** to support action in their own communities.

In May 2023, the League launched the **Know Your Bow campaign**, a collaboration with the American Federation of Musicians, bow makers associations, and global music partners to support musicians' instruments and the sustainability of endangered species. We represented musical instrument stakeholders in critical conversations about protected species at two meetings of global participants in the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) taking place in Geneva, Switzerland.



Map displays the 340 orchestras in 48 states that have collectively received more than \$267,000,000 in Shuttered Venue Operators Grants



Heather Noonan, the League's Vice President for Advocacy, represented American orchestras at the plants committee meeting of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) taking place in Geneva, Switzerland.



Byron Stripling's speech at the Closing Luncheon and Plenary was a Conference highlight.

Photo: Jason Cohn

Conference 2023

Nearly 1,100 delegates representing 248 orchestras, arts organizations, and businesses from 46 states gathered in Pittsburgh, June 14-16 for the League's **2023 National Conference**. The Conference theme was "building bridges" toward a sustainable future for orchestras that is both artistically creative and reflective of our communities. Together, attendees learned about effective business practices, healthy organizational cultures, orchestra demographic trends, and the current philanthropic environment, and discussed how to redefine the art form's relevance, especially for the next generation.

Among the highlights were performances by the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, Pittsburgh Youth Symphony Orchestra, and Three Rivers Young Peoples Orchestras, as well as an inspiring **Closing Session keynote speech** by Byron Stripling, Principal Pops Conductor, Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, who talked about the power of music to transform lives and communities. The League's highest honor, the Gold Baton Award, was presented to Deborah Borda, President and CEO of the New York Philharmonic, in recognition of her distinguished service to America's orchestras.



“Closing remarks by Byron Stripling were amazing. His words, his delivery, and the power of his humanity.”

— 2023 Conference Delegate





The Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, soloist María Dueñas, and conductor Manfred Honeck performed on the first evening of the League's Conference, followed by the PSO-hosted Tune-Up party for all delegates.

Photo: Jason Cohn



Deborah Borda received the Gold Baton Award, the League's highest honor, at Conference.

Photo credit: Jason Cohn

League Alumni Network

The **League Alumni Network** hosted two virtual and four in-person gatherings in 2023, bringing together over 160 alumni spanning five decades of League leadership programs. Alumni gathered twice in New York City where they attended a New York Philharmonic concert and reception at The Juilliard School; convened during the League's National Conference in Pittsburgh; and enjoyed a group dinner and concert of the San Francisco Symphony. These convenings provided valuable opportunities for alumni to share stories, network, and collaborate with one another both within and beyond the orchestra field.

League
Alumni Network



Alumni reception at The Juilliard School, July 2023.

Juan Patino Photography



Composers participating in the Virginia B. Toulmin Foundation Orchestral Commissions Program (clockwise from top left): Brittany J. Green; Moni (Jasmine) Guo; Karena Ingram; Meilina Tsui; Marina López; Chelsea Komschlies

Photos courtesy of the composers

Right: Anna Clyne and Yannick Nézet-Séguin; Clyne's League commission, "This Moment," was premiered by The Philadelphia Orchestra.

Photo courtesy of The Philadelphia Orchestra

Inclusive Stages

The League launched the new **Inclusive Stages** program, a major national initiative to increase the racial diversity of musicians in American orchestras. In total, 64 orchestras are participating in the program, representing the full range of budget sizes and geographic regions. A key component of Inclusive Stages is a National Coalition comprised of 28 orchestras, all of whom are actively working on milestone goals to increase racial representation of musicians onstage. There are also three separate research projects: the **Inclusion Index**, a new tool to allow orchestras to assess and benchmark their organizational cultures; the **Audition Applicant Demographics Survey**, which will provide data on a national basis about the musician applicant pool; and the Audition and Tenure Practices Survey, which will enable the field to better understand current processes and their prevalence.

Virginia B. Toulmin Foundation Orchestral Commissions Program

In December 2023, the **Virginia B. Toulmin Foundation Orchestral Commissions Program** launched a second 30-orchestra consortium that will premiere new works by 6 women composers beginning in the 2024-25 season and continuing the following year. Since its inception in 2014, the Virginia B. Toulmin Foundation Orchestral Commissions Program has shown impressive results in increasing the number of new works and repeat performances by women composers: 28 composers have received commissions, 21 premieres have been completed, and many of the composers have received additional commissions and career opportunities as a direct result of participating in the program.



“It is important for the next generation of composers to see women’s music being performed more widely and for a greater visibility. I’m grateful to be a part of this period of positive change, and to be a part of this program.”

