

Focus on What Works: Growing Membership



Houston Symphony League
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Orchestra Size: Group 1
Metro Houston: 7.1 million



PROJECT DESCRIPTION

After a ten-year decline in membership, the Houston Symphony League embarked on a five-year strategic plan to grow membership with a sustained multi-year growth, not just for a particular year. The themes for the first two years were Stop the Bleeding and Improve Data Management. The theme for the 2022-2023 season - Focus on What Works - is the focus of this submission. Our recruiting strategy this year involved a three-level approach of targeting friends of current Houston Symphony League members, individuals currently involved with the Houston Symphony, and individuals not currently involved with the Houston Symphony. Using these strategies, the Houston Symphony League saw a 32% increase in membership during the 2022-2023 season.

PURPOSE OF THE PROJECT

Membership is critical to the mission of the Houston Symphony League - "To collaboratively support the Houston Symphony's audience development, education and fundraising activities with engaged volunteers". The purpose of the project was to increase membership by 20% for a total of 300 members, have 90% of current members renew their memberships in the League, and to increase revenue through increased membership dues. All goals were exceeded. Membership increased by 32% over the previous year, from 258 to 341 members. 94% of current members

DEVELOPMENT OF THE PROJECT

While membership is always a focus of the Houston Symphony League, we needed a fresh approach to growing our membership after a lengthy period of declining membership and one that supports sustained growth. The Vice President of Membership developed a five-year strategic plan beginning in the 2020-2021 season based on in-depth research. The focus of this submission is the third year of the plan and the theme was Focus on What Works.

VOLUNTEER REQUIREMENTS

The primary driver of the project was our Vice President of Membership who set goals, developed the strategies to achieve the goals, and implemented the strategies. She was assisted by the Mentoring Chair who developed relationships with all new members, including regular communication of upcoming League volunteer opportunities and events. The support of the League President was key to making the needed changes.

TIMELINE

The third year of the strategic plan was begun in June 2022 and ended in May 2023.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Increased membership brought an additional \$9,850 to the League. Overall membership revenue was \$40,350 which was a historical high.

IMPACT ON THE COMMUNITY

The increase in membership allowed the League to increase its volunteer activities. New members volunteered for Student and Family Concerts, served as concierges for Symphony performances and open rehearsals, and staffed the Annual Fund table at Symphony concerts. The concierge program was a new volunteer opportunity for League members made possible by the increase in membership.

SUGGESTED IMPROVEMENTS



HOUSTON SYMPHONY

SYMPHONY SOIREE

Hello,

I'm pleased to welcome you back to *Symphony Soiree*—the Houston Symphony newsletter exclusively for special event donors and guests! If you're new here, you are receiving this newsletter because you recently attended a Houston Symphony special event. *Symphony Soiree* provides insight into how your donations to our special events support the Symphony and lets you in on what happens at the Symphony after the party is over.

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Houston Symphony League



The Houston Symphony League has a long and rich history with the Houston Symphony and the Houston community. The League has been a major source of support for the Symphony through fundraisers, volunteering, and education activities since 1937. Please consider joining the League to help support the Symphony and make new friends with other music enthusiasts like yourself. The League has many ways to show your support—join today!



When you become a League member, you can:

- Volunteer at various concerts and events—including the Student Concerts, Concert Greeter, and the crafts and activities at PNC Family Concerts.
- Participate in and host fundraising events such as Interview with an ICON, Magical Musical Morning, and more.
- Organize and serve on committees for the Symphony's major special events such as the Opening Night Concert & Gala, Wine Dinner & Collector's Auction, and the Symphony Ball—these events raise money for the Symphony's Education and Community Engagement Initiatives.
- Gain access to educational events and activities such as Bill Lushkowsky, a book club, and informative lectures with musicians, guest artists, composers, and Symphony staff.

Join the Houston Symphony League!

Formed in 1937, the Houston Symphony League is an organization dedicated to supporting the Houston Symphony and its educational enrichment of our city. For more than 80 years, the members of the League have devoted their time to raising funds for the orchestra, volunteering at Symphony Education and Community Engagement programs, and planning social events and other activities for members.

Scan here for more information on the Houston Symphony League:



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RETURN AFTER 2023