



youth
symphony
OF KANSAS CITY

SEASON GUIDE
2024/25

A photograph of a youth orchestra rehearsing in a chapel. In the foreground, a young woman with dark hair tied back, wearing a white cardigan over a blue and white striped shirt, is smiling and looking towards the camera while holding a double bass. Behind her, another young person is focused on playing a double bass. To the left, other musicians are partially visible, including one playing a violin. They are standing around music stands with sheet music. The background features large, colorful stained glass windows with religious scenes, set within a stone building with arched windows.

BE THE FUTURE NOW

HEAR
THE FUTURE
NOW

WELCOME FROM OUR CEO

Dear Friend,

For 65 years, Youth Symphony of Kansas City has focused on two foundational elements of life: education and music. If you are seeking a formative, student-centered musical experience in Kansas City, seek no more!

Youth Symphony is the premier music education program where dedicated students discover their passion, develop their skills and hone their talent.

With orchestras, chamber ensembles, performance tours, exploratory classes, collaborations with professional arts organizations and showcase concerts at Kansas City's most renowned venues, Youth Symphony of Kansas City is the place for student musicians craving more.

We hope to see you soon!

Steven C. Murray
Executive Director



youth
symphony
"KANSAS CITY"

WELCOME FROM OUR ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

Dear Friend,

Thanks to the incredible platform our community and YSKC has built during its first 65 years, we now look to the next 65 years. What should our goals be? What can we do for our community? How can we further enrich the education of our students?

First, we have created a curriculum that plots the course of musical development for every student while within our educational care. This enables us to provide a highly structured and student-focused education with the goal of deepening students' musical understanding and appreciation, all whilst enhancing their skills in a measured, tailored way.

Second, through our YSKC Academy offerings, students may opt to enroll in elective classes focused on a variety of areas such as music theory, performance psychology, pedagogy and the business of music, to name just a few. Chamber music programs are an integral offering of YSKC Academy and now include brass and woodwind ensembles in addition to string quartets.

Lastly, YSKC thrives upon meaningful relationships with professional arts organizations throughout our great city. In addition to the continuing educational residency with the Opus 76 Quartet, we are reviving collaborations with the Kansas City Symphony, several of whose musicians assist in coaching our Senior School orchestras. We are also forging new collaborations with the Kansas City Ballet with exciting projects planned in the years ahead. By deliberately surrounding our musicians with the best and brightest area professionals, students become inspired by people who live out their dreams and passions on a daily basis and at the same time receive the best guidance available.

This vision for the next 65 years is not something from my imagination, but from my memory of the education I received whilst attending a similar organization as a child in Europe. This experience made a profound impact on my lifelong passion for music.



In scouring through the Youth Symphony archives, one also finds inspiration noting the exciting programs performed throughout Kansas City and beyond.

The evolution of this organization from its first season to its current is truly remarkable; as that evolution continues, I am certain the next 65 years will continue to fulfill the Youth Symphony's great tradition of serving our community — and most importantly — our students, through music.

With best wishes,

Keith Stanfield, ARAM
Artistic Director

ARTISTIC VALUES

Youth Symphony of Kansas City is a professional arts organization focused on youth.

We look for musical potential, not perfection.

We help and encourage our students to find their own voice and develop individual excellence.

Throughout elementary, middle and high school, we help students turn aspiration into achievement.

We embed artistic risk-taking and practical professional training into everything we do.

Our graduates leave with a sound, well-rounded music education, prepared to continue engaging with music at any level.



"With incredible conductors [and] inspiring faculty mentors...YSKC has tremendously impacted my musical education and my life...I leave every rehearsal with a deeper love and appreciation for music and the amazing connections it can help us create."

Elan Jiang
YSKC Principal Viola

OUR HISTORY

"On the night of April 19, 1958, at a meeting extending into the small hours of April 20th,

OUR YOUTH SYMPHONY WAS BORN."

-The opening of a synopsis of the Youth Symphony's history written by Ruth Cady Austin in 1963

JULY 31, 1958

The Youth Symphony of Kansas City is incorporated as "The Youth Symphony of the Heart of America" by conductor Leo Scheer. The organization initially consisted of one orchestra of 80 musicians.

SEPTEMBER 6, 1958

The first concert is held, at which time Kansas City Mayor H. Roe Bartle proclaims the week to be "Youth Symphony Week."

1959

Conductor Scheer resigns and is replaced by Richard Cormier, a member of the Kansas City Philharmonic (now Kansas City Symphony) and faculty member at Park College (now University).

1961

The organization changes its name to "Youth Symphony of Kansas City" and joins the American Symphony Orchestra League, now known as the League of American Orchestras. The Youth Symphony also records a concert for New York radio station WNYC.

1964

The organization adds a younger orchestra, the "Junior Youth Symphony," due to increased demand. The Youth Symphony tours Chicago and Washington D.C. and performs at the 1964 World's Fair in New York.

1990

The Youth Symphony begins a long association with the American Royal, performing live for its Concert of Champions. That same year, the Youth Symphony travels to Chicago to participate in the Midwest Band and Orchestra Clinic.

1997

The Symphony Orchestra tours New York and performs at Carnegie Hall in June.

2006

Symphony Orchestra and the Kansas City Symphony hold a collaborative performance for the groundbreaking of the Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts. The orchestra also tours Italy.

