

Youth Symphony of Southern Oregon

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NEWSLETTER OF THE YOUTH SYMPHONY OF SOUTHERN OREGON

Volume 30 • Number 2 • Winter/Spring 2020

Quarter NOTES



Youth Symphony of Southern Oregon 2019-2020 Concert Season

Despite an abbreviated 2019-2020 Concert Season, the musicians of the Youth Symphony of Southern Oregon presented inspiring performances that delighted YSSO concert patrons from throughout the Rogue Valley and beyond.

Fall Concert Series performances were presented in Ashland at the Oregon Center for the Arts at Southern Oregon University and in Medford at the Collier Center's Craterian Theater in November 2019. The performances featured the Youth Symphony playing the overture to Gioachino Rossini's opera "William Tell," *Preludio Sinfonico* by Giacomo Puccini, and Domenico Cimarosa's *Concerto for Oboe & Strings* with soloist Alex Burns, winner of the 2019 Concerto Competition. The Youth Orchestra played arrangements of the *Russian Sailor's Dance* from "The Red Poppy" by Reinhold Glière, selections from *The Messiah* by G.F. Händel, Archangelo Corelli's *Adagio and Allegro*, and *Orpheus in the Underworld* by Jacques Offenbach. The orchestras were led by YSSO music director and conductor Cynthia Hutton, D.M.A.

In December, advanced level string, brass and woodwind musicians participated in Chamber Music Series performances at the Historic First Presbyterian Church in Jacksonville and at Grace Lutheran Church in Ashland. Multiple string quartets, a bassoon-cello duo, a French horn ensemble, and a wind ensemble played chamber music by W.A. Mozart, Josef Haydn, August Klughardt, and Ludwig van Beethoven, as well as selections for the season.

The annual Concerto Competition was held in Ashland in January 2020 at the Oregon Center for the Arts Recital Hall at SOU. Youth Symphony violinists, Sean Bullock and Katelyn Savino, were selected to play with the Youth Symphony as soloists in upcoming performances.

In February, the YSSO presented Winter Concert Series performances at the Performing Arts Center in Grants Pass, the Craterian Theater in Medford and at SOU in Ashland. The Youth Symphony played *Marche Slave* by Piotr I. Tchaikovsky and *The Composer is Dead*, music by Nathaniel Stookey and text by Lemony Snicket. The guest narrator for the work was noted actor and director Dennis Smith, Southern Oregon University Professor Emeritus. The Youth Orchestra played the *Bacchanale* from the opera "Samson & Delilah" by Camille Saint-Saëns (arr. Isaac), *The Great Locomotive Chase* by Robert Smith, and the *Overture to Lucile* by André-Ernest Modeste Grétry (arr. Barnes). YSSO music director and conductor Cynthia Hutton marked her 25th season as music director and conductor in 2019-2020.

Spring Concert Series performances were scheduled to take place in May 2020 at the Oregon Center for the Arts at

SOU in Ashland, the Performing Arts Center in Grants Pass and the Craterian Theater in Medford. Youth Symphony repertoire included *Symphonie espagnole, Op. 21* by Edouard Lalo, featuring Youth Symphony concertmaster and Concerto Competition winner Sean Bullock, and movements from *Symphony No. 5* by Dmitri Shostakovich. The Youth Orchestra was preparing *Scottish Fantasy* by Robert Washburn, *Procession of the Nobles* by Nicholas Rimsky-Korsakov (arr. Isaac) and *Thunder and Lightning Polka* by Johann Strauss (arr. Isaac). The Youth Symphony and Youth Orchestra were planning to present a joint performance of *Selections from The Sound of Music* by Richard Rogers and Oscar Hammerstein, Jr. (arr. Bennett). At the beginning of the spring term, however, the governing board and staff suspended the remainder of the spring rehearsals and canceled the May 2020 concerts in response to the worldwide health pandemic, directives issued by state leaders, and guidance by public health professionals.

