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36 Orchestra and Arts Professionals to Participate in League of American Orchestras' Essentials of Orchestra Management Program at The Juilliard School

League's Flagship Professional Development Program Now in 26th Year

New York, NY (June 17, 2026) – Thirty-six orchestra and arts professionals will participate in ***Essentials of Orchestra Management***, the League of American Orchestras' premier leadership development program. The ten-day program, running from July 21-30, 2026, is presented in collaboration with Juilliard Extension and will take place in New York at Juilliard's campus at Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts.

America's flagship program for early- and mid-career orchestra and arts professionals, *Essentials of Orchestra Management* offers a pathway to future leadership and career success; since its inception in 2000, more than 600 individuals have participated in the program. Now in its 26th year, *Essentials* connects, inspires, and challenges tomorrow's leaders, providing them with the knowledge they need to enhance their careers.

"The orchestra field's future depends on developing leaders who are equipped not just with management skills, but with the confidence to spark change in their organizations," said League of American Orchestras' President and CEO Simon Woods. "Essentials of Orchestra Management brings together and strengthens exactly those kinds of leaders: ones with drive and determination, diverse perspectives, and a genuine commitment to their orchestras and communities. Spending ten days with them, learning alongside them, is something I look forward to every year."

Topics will include artistic planning and leadership; development, finance, and strategic planning; equity, diversity, and inclusion; education and community engagement; human resources and organizational culture; general management and governance; media, marketing, and communications; orchestra operations; negotiations; and the future of orchestras. The program also includes two Festival Orchestra of Lincoln Center concerts

and a tour of David Geffen Hall, as well as peer discussions, mentoring opportunities, and social events.

This year's program is taught and directed by a faculty comprised of expert leaders of the orchestra field and beyond, including:

Faculty Leadership:

Scott Faulkner (Faculty Director), Principal Bassist, Reno Philharmonic and Reno Chamber Orchestra; Former Executive Director, Reno Chamber Orchestra; Director, League Alumni Network

Laura Reynolds, Vice President, Impact and Innovation, San Diego Symphony

John McCann, Founder and President, Partners in Performance

League Leadership:

Simon Woods, President and CEO

Caen Thomason-Redus, Vice President, Inclusion and Learning

David Styers, Director, Learning and Leadership Programs

Maria Martini, Meetings Manager

Juilliard Leadership:

John-Morgan Bush, Dean of Juilliard Extension, The Juilliard School

Guest Faculty to include:

Lisa Brown Alexander, Chief Executive Officer, LBA Holdings, and Founder, Nonprofit HR

Jennifer Barlament, Executive Director, Atlanta Symphony Orchestra

Michelle Miller Burns, President and CEO, Dallas Symphony Orchestra

Vince Ford, Senior Vice President, Digital Strategy and Innovation, Curtis Institute of Music

Mieko Hatano, Chief Executive Officer, Oakland Symphony

Christopher Harrington, President and CEO, Ordway Center for the Performing Arts

Christina Littlejohn, Chief Executive Officer, Arkansas Symphony Orchestra

Katie McGuinness, Chief Artistic Officer, Dallas Symphony Orchestra

Denise McGovern, former Vice President of Communications and Media, Dallas Symphony Orchestra

Anwar Nasir, Executive Director, Louisiana Philharmonic Orchestra

Heather Noonan, Vice President, Advocacy, League of American Orchestras

Jessica Phillips, Musician, Metropolitan Opera

Faith Raiguel, Former CFO, LA Opera; Board Member, Ojai Music Festival; Board Member, Silk Road

Paul Scarbrough, Principal, Akustiks, LLC

Jessica Schmidt, Principal Consultant, Orchestrate Inclusion

Alexa Smith, Associate Artistic Director, The Public Theater

Michelle Zwi, Director of Orchestra Operations and Touring, Philadelphia Orchestra

The 2026 *Essentials of Orchestra Management* cohort is comprised of professionals working at American and international orchestras, conservatories, and arts organizations, as well as career-changers interested in exploring orchestra management positions.

Participants include:

Andrew Angelos, Operations and Personnel Manager, Third Horn, Spokane Symphony

Hannah Beaudry, Director of Institutional Partnerships, The Northeastern Pennsylvania Philharmonic

Tamara Calder, Artist Relations Coordinator, San Francisco Symphony

Brianna Cantwell, Executive Director, Piedmont Wind Symphony

Amanda Chipchase, Director of Operations, Grand Junction Symphony Orchestra

Mariel Christiana, Corporate and Foundation Relations Manager, Hartford Symphony Orchestra

Richard Chwastiak, Director, Cape Symphony Presents

David Clemmer, Conductor, Author, and Arts Entrepreneur; Host, CommonTime Podcast

Marian Gutierrez Curiel, Community Orchestra Manager and Manager of Community Engagement, BRAVO Youth Orchestras, and Conductor, Metropolitan Youth Symphony

Linda Insook Diaz, Programming and Venue Operations Executive Assistant, Los Angeles Philharmonic

Kate Dreyfuss, Director of Communications, New Music USA

Margaret Eronimous, Director of Artistic Operations, The Knights

Peter Ferretti, Executive Director, Salisbury Symphony Orchestra

Danielle Gardner, Education and Community Coordinator, Orchestra of St. Luke's

Maddie Helbling, Director of Education and Community Partnerships, Knoxville Symphony Orchestra

Blake Helis, Production Manager, Memphis Symphony Orchestra

Elisha Johnson, Director of Marketing, Arkansas Symphony Orchestra

David Kaliser, VP of Marketing and Audience Experience, The Florida Orchestra

Grace Kim, Manager of Artistic Operations, Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra
Kari Kistler, Oboe and English Horn
Nicholas Kohn, General Manager, Symphony Arlington
Fernanda Lastra, Conductor
Cullan Lucas, Artistic and Executive Director, Driftless Urban Orchestra
Norman Menzales, Marketing and Community Engagement Director, Fort Collins Symphony
Marcus Mizelle, Director of Venue Operations, Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra
Hayley Murks-Abdikadirova, Program Director of the Longy Side-by-Side Orchestra, The Longy School of Music of Bard College
Amy Noon, Music Director, Jefferson County Public Schools
Patrick O'Brien, Development Officer, The Cleveland Orchestra
Diego Plata, Orchestra Operations Manager, San Diego Symphony
Jazmine Rampas, Co-Founder, Off-Key Orchestra, and Audience and Patron Manager, Salastina
Preston Ratliff, Education Programs Coordinator, Oklahoma City Philharmonic
Maya Reilly, Operations Manager, Community Engagement and Career Services, The Juilliard School
Harold Rivas, Teaching Artist (Orchestra Conductor), Miami Music Project
Timo Schmeichel, Principal Percussionist of the Staatskapelle Weimar, Deutsches Nationaltheater Weimar (Germany)
Grace Venner, Manager of Artistic Planning, Louisiana Philharmonic Orchestra
Lily Whiteman, Programs Manager, Education and Community Engagement, Albany Symphony

Hashtag: #Essentials2026

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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 1,600 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.