2007

Professor Steven D. Davis begins as conductor of YSKC's Symphony Orchestra.

2014

The Youth Symphony returns to Chicago to perform in the Midwest Band and Orchestra Clinic.

2016

In June, the Youth Symphony tours Ireland — its first international tour in a decade! The new Overture Program, an initiative focusing on young string players, is launched.

2017

Symphony Orchestra is featured on the Harriman-Jewell Series in celebration of YSKC's 60th Anniversary. This same year, following 20 years of musical contributions as a conductor within the Youth Symphony, conductor Russell E. Berlin retires.

2018

June brings the Youth Symphony's second recent international tour, this time to Austria, in celebration of the organization's 60th Anniversary Season. Tour performances are held in Salzburg and Vienna.

2020

In response to the Covid-19 pandemic, YSKC creates Orchestras Online, providing students the opportunity to continue making music through weekly online sectionals and group lectures, culminating in two virtual performances.

2022

The Youth Symphony partners with the Opus 76 Quartet to launch YSKC Academy, a year-round intensive curriculum providing YSKC students access to chamber music, master classes, elective courses and solo and small ensemble performance opportunities.

2023

The Youth Symphony's Touring Orchestra travels to New York, where they perform at Carnegie Hall. This year also marks start of the Youth Symphony's 65th Anniversary Season.



at-a-glance

400

YOUNG MUSICIANS
FROM
106 SCHOOLS
&
46 COMMUNITIES

47%

FROM COMMUNITIES OF COLOR

11,000+

ALUMNI ACROSS
THE WORLD

65 YEARS

OF LEARNING
AND PERFORMING

AT VENUES IN

KANSAS CITY, NEW YORK, AUSTRIA, CANADA,
GERMANY, IRELAND, ITALY, SPAIN AND MORE

OVER \$50,000

DEDICATED TO TUITION SUBSIDIES
AND WAIVERS FOR STUDENTS

A WORLD-CLASS EXPERIENCE

Our faculty and coaches teach and have trained at many of the world's finest institutions including:

- Cleveland Institute of Music
- Conservatorio Pollini (Padua, IT)
- Conservatorio Benedetto Marcello (Venice, IT)
- Eastman School of Music
- Idyllwild Arts Academy
- Interlochen Arts Academy
- The Juilliard School
- Missouri State University
- The Peabody Institute
- The Purcell School of Music (London, UK)
- The Royal Academy of Music (London, UK)
- University of Kansas
- University of Missouri - Kansas City
- University of Michigan
- University of Rochester
- Washburn University



YSKC students perform on some of the world's greatest stages throughout the United States and abroad.

Next stop: Great Britain in 2025!

"This experience was truly life-changing."

Musician Noah Luke on performing at Carnegie Hall on YSKC's 2023 tour

RECENT TOUR DESTINATIONS INCLUDE:

- Carnegie Hall, New York
- Vienna, Austria
- Dublin, Ireland
- Madrid, Spain



"YSKC has really helped me improve my musical abilities, especially transposition and playing more difficult pieces. And in the middle of it all, I've also made some really good friends that share my love for music!"

Ellie Okediji
YSKC French Horn

PERFORMANCE



**YSKC students
enjoy performance
opportunities that
are second-to-none.**

From our renowned orchestral performances at Carnegie Hall, the Kauffman Center and Yardley Hall at the Midwest Trust Center to our annual KC-area school music festivals to community chamber concerts and solo recitals, our robust calendar of events is the richest showcase of the next generation of young musical talent from the KC metro area.

YSKC ORCHESTRAS



All YSKC orchestras perform annually at the Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts and Yardley Hall at the Midwest Trust Center in Kansas City.

Our orchestras offer opportunities for performance, growth and musical enjoyment in a wide range of contexts. YSKC's orchestral curriculum is shaped to give students a strong foundation in music history, technique and appreciation.

Youth Symphony's conductors are esteemed and internationally recognized members of the musical community, including professors at conservatories and universities, professional conductors and award-winning music educators.

Whether a student's interests lie in playing concerts professionally, double-majoring or minoring in music, becoming a music educator or simply engaging with classical music and playing for pleasure, YSKC provides an encouraging platform to help them find their way.

OUR CONDUCTORS

YSKC SENIOR SCHOOL

Prof. Steven D. Davis

Dr. Raffaele Cipriano

YSKC JUNIOR SCHOOL

Michelle Davis

Amanda Kremer

Anna Cook

WORKSHOP CONDUCTOR

Matthew Pavon



YSKC ACADEMY



YSKC Academy offers a unique opportunity for students to develop all aspects of their musicianship in a creative learning environment - and form strong bonds and lifelong friendships along the way.

These supplemental classes provide students the necessary skills to become successful, well-rounded musicians as well as the guidance to help them make an informed decision about what they want their relationship with music to look like during college and long into the future.

Elective courses at YSKC Academy provide students with opportunities to:

- Play chamber music with their peers
- Develop aural and theory skills
- Grow their appreciation of musical history

In addition, Academy students are offered:

- Masterclasses
- Workshops with distinguished performers
- Opportunities to perform solo and chamber music in both informal and formal settings

YSKC Academy classes are generally scheduled so that musicians can participate before or following regular orchestra rehearsals on Sundays; ancillary activities and performances sometimes occur on weeknights.