In addition to Concert Series performances, the Youth Symphony, Youth Orchestra, Concerto Competition soloists and Chamber Music Series musicians were scheduled to present three Community Outreach Concerts for the residents and staff of the Rogue Valley Manor, as well as parents and Manor guests. Two of the three concerts took place this season.

In addition to gifts and contributions from individuals, the following foundations and agencies provided funding for programs, concerts and initiatives: Carpenter Foundation, Carrico Family Foundation, City of Ashland (Ashland lodging tax revenue), Cow Creek Umpqua Indian Foundation, Dunlap Silsby Family Foundation, James F. & Marion L. Miller Foundation, Joe and Frances Naumes Family Foundation, Oregon Arts Commission (funded by the State of Oregon and the National Endowment for the Arts), Pacific Power Foundation, Sharkey Foundation, and Trust Management Services-Braemar Charitable Trust. The annual distribution from the Roger G. Hewitt Fund for Youth Symphony of Southern Oregon of The Oregon Community Foundation provided support for tuition and lesson assistance for YSSO musicians. The YSSO also received a bequest from Robert T. Kuntz. Members of the governing board coordinated two fund raising events this season: "Short Stack for a Good Cause" breakfast at Applebee's Restaurant in November and the YSSO Community Benefit Card (in partnership with 12 local businesses).



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Membership News

Concert Season Giving & Friends of the Youth Symphony of Southern Oregon

As the Youth Symphony of Southern Oregon (YSSO) organization concludes its abbreviated thirty-second season of performances for Rogue Valley audiences, I would like to offer my appreciation to the individuals, businesses, foundations and agencies providing financial assistance to the YSSO organization. The governing board, volunteers, families, musicians and staff members are grateful for every gift of support.

During a time of new challenges and uncertainty, the impact of music and the arts on communities and people has been amplified. Music resonates - literally and figuratively - throughout communities and with people of all ages. Whether a young musician's career path or calling is that of an engineer, educator, physician, scientist, public administrator, nurse, manager, civic or faith leader, professional musician, volunteer, parent, architect, attorney, accountant or astronaut, she/he will be better prepared through teamwork, intellectual challenges, and positive interactions. Involvement in the YSSO empowers young people, and it helps develop skills and habits for a lifetime.

Your investment helps the YSSO maintain high artistic standards as well as present affordable concerts. The organization receives support through contributions from individuals, concert partner (sponsor) funding, and foundation and agency grants. The YSSO generates additional revenue through ticket sales, program advertising and nominal tuition. Members of the governing board coordinate special events to generate financial support. The Youth Symphony of Southern Oregon is dedicated to artistic quality, professional management, thoughtful governance and careful stewardship of resources.

As you consider a gift in support of the Concert Season, please know that every contribution makes an impact on the YSSO. Contributions from individuals help pay for music, rehearsal facilities, concert venues and operations, and help underwrite tuition waiver and lesson assistance for YSSO musicians. When you receive a letter from the YSSO, please renew your membership or offer a Concert Season gift to honor a friend, colleague, musician or a family member. Checks should be made payable to the Youth Symphony of Southern Oregon and sent to the YSSO, P.O. Box 4291, Medford, OR 97501. The YSSO is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization and your gift may be tax-deductible. Please consult your professional tax advisor.

The public health crisis has had an enormous impact on young people, families, communities, businesses, organizations, services, and schools. It has also highlighted the importance of interaction, cooperation and collaboration. The YSSO looks forward to celebrating teamwork and reconnecting with families, student musicians, educational institutions, community groups and the public-at-large. As YSSO staff and board leaders plan for the upcoming season and adapt to the challenges ahead, the organization will emphasize and rededicate itself to best practices in instruction and performance, community responsiveness and engagement, careful planning and implementation, and thoughtful decision-making.

Thank you for investing in this remarkable organization and for joining us at the concerts and activities.

