



***Springfield Symphony
Youth Orchestras***



Policy Handbook

2023-2024

SPRINGFIELD SYMPHONY YOUTH ORCHESTRAS



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Springfield Symphony Youth Orchestras

The Springfield Symphony Youth Orchestras (SSYO) founded in 1944, are two orchestral ensembles sponsored by the Springfield Symphony Orchestra. The Springfield Youth Sinfonia (SYS) is an introductory orchestra that develops ensemble skills. The Springfield Youth Orchestra (SYO) is an advanced orchestra that cultivates standard orchestral repertoire. The orchestras draw their membership from over forty towns in Massachusetts, Connecticut, and Vermont.

The founder of the Springfield Symphony Orchestra, Dr. Alexander Leslie, conducted the first performance of the Young People's Symphony (YPS), a senior orchestra grades 9 - 12, on January 14, 1945. In 1956, Prescott Barrows succeeded Dr. Leslie briefly as interim conductor, followed by Robert Staffanson until 1969. Robert Gutter became the fourth conductor of YPS in 1970. Under the direction of Mr. Gutter, YPS participated in the first Festival of Youth Orchestras in 1982 and toured with the Yugoslavian Friendship Program in 1985.

In 1977, the Young People's Philharmonia (YPP), an introductory orchestra for musicians grades 5 - 9, was created to provide opportunities for young string players, and in 1997, was transformed into a full orchestra. Michael Greenebaum directed YPP until 1986. During the 1986-87 season, David Hagy conducted both orchestras. Nyela Basney led the ensembles from 1987 to 1990 until Dr. Peter Cokkinias assumed the podium from 1990 to 1992. Beginning in 1992, YPP and YPS were under separate directorships. Laurie Redmer conducted YPP from 1992-98. Marsha Hassett became YPP conductor in 1998 and Patrick Smith was YPS conductor from 1992-2006. In 2006, the orchestras evolved from grade-based to merit-based. Two new orchestras were formed: Springfield Youth Sinfonia (SYS) and Springfield Youth Orchestra (SYO). Matt Bertuzzi is conductor for SYS; Jonathan Lam is the SYO conductor.

SSYO musicians have had unique musical experiences in recent seasons. In 1996, YPS toured England, while YPP held an exchange with the Empire State Youth Orchestras. In 1998, SSYO presented its first dinner concert, as well as exchange concerts with the Greater Bridgeport Youth Orchestras. The 2002 Season Finale Concert featured renowned violinist Corey Cerovsek, performing with the youth orchestras. YPS highlights have included tours to Montreal (1999), Philadelphia (2001 & 2005), Washington, DC (2003), and Burlington/Montreal (2006); and retreats at the University of New Hampshire (2000), the University of Rhode Island (2002), and the University of Southern Maine (2003). YPP highlights have included attendance at a Boston Symphony Orchestra rehearsal with Midori (1999), a New York Philharmonic concert (2000), a performance of soloist Joshua Bell with the Boston Symphony Orchestra (2001), the New York Philharmonic (2001), Boston Ballet's performance of *Onegin* (2002), New York City Opera's performances of *The Magic Flute* (2003), *The Barber of Seville* (2005), and *Carmen* (2006), and the Broadway production of *Beauty and the Beast* (2004). In October 2010, SYS attended a performance of *Don Pasquale* at the Metropolitan Opera and SYO participated in an exchange program with the Vermont Youth Orchestra Association, including a performance at Six Flags New England.

Conductors

MATT BERTUZZI



Matt Bertuzzi is the Conductor of the Springfield Symphony Orchestra's Springfield Youth Sinfonia and Music Director at the Springfield Honors Academy, both in Springfield, Massachusetts. He has been hailed as a "lively and animated teacher" by OperaPulse and opera critic Mike Cascia has described his technique as "a striking Italianate style of conducting."