Most courses are not included in season tuition (see Tuition Information). Additional details are provided at the time of YSKC Academy registration.

CURRENT COURSE OFFERINGS

Chamber Music - Strings, Woodwinds, Brass
Alumni Chamber Music
AP Music Theory Prep
Aural Skills
Business for Young Musicians
Chamber Orchestra
Introduction to Conducting
Introduction to Composition
Introduction to Teaching
Performance Psychology in Practice
Transposition
Sonata Sessions





"Being a part of YSKC has given me a unique musical experience that I wouldn't have gotten from a school orchestra or even an all-state orchestra. This year the YSKC Symphony Orchestra music repertoire was very challenging, especially Tchaikovsky's [Symphony No.] 4!

The YSKC chamber program taught by the Opus 76 Quartet helped me gain many valuable skills and gave me a glimpse of what being a professional in a quartet is like...I am grateful to have been a part of YSKC. It's been a wonderful experience!"

Athul Prasad | YSKC Violinist

**youth
symphony**
"KANSAS CITY"

FACULTY

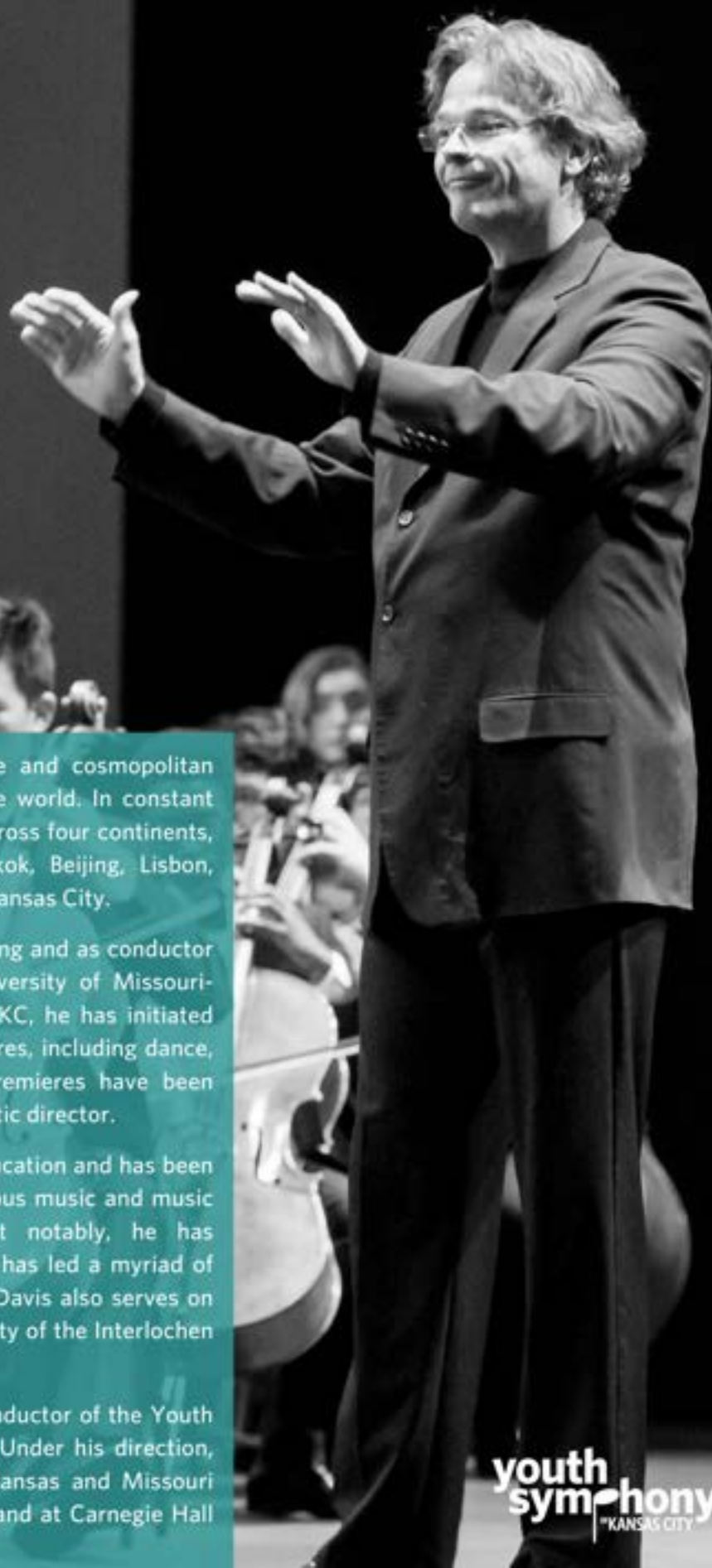


**Great teachers inspire students.
Great mentors inspire communities.**

We know how vital it is for a young musician to find a mentor who inspires them to be their best self. Students are supported by outstanding teachers who challenge them to find their own voice. In addition to sharing their artistic and technical expertise, instructors offer practical advice on how to prepare for a career in music and a lifetime of enjoying it.

CONDUCTORS

STEVEN D. DAVIS



Conductor Steven D. Davis is a lauded, versatile and cosmopolitan conductor who has inspired ensembles around the world. In constant demand as a guest conductor, he has conducted across four continents, working with ensembles in cities such as Bangkok, Beijing, Lisbon, Sydney, and regularly conducts in his favorite city, Kansas City.