Sharon Wilson
Executive Director

**Youth Symphony of Southern Oregon
2020-2021 Concert Season**

(concert season plans and dates are subject to change due to health directives, facility use, distancing guidance and other factors)

Community Outreach Concert
Nov. 3, 2020 (Youth Symphony)

Fall Concert Series
Nov. 14 & 15, 2020

Chamber Music Series
Dec. 12 & 13, 2020

Concerto Competition
Jan. 25, 2021

Community Outreach Concert
Feb. 4, 2021 (Chamber Music & Soloists)

Winter Concert Series
Feb. 19, 20 & 21, 2021

Community Outreach Concert
May 4, 2021 (Youth Orchestra)

Spring Concert Series
May 7, 8 & 9, 2021



**Youth Symphony of Southern Oregon
2020-2021 Season Auditions**

Due to public health issues and limitations on facility use, Youth Symphony of Southern Oregon staff is in the process of developing special procedures for auditions. Please watch your e-mail for details.

Important Information



Katelyn Savino



Sean Bullock

photos by Cari Baker

2020 Concerto Competition

The Youth Symphony of Southern Oregon's annual Concerto Competition was held on Monday evening, January 27, 2020, at the Oregon Center for the Arts Music Recital Hall at Southern Oregon University in Ashland. Advanced-level Youth Symphony musicians competed for an opportunity to play with the Youth Symphony as a soloist.

This year's participants included violinists Kai Savage, Trinity Psalm, Elizabeth Moore, Ivana Petrovic, Katelyn Savino and Sean Bullock. The musicians performed excerpts from works by Dmitri Kabalevsky, Johan Sebastian Bach, Edouard Lalo, and Max Bruch. Sean Bullock and Katelyn Savino were selected as winners this year.

The judges for the 2020 Concerto Competition were Lori Calhoun and Abigail Wilensky



Celebrating Cynthia Hutton's 25 Years of Music with the YSSO



By Ann Godwin, Vice-President, Governing Board

The 2019-2020 Concert Season marked Cynthia Hutton's 25th anniversary as music director for the Youth Symphony of Southern Oregon. The YSSO governing board would like to extend its heartfelt thanks to Dr. Hutton for an amazing 25 years of music as conductor of the Youth Symphony and Youth Orchestra.

To honor her service, the governing board will be presenting her with a special gift to celebrate this milestone. A presentation baton and case with a bespoke silver plaque hand engraved by local master craftsman Murray Huggins has been commissioned by the governing board. Mr. Huggins is a parent of Youth Symphony alumna Aubrey Huggins. His beautiful work is sought after world-wide. Please visit his website to view his extraordinary work: Colin Kyo Bagpipes www.ckpipes.com

Dr. Hutton has served as music director of the Youth Symphony of Southern Oregon and conductor of the Youth Symphony and Youth Orchestra since 1995. She has dedicated countless hours bringing music to life in vibrant and inspiring YSSO performances. She is an energetic and passionate leader and is superbly skilled at engaging each musician. Her baton is tirelessly at work during rehearsals bringing every chair into the music.

Our audiences are always complementing the performances and the range of music showcased each year. Young musicians from grade school through college have been honored to participate in our concerts under her direction. Many of our alumni have been so inspired by the experience that they have pursued music as a degree or career. In addition to her work with the YSSO, Dr. Hutton is associate professor of music at Southern Oregon University (SOU) where she has served as chair of the department of music. She is a member of the Rogue Valley Symphony and the SOU Faculty Brass Quintet. Dr. Hutton has served on the boards of the Oregon Music Educators Association and the College Band Directors National Association – Northwest Division. Dr. Hutton is a Recipient of the Alteria M. Bryant Award honoring women in the arts, as well as SOU's Elmo Stevenson Presidential Award. Prior to coming to southern Oregon, Dr. Hutton served as director of bands and horn instructor at the University of California, San Diego, and was assistant conductor of the La Jolla Civic University Orchestra. She received her doctorate in conducting from the University of Colorado (Boulder).