As a Trustee of the Springfield Symphony Orchestra he developed and implemented the Symphony's innovative Real-Time Concert Notes program which allows audience members, using a smartphone app, to receive live program notes about the music they are hearing while its being played in concert. After the success of this program, Matt gave a TEDx Talk entitled, *THE ROCKET IN YOUR POCKET: How a high school band led to the development of a smartphone app allowing for new means of audience engagement in the 21st Century.*

As the Assistant Conductor of the Pioneer Valley Symphony Orchestra and Chorus in Greenfield, Massachusetts the symphony won numerous ASCAP awards for adventurous programming. A Massachusetts native, Matt has also been Assistant Conductor of The Professional Advantage and the Italian Operatic Experience, opera festivals in the Marche region of Italy. He was the musical director of the UMass Chamber Orchestra as well as the Assistant Conductor of the UMass University Orchestra, 5 College Opera Project, and Opera Workshop. In his final concert at UMass, he produced and conducted the University's first fully staged opera to be performed with full orchestra, Donizetti's *Rita*. For this performance, Matt was a semi-finalist for The American Prize in Opera Conducting, the only collegiate conductor to achieve such an honor.

Matt has traveled to Brazil as a guest conductor with the Orquestra Criança Cidadã, Recife, Brazil's premiere youth orchestra academy. He has also conducted at the International Institute for Conductors Advanced Conducting Academy in Bacau, Romania, while performing with the Mihail Jora Filharmonica, and at the Omaha Symphony's Conductors Symposium. Matt has also served as a Conducting Fellow at The Seasons Music Festival in Yakima, Washington where he conducted the Yakima Symphony Orchestra in the world premiere of Daniel Corral's *Animatic*.

Matt studied conducting with Lanfranco Marcelletti Jr. and cello with Astrid Schween. He holds a master's degree in Orchestral Conducting and a bachelor's degree Music Education from the University of Massachusetts Amherst. He currently resides in Longmeadow, Massachusetts with his wife, Allison, and their sons, Noam and Kaleb.

Conductors, continued

JONATHAN LAM



Jonathan Lam, SYO conductor, began violin studies at the age of six and was a member of the Greater Boston Youth Symphony Orchestras. He continued his studies at Tufts University earning Bachelor of Arts in Music and Quantitative Economics. At Tufts, he was named Assistant Conductor of the Tufts Symphony and served as an Assistant Conductor for the Kalistos Chamber Orchestra and as Guest Conductor for the Metro West Youth Symphony. Mr. Lam then enrolled at Southern Illinois University, earning his Master's in Orchestral Conducting. During his last semester as a conducting

student, he led the Southern Illinois Symphony when the Music Director went on sabbatical. During that time, he successfully led performances of a Broadway musical *Parade* as well as working with New Orleans Jazz musician Banu Gibson and ended the semester leading the orchestra in a performance of Elgar's *Enigma Variations*. Recently he has served as Conductor for the Nashoba Youth Orchestras in Westford, MA, the Worcester Youth Orchestras, Assistant Conductor for the Southern Illinois Music Festival Orchestra and Chorus, and serves as a cover conductor for the North Shore Philharmonic Orchestra, Beverly, MA. As a violinist, he played in numerous orchestras in the US and Canada, including the violin and viola sections of the Illinois Symphony Orchestra, and served as Assistant Principal Viola in the Paducah Symphony (KY). In the summer of 2003, Mr. Lam attended the prestigious Pierre Monteux School for Conductors and Orchestra Musicians.



Benefits of Membership

- Great repertoire & skilled conductors
- Fellowship with other young musicians
- Performance opportunities
- Sectionals with members of the SSO
- Concerto Competition
- Advancement opportunities within the ensembles
- Musical retreats or educational trips in selected years

General Information

Youth Orchestra Manager: Rocío Mora manages the Sunday operations of the youth orchestras and serves as a liaison between the conductors, Education Director, the Springfield Symphony Orchestra staff, the SSYO musicians and parents. On site for most rehearsals and all concerts.

Phone: 413-733-0636 x 7 email: rmora@SpringfieldSymphony.org
General SSYO email: ssyo@SpringfieldSymphony.org

Rehearsals: Regular rehearsals are held on Sunday evenings in the Fine Arts building (lot F) of Holyoke Community College (303 Homestead Ave, Holyoke, MA 01040. SYS musicians rehearse from 5:00pm-7:00pm and SYO musicians rehearse from 5:00pm-7:45pm. Musicians should arrive fifteen minutes early to warm-up. Rehearsals are not open to the public.

Musicians should bring their own music, stands, and pencils to all rehearsals. **Food and drinks are not allowed in the rehearsal rooms.** To maintain our rehearsal privileges at HCC, everyone needs to respect HCC property and keep the rehearsal halls and outside areas clean. After rehearsals, chairs should be returned to their proper places.