Mr. Davis currently serves as professor of conducting and as conductor of the Conservatory Wind Symphony at the University of Missouri-Kansas City Conservatory. During his time at UMKC, he has initiated countless collaborations with other artists and genres, including dance, theater, visual art, and film. Numerous world premieres have been dedicated to the ensemble during his tenure as artistic director.

Mr. Davis is a proud advocate for artistic music education and has been a guest lecturer, conductor and clinician at numerous music and music education conferences across the world. Most notably, he has performed at five Midwest Clinics in Chicago and has led a myriad of All-State ensembles across the United States. Dr. Davis also serves on the Orchestra and Wind Ensemble conducting faculty of the Interlochen Summer Arts Camp.

Mr. Davis is now in his sixteenth season as the conductor of the Youth Symphony of Kansas City's Symphony Orchestra. Under his direction, the Symphony Orchestra has performed at the Kansas and Missouri Music Educators Conferences, the Midwest Clinic and at Carnegie Hall in 2023.



CONDUCTORS

RAFFAELE CIPRIANO

Raffaele Cipriano is an esteemed Italian conductor, opera coach and composer. Trained at the prestigious conservatories of Padua and Venice, he excels in orchestral conducting, collaborative piano, opera repertoire and composition. In 2015, he pursued a doctorate in orchestral conducting at KU, mentored by Maestro David Neely, graduating with honors in 2018. Dr. Cipriano has garnered acclaim through collaborations with esteemed organizations like Lawrence Arts Center, Lawrence Opera Theater and Landlocked Opera. He served as assistant/cover conductor at Sarasota Opera and currently holds the position of assistant conductor for the Topeka Symphony Orchestra. He has recently joined the Music faculty at Washburn University as a lecturer and Director of Orchestra.

Notable achievements include music direction for *Romeo and Juliet*, *Cinderella* and *Carmen* for Lawrence Opera Theater, conducting *A Chorus Line* in Topeka and guest conducting the Springfield Symphony. Based in Kansas City, Dr. Cipriano is the music director and conductor of the Overland Park Orchestra and serves as music director at the Good Shepherd Catholic Church in Shawnee, Kan.

A black and white photograph of Michelle Davis, a woman with glasses and her hair in a bun, conducting an orchestra. She is wearing a dark, long-sleeved top and has her arms extended in a conducting gesture. The background is dark and out of focus, showing the silhouettes of orchestra members and their instruments.

CONDUCTORS


MICHELLE DAVIS

Michelle Davis has been a string orchestra educator for 30 years in Illinois, Michigan and Missouri. She has taught strings/orchestra at the elementary, middle and high school levels. Currently, she is the conductor of the Liberty High School Orchestras in Liberty, Missouri. In addition, she teaches private lessons to aspiring violin and viola students. Previously, she taught beginning strings and junior high orchestra in Oak Park, Illinois, and middle school orchestra in Farmington Hills, Michigan. She just finished a two-year tenure as Orchestra Vice President of the Missouri Music Educators' Association.

Ms. Davis has been a guest conductor in school districts across the state and has presented clinics at state and national conferences, including the Michigan Music Educators' Conference and the American String Teachers' National Conference. In 2008, she was Liberty Public School District's "Teacher of the Year." She is a graduate of the University of Michigan with a bachelor's degree in viola performance and a master's degree in music education. She is a member of the Suzuki Association of the Americas (SAA), National Association for Music Education (NAfME), and American String Teachers' Association (ASTA). She lives with her husband, Steve Davis, and her two goldendoodles, Maddy and Henri.

CONDUCTORS

AMANDA KREMER

A photograph of Amanda Kremer, a woman with blonde hair, wearing a black blazer and pants, conducting a youth orchestra. She is standing in front of the orchestra, with her right arm raised and her left hand holding a violin. The orchestra consists of young people, mostly teenagers, dressed in formal attire (suits and dresses). They are seated in rows, playing various instruments including violins, violas, and brass instruments like tubas. The background is a wooden wall, suggesting a concert hall or rehearsal space.

Conductor Amanda Kremer's love of classical music began at age five when she started piano and then joined the Springfield Ballet at age eight, dancing in numerous ballets and operas until age 18. Amanda studied horn at Missouri State University with Dr. Lisa Casey and played in a variety of concert bands under Jerry Hoover and Dr. Belva Prather. She also played horn in the MSU Symphony Orchestra under Robert Quebbeman and sang in vocal ensembles under Guy Webb.