As the YSSO faces new challenges in the coming year, the governing board is fortunate to have Dr. Hutton with us. Her experience, dedication and passion will be invaluable in meeting these challenges.

The governing board is honored to have Dr. Hutton as music director of the YSSO. We look forward to many more seasons bringing hearts, hands and minds together, and inspiring new generations through the power of music and with Cindy at the baton.





ROSALEE WIRFS *Symphony, Violin*

Rosalee knew when she was young and before it was available in her school that she wanted to play the violin. In the fifth grade she finally got to start. She is a senior at South Medford High School (SMHS) and her school music teacher is Zoryn Thompson. In addition to playing violin in the Youth Symphony, Rosalee plays in the SMHS Concert Orchestra and the SMHS Chamber Orchestra. At the suggestion of her private teacher, Heidi Smith, Rosalee joined the YSSO in the seventh grade. Rosalee's mother is Carolyn Wirfs.

JASMINE YANEZ *Symphony, Violin*

Jasmine Yanez, a senior at Ashland High School (AHS), joined the YSSO in her freshman year. In addition to the Youth Symphony she plays in the AHS Chamber Orchestra and Siskiyou Violins. Her mother is Sonia Rangel. After her baby grand piano couldn't be moved with them to Ashland, Jasmine was introduced to the violin by Ashland Middle School music teacher Lauren Trolley.



She currently studies violin privately with Faina Podolnaya whom she credits with helping her in both her musical and personal development.

"Practice," is the advice Jasmine would pass on to future YSSO musicians. She will remember the sense of community she felt with her YSSO colleagues and Cindy Hutton's incredible talent as conductor. In college, Jasmine intends to pursue a degree in business.



Annual Giving: Friends of the Youth Symphony of Southern Oregon

Gifts and contributions from individuals, businesses and families generate 20 percent of the Youth Symphony of Southern Oregon organization's annual revenue. Take a moment to renew or increase your gift, make an additional gift or honor a friend or colleague by making a contribution in his/her name. This is the perfect time to show your support for the YSSO organization. The Youth Symphony of Southern Oregon is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization and contributions may be tax-deductible. Please consult a professional tax advisor for details.

Categories of giving:

- | | | | | | |
|--|----------|---|---------|--------------------------------------|-------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Director's Circle | \$10,000 | <input type="checkbox"/> Conductor's Circle | \$1,000 | <input type="checkbox"/> Sponsor | \$100 |
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Please mail your gift to: **Youth Symphony of Southern Oregon
P.O. Box 4291
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(as you wish the name/s to appear in the concert series program)

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Enclosed is a check in the amount of: \$ _____

Please charge the gift to my: Visa MasterCard

Credit Card #: _____

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In Appreciation...

Thank you for your support of the Youth Symphony of Southern Oregon

Sharon Wilson, Executive Director

I wish to offer my appreciation to the volunteers, parents, musicians, teachers, schools, businesses, organizations and governing board directors who assisted with rehearsals, concerts, initiatives and events this season.

Volunteers: Thank you to Jill Savino, Tristan Morrow and Patty Klein for recruiting and managing volunteers. Thank you to Sally Snyder for heading the team that organized the annual breakfast at Applebee's Restaurant, as well as the members of the governing board for their work on the YSSO Community Benefit Card fund raising project. Thank you to parents who provided refreshments for evening rehearsals and receptions, and volunteered their time to help with activities and concerts.

Musicians, Families, Organizations: To the musicians, thank you for participating in the YSSO and for helping to enrich the cultural landscape of the Rogue Valley. Thank you to the families of the musicians for supporting the YSSO and its work. Thank you to all of the music coaches who mentored the musicians this year. The YSSO offers its thanks and appreciation to school music teachers and private instructors for their work and for advocating for music education in schools and communities.

Concert Logistics: The YSSO offers its appreciation to Jennifer Garcia, David Johnson, and Chris Jossy for their assistance and work at rehearsals and the performances.

