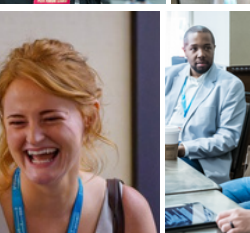


2024-2025  
IMPACT REPORT

“There is an immeasurable comfort and strength in the knowledge that one is not alone. Time and time again, ACSO leads the charge connecting orchestras and colleagues to the news, skills, people, and other resources that breathe new life and energy into our work.”

~ Nuri Kye, Director of Development, Marin Symphony



# A Message from the Executive Director

## Vision

ACSO envisions thriving, inclusive orchestras that serve and uplift their communities.

## Mission

ACSO provides leadership, knowledge-building, advocacy, and connection to expand the vitality and impact of the orchestra and broader music community.

## Values

Integrity & Authenticity

People & Service

Connecting & Belonging

Equity, Diversity,  
Inclusion & Access

Learning & Sharing

Dear Friends,

I am proud to share the Association of California Symphony Orchestra's (ACSO) first annual Impact Report, highlighting how our work this past year strengthened orchestras and music organizations—and the thousands of staff, musicians, board members, and volunteers who bring music to communities across California and the Western United States.

2024-25 was a year of meaningful internal growth as we invested in ACSO's long-term resilience. We completed the first year of our five-year [Strategic Framework](#), updated our [Equity & Inclusion Commitment](#), and undertook a major transition to a new database and website to better serve our members.

Even more significant, however, was the impact we made across the wider orchestra ecosystem. In January, when the fires struck Los Angeles, we quickly created a [Wildfire Resources](#) website to support performing arts workers in need. In the spring, we joined statewide advocates to successfully preserve the \$11.5 million Performing Arts Equitable Payroll Fund. In the summer, we convened more than 270 professionals at our annual conference for learning, inspiration, and connection. Throughout the year, we expanded programs and services across all areas—resulting in a 17% increase in member engagement.

As you explore this report, I hope you feel as inspired as I do by what our music community accomplished together. Your support, partnership, and participation make this work possible. Thank you for your dedication to ACSO and to the orchestras and music organizations that enrich lives in every corner of California.

With gratitude,



**Sarah Weber**  
ACSO Executive Director



ACSO Executive Director Sarah Weber donates her violin to Director of Education and Community Engagement Alex Chu at the Pasadena Symphony's Instrument Drive, January 2025





# 2024-25 ACSO By the Numbers

## MEMBERSHIP COMMUNITY

125

Orchestras & Music Orgs throughout California and the Western U.S.

2,600

Individual Members & Individuals Connected through their Organizations

## LEARNING & CONNECTING

307

Colleagues shared ideas and support at 27 virtual peer forum meetings.

391

Orchestra professionals learned and connected at webinars, workshops, confabs, meetups, and retreats.

271

Delegates gathered in Costa Mesa for the 2025 Annual Conference

## INFORMATION SHARING

50 Editions of *ACSO eNews* and other eblasts

400

Concert Calendar Listings

100

Career Center Jobs Postings

19

Blog Posts

60

Member News Social Posts

45

Requests fulfilled for data, information, & resources

380

Views of *LA Wildfire Resources* Webpage

11

Awards Presented to Remarkable Individuals

## Organizational Member Map



# 2025 ACSO Annual Conference

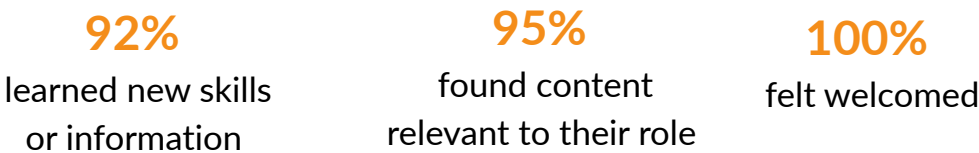
The 2025 Annual Conference brought together over 270 orchestra professionals to Costa Mesa in August for three days of learning, inspiration, and connection. Hosted by **Pacific Symphony**, the event featured breakout sessions, peer forums, and idea exchanges on topics ranging from video game music and audience surveys to tech tools, board governance, strategic planning, and the role of conservatories in shaping the canon. GRAMMY award-winning pianist **Michelle Cann** and behavioral scientist **Dr. Tasha Golden** delivered powerful keynotes that uplifted and challenged the field.