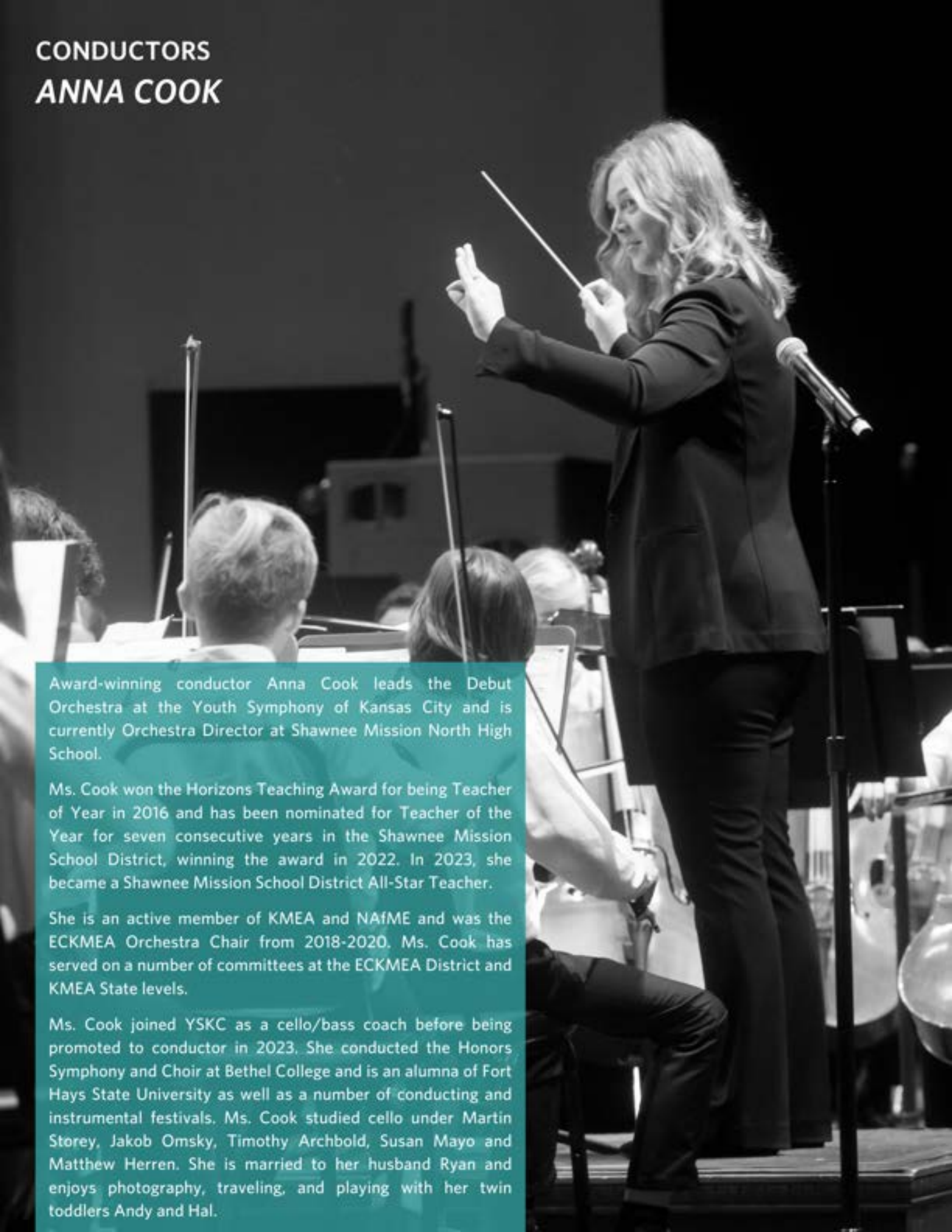
Ms. Kremer went on to teach 6-9th grade band and jazz band in Minneapolis, Minn. and assisted with the high school marching band in Edina. She traveled all over the world with the Edina Concert Band, performing in Beijing, Singapore and St. Lucia. She also took graduate conducting courses at the American Band College through Sam Houston University in Oregon with numerous clinicians, soloists and conductors. In 2011, Ms. Kremer received a master's degree in educational leadership from Saint Mary's University of Minnesota. She played horn in the Minnesota Symphonic Winds under the direction of composer and conductor Timothy Mahr and was previously on staff with the Greater Twin Cities Youth Symphony as the Sinfonia Orchestra Conductor.

Ms. Kremer joined the YSKC artistic staff in 2016. Currently, she runs a private piano studio and is in her second year as the music librarian for the Blue Valley School District.

Ms. Kremer and her husband Nate live in Overland Park, Kan. and are enjoying life with their three daughters, Hannah, Sarah and Lydia.

CONDUCTORS

ANNA COOK



Award-winning conductor Anna Cook leads the Debut Orchestra at the Youth Symphony of Kansas City and is currently Orchestra Director at Shawnee Mission North High School.

Ms. Cook won the Horizons Teaching Award for being Teacher of Year in 2016 and has been nominated for Teacher of the Year for seven consecutive years in the Shawnee Mission School District, winning the award in 2022. In 2023, she became a Shawnee Mission School District All-Star Teacher.

She is an active member of KMEA and NAfME and was the ECKMEA Orchestra Chair from 2018-2020. Ms. Cook has served on a number of committees at the ECKMEA District and KMEA State levels.

Ms. Cook joined YSKC as a cello/bass coach before being promoted to conductor in 2023. She conducted the Honors Symphony and Choir at Bethel College and is an alumna of Fort Hays State University as well as a number of conducting and instrumental festivals. Ms. Cook studied cello under Martin Storey, Jakob Omsky, Timothy Archbold, Susan Mayo and Matthew Herren. She is married to her husband Ryan and enjoys photography, traveling, and playing with her twin toddlers Andy and Hal.

A photograph of conductor Matthew Pavon in a dark blue shirt, gesturing with his hands while holding a baton. He is standing in front of a large, colorful stained glass window depicting religious figures. The background is slightly blurred, showing the silhouettes of orchestra members and their instruments.