— Anna Clyne, composer in the first round of Toulmin consortium commissions.

Anne Parsons Leadership Program

The **Anne Parsons Leadership Program** launched its inaugural cohort of six women and nonbinary orchestra professionals and aims to ultimately improve gender equity in executive orchestra leadership. “Through working with this first cohort of talented, intellectually curious, and dedicated women, it is clear to me that this program will transform our industry and ensure gender balance on the CEO level to enable our field to grow and thrive in the 21st century.” —Kim Noltemy, President and CEO, Dallas Symphony Orchestra and mentor, Anne Parsons Leadership Program

Student Leadership Council

The League announced its first ever **Student Leadership Council** in November 2023 to support the growth of student engagement within the orchestral field. These students are bringing their voices to the League’s strategic thinking, developing content for the League’s 2024 National Conference and student constituency programming, and creating pathways for a new generation of orchestra professionals.

League Insights

A partnership with TRG Arts and its Arts & Culture Benchmark provided access to a large set of real-time orchestra patron data, including ticket sales, donation revenue, and patron demographics. **League Insights** on the aggregated data are helping the field understand current patron behavior and enabling orchestra leaders to craft more strategic and engaging customer outreach.

Webinars

Eight live webinars in 2023 contributed to an ever-growing library of **on-demand offerings** that serve as important pathways for the League to deliver knowledge and effective practices to individuals in all roles at orchestras nationwide. The two most popular webinars were centered around equity, diversity, and inclusion, with more than 300 registrants each. In total, more than 1,000 unique individuals from 351 orchestras and 64 arts organizations and businesses participated in 2023 webinars, with 22% participating in multiple webinars. Ninety-five percent of survey respondents plan to apply concepts and practices learned.

Catalyst Guide on Audience Diversification

The League produced the **Catalyst Guide on Audience Diversification**, highlighting the endeavors of 15 member orchestras that are pioneering innovative approaches to address the unique needs of their communities. This guide presents actionable strategies for success, insights into overcoming challenges, and case studies for the benefit of the entire field. The guide is seeing extraordinary engagement so far, with 4,000 views within the first two weeks following its launch and 400 registrants for an accompanying webinar.



The Anne Parsons Leadership Program cohort and mentors. Catherine Beeson, Assistant Principal Viola, Colorado Symphony; Kathryn Ginsburg, General Manager, Detroit Symphony Orchestra; Emma Kail, Executive Director, Grand Teton Music Festival; Kate Kammeyer, former Executive Director, Berkeley Symphony; Felecia Tchen Kanney, Vice President of Communications, Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra; Pamela Calero Wardell, Senior Director of Development, Special and Capital Campaigns, Jacksonville Symphony; mentors Jennifer Barlament, Executive Director, Atlanta Symphony Orchestra; Marie-Hélène Bernard, President and CEO, St. Louis Symphony Orchestra; Kim Noltemy, President and CEO, Dallas Symphony Orchestra; Melia Tourangeau, President and CEO, Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra.

Photo: Jason Cohn



Essentials of Orchestra Management Class of 2023

Essentials of Orchestra Management: the League's premier leadership development program

Class of 2023:

- 36 participants from 19 states, Canada, and Denmark
- 30+ faculty from across the orchestra field and beyond
- 15 scholarship recipients
- 12 sessions on artistic planning and leadership; development, finance, and strategic planning; equity, diversity, and inclusion; education and community engagement; human resources and organizational culture; leadership and governance; advocacy, marketing, and communications; and orchestra operations.
- 3 mentoring sessions
- 20% career advancement since summer program participation

Symphony

Symphony, the League's signature digital and print publication, featured more than 750 breaking news briefs and reports on the critical issues, trends, people, and developments of the orchestra world. More than two dozen major articles took readers behind the scenes, examined how orchestras are adapting to contemporary expectations, and surveyed the strategies that are helping orchestras meet the challenges of the 21st century. Since launching in late 2022, the magazine's new website symphony.org receives an average of 25,000 views per month (compared to the League's previous news site, The Hub, which received 14,000 views per month). The most widely viewed articles include **"Forward Thinking: Rethinking Orchestra Governance"** by League President and CEO Simon Woods and **"Change Agents"** by Naveen Kumar on the new leaders in equity, diversity, and inclusion.



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**Thank you for supporting the
League of American Orchestras.**

Your investment in 2023 created impact for the League, for more than 650 member orchestras, and for countless musicians, conductors, composers, staff, board members, volunteers, and individuals who work to bring orchestral music to communities across the country.