Opening Keynote Speaker Michelle Cann



## CONFERENCE SURVEY RESPONSES



## What was your favorite part about the 2025 ACSO Conference?

- “Meeting with colleagues who could answer difficult questions.”*

*“Seeing my staff and board members realize how they have much to contribute to the field, and learn from the field.”*
- “It was a terrific opportunity to learn!”*

*“Meeting new folks and learning about other orchestras.”*
- “Having open conversations with other members about strategies and ideas...learning to survive challenging times.”*

Pacific Symphony Youth Ensembles Saxophone Choir performs at Conference Opening Plenary





# 2025 ACSO Annual Conference

We asked Conference attendees:

***What keeps you passionate about working in the performing arts?***



*Hutchins Consort performs at  
Conference Closing Plenary*



## Emerging Professionals Brown Bag Lunch

*ACSO President Scott Vandrick  
presents the ACSO Legacy  
Award to Pacific Symphony  
Music Director Carl St.Clair*



# 2024-25 Programs and Services

## Youth Orchestra Confab

*Bringing youth orchestra leaders together to create opportunities for the next generation of musicians.*

On March 28, 24 youth orchestra leaders gathered in San Luis Obispo for a day of learning and networking (and axe-throwing!) Discussion topics included growing scholarship funds, designing gender-inclusive policies, board diversity, best practices in social media, recruiting music directors, and centering the student perspective.



2025 ACSO Youth Confab

***"Sometimes it feels like I'm working in a silo, but being at the ACSO Youth Orchestra Confab and hearing from peers with similar experiences makes me feel seen and reminds me that we're all in this together."***

*~ Nadia Liu, Executive Director, Young People's Symphony Orchestra*



## Webinars

*Building capacity through training and professional development.*

ACSO presented 6 webinars for 176 attendees, with content focused on fundraising, government relations, CA employment law (AB5), and optimizing and building more inclusive boards.



## Peer Forums

*Keeping the conversation and connection going year-round.*

ACSO organized 27 Virtual Peer Forum meetings for 307 attendees across 12 constituency groups such as Orchestra CEOs, Artistic Leaders, Board Members, Community Orchestra Leaders, Development Staff, and Marketing Staff (pictured left).

***"Virtual peer forums build community, support, and reassurance."***

*~ Zen Edwards, Executive Director, Baroque Music Festival Corona del Mar*



# 2024-25 Programs and Services

## Orchestra CEO Retreat

*Supporting and valuing orchestra leaders.*

Eighteen orchestra leaders gathered in Big Sur on January 13, in partnership with the Monterey Symphony and the Big Sur Land Trust, to examine the orchestra business model, strengthen board development, and offer peer-to-peer learning and support.



2025 Orchestra CEO Retreat



Orchestras at the State Capitol for 2025 Arts Advocacy Day

## Advocacy

*Giving orchestras and music organizations a seat at the table.*

ACSO and nine member orchestras gathered with hundreds of statewide arts colleagues in Sacramento for Arts Advocacy Day on April 22. We rallied in solidarity and met with lawmakers to champion public funding and support for the arts.

In the spring, ACSO advocated as part of a statewide coalition to successfully protect \$11.5 million for the Performing Arts Equitable Payroll Fund.

## ACSO Awards

ACSO celebrated remarkable individuals for their meaningful contributions to the orchestra field through four awards: Most Valuable Player (MVP) Volunteer Award, Executive Leadership Award, Emerging Professional Award, and Young Musician Leadership Award.

Eleven outstanding individuals were honored at ACSO's 2025 Annual Meeting for their innovation, fearlessness, and the deep sense of service they bring to their work.



[Click to Read About the 2025 ACSO Award Winners](#)

# Individual Donors

(Oct 1, 2024 - Sept 30, 2025)

**ACSO is grateful for the generous individuals whose support helps us deliver essential programs and services to our music community.**

## **\$7,500+**

Jamei Haswell & Mack Schwing  
Donna Williams

## **\$5,000 - \$7,499**

Jeri Crawford  
Sharon Simpson  
Scott Vandrick & Tony Foster

## **\$2,500 - \$4,999**

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Giuliano Kornberg  
Elizabeth Shribman  
John Wineglass

## **\$1,000 - \$2,499**

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## **\$750 - \$999**

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Akilah Morgan  
Ellen Armour Stein

## **\$500 - \$749**

Aubrey Bergauer  
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## **\$250 - \$499**

Kate Akos & Harry Jacobs  
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Dwight Tate, *on behalf of*  
*Riverside Philharmonic*  
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Stephen Wilson  
Marie Yang

## **\$100 - \$249**

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Leni Boorstin  
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Keven Brown  
Luisa Cariaga  
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ACSO Board Meeting, October 2024, The Music Center, Los Angeles

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ASSOCIATION OF CALIFORNIA  
SYMPHONY ORCHESTRAS

Empowering Our Music Community

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