CONDUCTORS
MATTHEW PAVON

Matthew Pavon is a recent Missouri State University graduate with a master's degree in music. He is active in Springfield, Missouri and the Northwest Arkansas region as a professional violist and conductor. Mr. Pavon has served as the assistant conductor for the Missouri State University Orchestra and as the director of the Student Repertory Ensemble. He is also the founder and Music Director of the Galloway Chamber Orchestra in Springfield, MO. Other musical engagements include guest conducting for the Missouri Philharmonic Orchestra, Drury University Orchestra and the Kansas City Civic Orchestra.

Along with his conducting, Mr. Pavon is an active orchestral musician as an assistant principal violist with the Springfield Symphony Orchestra and a substitute of the Symphony of Northwest Arkansas. Mr. Pavon lives in Springfield, Missouri with his wife, Leianna, and two dogs, Koda and Ellie.



"The YSKC chamber program has given me the opportunity to expand my repertoire...the program teaches students how to incorporate individual voices into a small group setting, provides lessons with respected mentors and an opportunity to perform in more intimate venues.

My approach to the cello has changed significantly since joining this program."

Sylvia Brown
YSKC Principal 'Cello

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EDUCATORS-IN-RESIDENCE THE OPUS 76 QUARTET



Kansas City's Opus 76 Quartet has been recognized in journals worldwide for its entertaining and energetic interpretations of the classics. The *Spectator* (London), reviewing a recent performance of one of Beethoven's late quartets, lauded the group, remarking: "a brilliant young string quartet...[a] luminous performance." In the US, the *Kansas City Star* described the group's complete Beethoven String Quartet cycle as "certainly passionate performances, fully expressing all of Beethoven's many emotions, from the lighthearted and jocular to the feverish and intense."

Artists-in-Residence at the Midwest Trust Center at Johnson County Community College, the Opus 76 Quartet performs 50 concerts annually nationwide. In 2020, Opus 76 performed and recorded all eighteen of Beethoven's string quartets in front of a live audience over a six-week period. They have also appeared as a guest ensemble with the Kansas City Ballet, delivering critically acclaimed performances of works by Philip Glass in the Ballet's 2021/22 season opening performance of "Wunderland" and again in 2023 as the on-stage musicians for Alexander Ekman's "Cacti" at the Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts. Opus 76 made their Carnegie Hall debut in March 2023, performing Beethoven's String Quartets Op. 130 & 131.

In addition to their collaborations with the Kansas City Ballet, Opus 76 has performed with many celebrated artists and groups, including Julie Coucheron, Ramona Pansegrau and David Krakauer.

Opus 76 performs a number of recitals around the US annually and looks forward to performing with violinist David Kim in 2025. The ensemble's discography includes Beethoven's complete string quartets, Schubert's C Major Quintet, Mendelssohn's String Quartet Op. 44, No. 1, Mozart's Six Quartets Dedicated to Haydn and Brahms's F minor Piano Quintet.

The Opus 76 Quartet is proud to lead the way in classical music education in Kansas City, having created the city's longest running year-round chamber music program. Opus 76 is fully committed to improving society through music, and its non-profit foundation, the Friends of the Opus 76 Quartet, oversees its "Music Making Minds" initiative, which performs charitable works in the community of Kansas City. Opus 76 continues to be mentored by retired founding member of the Takács Quartet, Károly Schranz.

INSTRUMENTAL KEITH STANFIELD



Violinist Keith Stanfield, hailed as "The Polynesian Paganini" (KC Arts Beat), is a highly acclaimed concert violinist based in the US. A founding member of the Opus 76 Quartet and one of a tiny handful of professional classical musicians from Western Samoa, Mr. Stanfield performs over 200 concerts a year. He serves as concertmaster of the Kansas City Civic Orchestra and the Kinnor Philharmonic Orchestra, guest concertmaster of the Kansas City Ballet and is an Associate of the Royal Academy of Music (London, UK). In 2023, he was appointed Artistic Director of the Youth Symphony of Kansas City.

In early 2022, Mr. Stanfield became the first musician to win the KC Independent's "Rising Stars of Kansas City" award, and he has received acclaim from renowned music journals such as Gramophone, The Strad, and Bachtrack. He has an extensive discography featuring works by a variety of composers including Brahms, Mozart, Mendelssohn and Schubert.

Mr. Stanfield began violin lessons at age three with Alison Apley and is an alumnus of the Suzuki Violin Method, Purcell School of Music (UK) and the Royal Academy of Music. He made his recital debut at age six and appeared as a guest soloist on the BBC TV show "Brian Conley's Crazy Christmas" at ten. The winner of a number of solo violin competitions and prizes, he has performed in many of the world's finest concert venues, including Carnegie Hall; Wigmore Hall, Royal Festival Hall and Royal Albert Hall (London); the Berliner Philharmonie and Teatro alla Scala (Milan). Violin coaches include the late Erik Huston, Remus Azoitei and Karoly Schranz.

Hungarian violinist Zsolt Eder is a versatile and engaging performer and teacher. He is Professor of Violin and Viola at Washburn University and has been concertmaster of the Topeka Symphony Orchestra since 2011. He is a founding member of the Opus 76 Quartet and also performs with Spire Chamber Ensemble, newEar Contemporary Chamber Ensemble, the KC Baroque Consortium, Ensemble Iberica, the Sunflower Music Festival and the Kansas City Symphony, as well as his chamber music group Zsolt Eder and Friends.

