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## Six Participants Selected for League of American Orchestras' Anne Parsons Leadership Program

New York, NY (June 5, 2025) – Six orchestra professionals from across the country will participate in the League of American Orchestras' **Anne Parsons Leadership Program**, the League has announced. Honoring the late Anne Parsons, the transformative orchestra field leader and mentor, the program is designed to build greater gender diversity in leadership roles at the country's 50 largest-budget orchestras. This is the program's second cohort since its launch in 2023.

"The Anne Parsons Leadership Program provides a golden opportunity for professionals with leadership potential to learn from established field leaders while developing their own support network of peers," said League of American Orchestras President and CEO, Simon Woods. "I'm so grateful to the mentors for sharing their expertise, as Anne always did, and I can't wait to see where these talented professionals' careers take them."

The new cohort will be:

**Rebecca Cain**, Vice President of Operations, Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra

**Felice Doynov**, Associate Dean of Visiting Faculty and Orchestra, New World Symphony, America's Orchestral Academy

**Mitsuko Flynn**, Chief Operating and Impact Officer, Charleston Symphony

**Emily Fritz-Endres**, Executive Director, Albany Symphony

**Amy Heald**, Executive Director, The Reno Chamber Orchestra

**Jessica Ruiz**, Director, KD SCHMID US

Six orchestra leaders will serve as mentors: **Jennifer Barlament**, Executive Director, Atlanta Symphony Orchestra; **Marie-Hélène Bernard**, President and CEO, St. Louis Symphony Orchestra; **Anna Kuwabara**, Executive and Arts Education Consultant; **Kim Noltemy**, President & Chief Executive Officer, Los Angeles Philharmonic; **Melia Tourangeau**, President & CEO, Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra; and **Dr. Andrea Warren**, President & CEO, Virginia Symphony Orchestra.

## Program Activities

Participants will meet in person at the League's National Conference in Salt Lake City, June 11-13, 2025, and take part in online leadership training and coaching sessions, bimonthly conversations with mentors, and quarterly Leadership Forums. The cohort will also meet virtually as a group throughout the year to learn from each other, share resources, and build community.

## About the Anne Parsons Leadership Program

The Anne Parsons Leadership Program is designed to build greater gender diversity in leadership roles in the country's 50 largest-budget orchestras: 70% of larger orchestras currently have men as executive directors. Research shows that as well as creating fair opportunities for all, gender diversity at senior levels in organizations improves decision-making and performance, strengthens organizational culture, and enhances creativity. The program aims to advance a new generation of candidates with the capacity to take on C-suite roles in major orchestras as well as building a culture of mentorship, coaching, and support across the orchestra field. Participation in the program is free of charge.

For the June 2025-to June 2026 program, six participants have been selected based on their demonstrated experience, vision for the field, and commitment to serving American orchestras. Eligible candidates had either a minimum of five years of professional experience in the orchestra field or were currently in an executive leadership role in orchestras or comparable music organizations, including music festivals and arts organizations.

Each participant will receive a travel stipend and free registration to the League's National Conference in 2025, as well as a gratis, one-year professional membership to the League of American Orchestras.

### **About Anne Parsons**

**Anne Parsons** (1957-2022) was a transformational mentor and leader, lost too soon after fighting a courageous battle with cancer. Parsons served as President and Chief Executive Officer of the Detroit Symphony Orchestra for seventeen years. Following her appointment at the DSO in 2004, she instilled a culture of resilience and financial stability and grew the audience and donor base, all while successfully navigating local and national economic downturns and a global pandemic. Under her leadership, the DSO posted nine consecutive operating surpluses from 2013 to 2021. Parsons was also responsible for bringing two new music directors to Detroit—Leonard Slatkin in 2007 and Jader Bignamini in 2020—and returning the orchestra to national and international prominence through touring and webcasts.

Parsons' vision of transforming the DSO into the “most accessible orchestra on the planet” led to an increased focus on serving audiences through innovative new programs. At the same time, her emphasis on reaching Detroiters and DSO fans across the region offered unique ways to connect with the organization, including chamber music programs, senior engagement concerts, music therapy partnerships, in-school appearances, and full orchestra performances in metro Detroit neighborhoods.

Prior to joining the DSO, Parsons served in management positions for a variety of major arts organizations, including New York City Ballet, the Hollywood Bowl in Los Angeles, the Boston Symphony Orchestra, and the National Symphony Orchestra in Washington, D.C. She received a Bachelor of Arts degree from Smith College in Massachusetts. Post-graduation, Parsons was among the first class of the League's Orchestra Management Fellowship Program.

Anne Parsons was named an Emeritus Director of the League of American Orchestras as well as President Emeritus of the Detroit Symphony Orchestra.

The **League of American Orchestras** champions the vitality of music and the orchestral experience, supports the orchestra community, and leads change boldly. The only national organization dedicated to orchestras and their communities, the League supports the field through advocacy, research, convenings, leadership development, artistic programs, and grants. Founded in 1942 and chartered by Congress in 1962, the League includes nearly 25,000 musicians, conductors, orchestra staff, board members, volunteers, and business partners working within our membership of 1600 world-renowned orchestras, community groups, summer festivals, student and youth ensembles, conservatories and libraries, businesses serving orchestras, and individuals who love symphonic music. Visit [americanorchestras.org](https://americanorchestras.org).