Attendance Taking: Musicians must check in at the attendance table at each rehearsal where volunteer parents will be taking attendance. Parents will be asked to volunteer for attendance duty at each rehearsal. This will be on a rotating basis.

Staying Informed: Weekly Notes are sent by email. **This is our primary method of keeping in touch so be sure to provide an email that is in good working order, and please take the time to read these emails each week.** At rehearsal each week, announcements are made to the musicians. About two weeks before every concert, families will receive an e-mail with all concert information. Hard copies will be available upon request.

SPRINGFIELD SYMPHONY YOUTH ORCHESTRAS

Concert Attire:

SYS

- White button-down shirts or blouses
- Black pants or skirts (below the knee)
- Black socks, stockings, shoes
- Black bow tie

SYO

- Black/Dark tuxedo/suit with white shirt and black bow tie
- Black shirt/blouse with black pants or skirts
- Black dress
- Black socks, stockings, shoes

Breaks: Rehearsal break time is 6:30 PM for SYO and 6:45 PM for SYS.

Incident Weather Cancellation Policy: The decision to cancel an SSYO event will be made three hours before a scheduled rehearsal or event, unless an emergency situation occurs. An email blast will be sent to everyone providing cancellation information.

Policy for SSYO Concert Tickets: SYS and SYO will be performing at three SSYO concerts during the 2023-2024 season. Ticketing will be established and announced via SSYO's weekly newsletter to its musicians and families for each concert.

SSYO Concerts 2023-2024

Season Premiere

11/19/23, 3:00pm
TBD

Winter Concert

2/11/24, 3:00 pm
TBD
Snow date: 2/25/22

Season Finale

5/19/24, 3:00pm
Symphony Hall



Conditions of Membership

Conditions of membership in SSYO were established to promote musical excellence, personal growth, and team building.

Attendance: Performance readiness depends upon your commitment to be at all rehearsals. Attendance at the dress rehearsal the week prior to the concert date and the warm-up rehearsal on concert day is required for participation in the performance. We respect commitment to school musical events and religious holiday observances as excused absences. The orchestra's conductor, the SSYO Manager, and the Education Director will conduct a membership review after **3 unexcused** absences; this may result in not being able to play in a concert. Additional absences may lead to loss of membership from the orchestra. Circumstances surrounding all absences, along with other factors, will be taken into consideration prior to any action. Frequent absences, tardiness, demonstrated lack of interest, and behavioral problems are grounds for dismissal. Musicians **must** notify the [Youth Orchestra Manager](mailto:ssyo@springfieldsymphony.org) (ssyo@springfieldsymphony.org) **prior** to any absence (including the reason of absence). If the Youth Orchestra Manager is not notified in advance, that absence will be considered "unexcused" unless it is an emergency. In cases of illness or family emergencies where advance notice is not possible, call 413.733.0636, ext. 7, and leave a message for the Youth Orchestra Manager. Messages can be left twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week.

Punctuality: SSYO members should be in the rehearsal room, with instruments tuned, fifteen minutes before the start of rehearsal. Musicians must stay close to their rehearsal room at break and return promptly to the rehearsal room after break. Rehearsal time is valuable. Tardiness and early dismissals from rehearsal are disruptive. Excessive tardiness and/or early dismissals (any combination of three occurrences) is considered a form of absence and noted as such in the musician's record. If a musician must leave rehearsal early, he/ she must notify the [Youth Orchestra Manager](mailto:ssyo@springfieldsymphony.org) prior to the time of departure.

School Music Programs: SSYO musicians are expected to participate in their school's music program, where available. The youth orchestras are considered extracurricular and are not intended to replace components of any school's music curriculum. School music directors are the sponsors for all district and statewide events. In the event that a student has a legitimate schedule conflict and cannot participate in their school program, an exemption may be sought through the school music director or conductor (contact the [Youth Orchestra Manager](mailto:ssyo@springfieldsymphony.org) for details).

Scheduling Conflicts with School Concerts: Musicians should compare the SSYO calendar with their school calendars as soon as they receive them, and notify the Education Director in writing of any potential conflicts. When a musician faces a scheduling conflict between an SSYO commitment and a school concert commitment, the SSYO musician is expected to honor the school concert commitment. Other extracurricular activities, appointments, college tours, and musical endeavors should be scheduled for times that do not conflict with SSYO commitments.

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Private Study: Musicians are highly encouraged to take lessons on their SSYO instrument with private instructors. Please inform the [Youth Orchestra Manager](#) of any changes in instructor.