Dr. Eder has performed extensively in North and South America, Europe, Asia and Australia, and he has performed as a soloist with many orchestras, including the Cleveland Institute of Music Symphony Orchestra, the Topeka Symphony, the City of Asuncion Symphony Orchestra in Paraguay and the Via Salzburg Chamber Orchestra. In 2018, he appeared as guest concertmaster of the National Symphony of Colombia.

Dr. Eder is passionate about education, working with organizations like UMKC Conservatory Bridges, the Blanche Bryden Chamber Music Institute, Harmony Project KC, Topeka Strings for Success and CityMusic Cleveland. In 2019, he completed a week-long residency at the National University of Paraguay.

Born in Budapest, Hungary, Dr. Eder spent most of his childhood in Perth, Australia. College studies brought him first to Toronto, Canada, where he studied with Lorand Fenyes. He then continued with Paul Kantor at the Cleveland Institute of Music, where he earned his bachelor's and master's degrees. In Kansas City he studied with Benny Kim at the UMKC Conservatory and received a doctoral degree in violin performance in 2018. He lives in Kansas City with his wife Gloria and their two children.

INSTRUMENTAL ZSOLT EDER



INSTRUMENTAL ASHLEY GIESING



Violist Ashley Giesing is a founding member of the Opus 76 Quartet. An experienced chamber musician, she is a former and founding member of the Hampden String Quartet, with whom she won the Sir John Barbirolli Prize for Chamber Music at the Royal Academy of Music.

Ms. Giesing performs regularly with the Kansas City Symphony, the Des Moines Symphony, Lyric Opera of Kansas City and Kansas City Ballet. She has also served as guest Principal Violist for the Kinnor Philharmonic and the Saint Joseph Symphony and has appeared as a guest artist with the Bach Aria Soloists, Spire Ensemble and the KC Baroque Consortium. Additionally, she has performed as a guest soloist with various orchestras, most recently with the Kansas City Civic Orchestra, playing Mozart's "Sinfonia Concertante."

Ashley is an alumna of both the Interlochen and Idyllwild Arts academies and holds a bachelor's degree in viola performance as well as a teaching licentiate from the Royal Academy of Music, where she was a student of Paul Silverthorne. Other teachers include violist Scott Lee, Evan Wilson, Donald McInnes and Christine Grossman.

A passionate educator, Ashley enjoys teaching and has extensive experience at the beginner through collegiate level. She currently teaches elementary level group violin with Harmony Project KC and formerly served as a teaching artist on the faculty of Drake University. Many of her private students are regularly members of the Kansas All-State and District Orchestras. She lives in Kansas City with her husband, son and daughter. In addition to her career as a violist, Ashley is pursuing a degree in psychology at Harvard University.

INSTRUMENTAL DANIEL KETTER



Daniel Ketter, born and raised in Kansas City, is Associate Professor of Music at Missouri State University, where he teaches courses in cello, chamber music and music theory. He specializes in performance of contemporary and classical chamber music, regularly collaborating with Ensemble Alla Balena, Cellax Duo and other groups nationally and internationally. Daniel joined the Opus 76 Quartet in June of 2021.

Additionally, Dr. Ketter is Co-Director and cellist of the American Wild Ensemble, which celebrates the people and places that define American communities with new music. In 2018, the Ensemble released a two-hour album of eleven original works, and with support from the National Endowment for the Arts, these works were commissioned and performed for a national tour in seven national parks celebrating the centennial of the National Park Service in 2016.

Dr. Ketter holds a Doctor of Musical Arts degree from the Eastman School of Music, where he now serves as summer faculty for the Eastman Cello Institute. He has also taught at the Hochstein School of Music and Dance in Rochester, NY and is founder of the Eastman Cello Ensemble. He completed his Ph.D. in Music Theory at Eastman and is Co-Chair for the Society for Music Theory's Performance and Analysis Interest Group.

Dr. Ketter holds a Master of Music degree in cello performance and pedagogy from the Peabody Conservatory and graduated with high honors from both the Eastman School of Music and the University of Rochester with degrees in cello performance and mathematics, respectively.

INSTRUMENTAL COACHES



"The Youth Symphony of
Kansas City laid the
foundation for my career as
professional musician."

Ashley Giesing, Violist - The Opus 76 Quartet
YSKC Alumna





STRINGS & WOODWINDS



Over the course of a student's time with YSKC, they receive intensive training in the art of orchestral playing and chamber music. We make ensemble experience a priority in both full symphony orchestras and chamber groups. Students also have opportunities to perform solo works and prepare for competitions and auditions, for which supplementary coaching is available.

In a stimulating and fun learning environment, students perform regularly and work with a range of specialist coaches in performance classes, chamber coaching and instrument-specific classes which cover aspects of performance practice, technique and repertoire, as well as preparation for competitions such as District, All-State and Solo & Ensemble Festivals.

Our distinguished faculty and visiting coaches are internationally renowned professional chamber musicians, orchestral players and pedagogues, encompassing an incredible breadth of knowledge and displaying an extraordinary musical lineage.