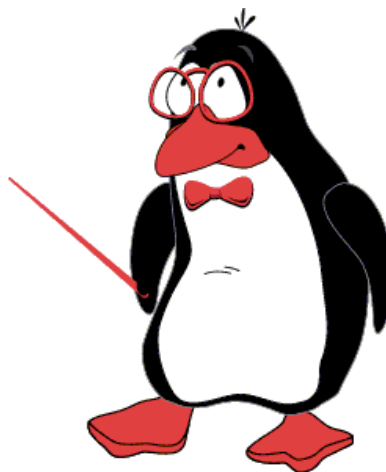
Tuition for 2023-2024 Season: The annual membership fee for SYS and SYO this year is \$450 for the first family member and \$395 for each additional family member. Financial assistance is available through SSYO scholarships or a limited number of student internships. Families may also make payment arrangements with the [Youth Orchestra Manager](#). Late charges may apply to any payments submitted after deadlines unless special arrangements have been made.

SSYO Scholarships: SSYO has a limited scholarship fund available to provide full or partial scholarship awards to families who demonstrate financial need. Scholarships may be applied only to membership fees.

Student Internships: A limited number of internships are available for stagehands and music librarians. Internships carry a stipend worth 50% of the membership fee. Job descriptions and applications are available in the spring for the following season.

Seating: Sectional seating is at the discretion of the conductors. The conductors' criteria for the seating audition are based on the musician's performance of the orchestra's repertoire. Seating auditions for each ensemble will take place once each year. The conductors make all final decisions on matters related to seating.

Withdrawals: Musicians should plan to commit to SSYO for the full season. If withdrawal is necessary, the musician should give the conductor and the [Youth Orchestra Manager](#) a letter of resignation with at least four weeks' notice. There will be no refunds.



Other Activities for 2023-2024

First Rehearsal and Parents' Meeting/Orientation: There will be an Orientation for all musicians and families at 4pm on the day of the first rehearsal, September 10, 2023. This is **MANDATORY** for everyone.

Concerto Competition: The annual Concerto Competition will be held Tuesday, January 9, 2024 (snow date - January 10th) at a location TBD. The competition is open to all SSYO musicians, except past winners who are still in the same orchestra (i.e., an SYS winner may not enter again while still a member of the SYS, and an SYO winner may not enter again while a member of the SYO). Contestants perform one movement from a concerto or other solo piece by memory with accompaniment, and provide their own accompanist for the competition. All music selected **must be approved in advance** by the conductor. Judges will select from each orchestra a soloist who demonstrates high artistic standards. Musicians selected will perform with their orchestra at the Season Finale. They will write program notes for the piece and a soloist biography.

Fundraising Activities: All fundraisers assist the SSYO in keeping our tuition costs low, trip expenses affordable, and in making scholarship assistance available to our young musicians.

- **Fundraising Concert Event:** TBD - a fundraising concert event that will incorporate soloists, duets, and small ensemble performances.
- **Raffles/Silent Auctions:** At our concerts, we may hold raffles and/or auctions. We ask that all families participate by donating items or helping in the preparation of these events.
- **Alumni, Advertisers, and Sponsorships:** The SSYO relies upon the generous support of our extended family and businesses in our community. For more information on becoming a sponsor or advertising your business in our materials, contact the [Youth Orchestra Manager](#).

Covid-19 Clause:

Due to the changing nature of the COVID-19 pandemic, any part of our 2023-2024 can change at any point, though we are hopefully that there will be no changes. Thank you for your flexibility and patience as we strive to rehearse and perform together safely.

2023-2024 SSYO STAFF CONTACT INFORMATION



<p><i>Youth Orchestra Manager</i> Rocío Mora 413-733-0636 ext 7 ssyo@springfieldsymphony.org rmora@springfieldsymphony.org</p>	<p><i>SSO President & CEO</i> Paul Lambert plambert@springfieldsymphony.org 413-733-0636 x 2</p>
<p><i>SYS Conductor</i> Matt Bertuzzi matthew.bertuzzi@gmail.com</p>	<p><i>SSYO Conductor</i> Jonathan Lam Jonathan Lam jonathanlam07@gmail.com</p>
	<p><i>SSYO Mailing Address</i> SSYO Springfield Symphony Orchestra 1441 Main Street, Suite 121 Springfield, MA 01103</p>