COACHES

EDUCATORS-IN-RESIDENCE

The Opus 76 Quartet

VIOLIN

Keith Stanfield, Dr. Zsolt Eder,
Teresa Edgar

VIOLA

Ashley Giesing, Christine Grossman

CELLO

Dr. Daniel Ketter, Ho Ahn

DOUBLE BASS

Evan Halloin

FLUTE

Michael Gordon, Emlyn Johnson

OBOE

Erin Huneke

CLARINET

Dr. Larkin Sanders

BASSOON

Prof. Austin Way



BRASS & PERCUSSION

Youth Symphony provides ample resources, dedicated practice spaces and a wide range of performance opportunities and projects to students at all levels.

In addition to receiving the essential musical and technical grounding in the core orchestral repertoire, our students take advantage of a wide range of performance opportunities and workshops, including preparation for competitions such as District, All-State and Solo & Ensemble Festivals.

At YSKC, our brass and percussion coaches are active at the highest professional level as members of the Kansas City Symphony, professors at universities and as renowned performers and pedagogues — all of whom understand the priorities and challenges of an ever-changing profession.

Student growth is central to our mission. Regardless of where a student is in their musical journey, all of the necessary skills for lifelong artistic and professional development may be attained at YSKC through a curriculum that offers varied and personalized experiences.



COACHES

HORN

Ben Bacni, Tracy Blizman,
Elizabeth Gray

TRUMPET

Julian Kaplan, Alberto Racanati,
Meghan Conley

TROMBONE

Steven Murray

LOW BRASS

Joe LeFevre

PERCUSSION

Bryan Busby, Greg Carroll, Toby
Grace, Dr. Von Hansen



"I want to commend all of you at Youth Symphony for the organization, planning and thoughtfulness with which you are running the program and all the amazing experiences that your team is building for the kids. Laki has done this for a few years now, and this year has exceeded our expectations in every way."

Rupal Gupta | YSKC Parent

CREATIVE PARTNERS

A world of talent comes to us in Kansas City, and we send it back out into the world through music.

Some of our creative partners include:

- Kansas City Symphony
- Kansas City Ballet
- Harriman-Jewell Series
- Midwest Trust Center Presents
- The Opus 76 Quartet



Since its founding, professional collaborations have played a unique and indispensable role in YSKC's musical training. Exclusive initiatives with the above professional organizations contribute significantly to our students' affinity for music and inspire them to develop their musicianship at a professional level.

*Youth Symphony and Kansas City Symphony
Side-by-Side, conducted by Michael Stern in 2019.*



HEAR
THE NEXT

GENERATION

Our graduates spread the gift of music all around the nation.
University destinations for the 2024/25 academic year include:

Drake University
Emory University
Kansas State University
MidAmerica Nazarene University
Princeton University
United States Navy
University of Kansas

University of Missouri - Columbia
University of Missouri - Kansas City
UMKC Conservatory of Music
University of Pennsylvania
University of Michigan
University of North Texas
Yale University

youth
symphony
"KANSAS CITY"



ALL TOGETHER NOW

Tuition Information

Since its founding in 1958, Youth Symphony of Kansas City has been committed to providing music education experiences of the highest quality, while ensuring affordable and accessible tuition.

As a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization, YSKC employs staff and volunteers who secure contributions from individuals, foundations, companies and other entities. Thanks to their generosity, the actual total cost of YSKC programming is subsidized for all participating students.

In recognizing the vast socioeconomic diversity throughout the region, YSKC implements a "choose-your-own" tuition system that includes three tuition rates from which families may choose. Regardless of which tier is selected, all participants receive the full YSKC Orchestral Education Program.

2024/25 Season Choose-Your-Own Tuition rates:

- Tier A - \$1,690
- Tier B - \$1,270
- Tier C (base) - \$850

Annual Program Registration Fee - \$40

At the time of program registration, families are required to pay the annual program registration fee along with half of the full tuition tier amount. Alternatively, families may submit a financial assistance request form along with the \$40 registration fee. All fees and tuition are non-refundable.

Tuition for YSKC Academy (including chamber music, workshops and electives) is not included in the above tuition rates. Tuition for YSKC Academy offerings range from \$50 to \$300, depending on the length and the scope of the course offering. Additional details are available when YSKC Academy registration opens.

Financial Assistance

Financial assistance is available for musicians whose families demonstrate qualified need. Any amount of assistance awarded will be a percentage relative to the base tuition rate of \$850 noted above (Tier C). Any remaining balance may be paid in installments, as needed.

Financial assistance applications are made available online for all registrants, following a successful audition to join YSKC. A most recent IRS income tax return (Form 1040) must be submitted/uploaded with the application. Applications are held in strictest confidence.

Please note: By accepting a financial assistance request form, YSKC neither guarantees nor ensures applicant eligibility; additionally, no offer of a financial assistance award is implied.

WANNA PLAY?



JOIN THE FUTURE NOW.

Visit [YSKC.org](https://www.yskc.org) for full details!



**2024/25 auditions
are now open!**

Audition Checklist:

- ☒ Apply to audition at [YSKC.org](https://www.yskc.org)
- ☒ Download the audition requirements for your instrument
- ☒ Practice!
- ☒ Record, upload and submit your audition video





"Being in the Youth Symphony of Kansas City has greatly improved my ensemble skills and enabled me to play much more challenging orchestral music than in school.

Additionally, the community within the ensemble is so supportive! It is a wonderful learning opportunity for anyone who wants to become a better orchestral musician and connect with others who share their passion!"

Hazel Ecklund-Johnson
YSKC Violist

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KANSAS CITY, MO 64111

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