Governing Board: I wish to express my thanks to governing board directors Stacy Brubaker, Ann Godwin, Jill Savino, Kriko Michaels, Shanée von Strahl, Tanya Kerr, Mary Jane Morrison, Collette Rotter, Charla Crawford, Sally Snyder and Eric Werner for work on behalf of the YSSO organization.

Operations: The YSSO offers its appreciation to David Ruppe and Angel McDonald for their work on YSSO publications, Ingrid Perry (NP Bookkeeping by ID, LLC) for bookkeeping assistance, and Rory Tosh, CPA (KDP Certified Public Accountants, LLP) for preparing the annual reports. To Mark Jacobs, thank you for providing wonderful program notes this season. Thank you to photographer Cari Baker for documenting the performances and to Patty Klein for her assistance with administrative projects and the music library.

Businesses: Thank you to Paddington Station in Ashland and Artistic Piano in Medford for selling concert series tickets. The YSSO would also like to thank the businesses who placed advertising in concert series programs. The organization offers its thanks to Applebee's Neighborhood Grill for its support as well.

Funders: In addition to annual gifts and contributions from individuals and families, the YSSO received funding from the following foundations and agencies this season: Carpenter Foundation, Carrico Family Foundation, City of Ashland (Ashland lodging tax revenues), Cow Creek Umpqua Indian Foundation, Dunlap Silsby Family Foundation, James F. & Marion L. Miller Foundation, Joe and Frances Naumes Family Foundation, Oregon Arts Commission, a state agency funded by the State of Oregon, Pacific Power Foundation, the Roger G. Hewitt Fund for Youth Symphony of Southern Oregon of The Oregon Community Foundation, Sharkey Family

Foundation, and Trust Management Services-Braemar Charitable Trust.

Facilities & Venues: The YSSO would also like to thank the Medford School District Facilities Office and the staff at North Medford High School, Ashland School District, Grants Pass High School Performing

Arts Center, the Craterian Theater at the Collier Center, the Oregon Center for the Arts at Southern Oregon University, Historic First Presbyterian Church (Jacksonville), and Grace Lutheran Church (Ashland). Thank you to Mary Jane Morrison, Bert Chumbler, Ollie Sontag, Jo Ann Basin and Bob Buddemeier for coordinating YSSO concerts at the Rogue Valley Manor.

Each year, the YSSO relies on a cadre of individuals, businesses, institutions and community members to carry out its mission. It would not be possible to rehearse, perform or hold special events without the help and cooperation of parents, volunteers, schools, venues, educators, businesses and music professionals.

Thank you to all for your commitment to sustaining music and music education programs, to ensuring affordable and accessible concerts, for transforming lives, and for augmenting the creative prosperity of our region. The YSSO looks forward to serving Rogue Valley communities, families and audiences next season and for years to come.



Music Coaches, Accompanists & Adjudicators

The Youth Symphony of Southern Oregon would like to thank the following musicians and music teachers for serving as audition and concerto competition adjudicators, music coaches and accompanists this season:

Pat Berlet, Kathryn Brunhaver, Lori Calhoun, Cynthia Cournoyer, Shelly Cox, Bruce Dresser, Kristin Kessler, Bruce McKern, Faina Podolnaya, Anne Robison, Tiffany Schmidt, Cynthia Stauffer, Thomas Stauffer, Kathleen Strahm, Heidi Strahm Smith, Nicholas Temple, Alexander Tutunov, Abigail Wilensky, and Carolyn Wirfs.

Roger G. Hewitt Fund for Youth Symphony of Southern Oregon

In late 2014 the Youth Symphony of Southern Oregon was named the charitable beneficiary of the Roger G. Hewitt Fund for Youth Symphony of Southern Oregon of The Oregon Community Foundation. An annual distribution from this permanent fund helps underwrite tuition and lesson assistance for participating YSSO musicians with financial need. The establishment of the fund expands the organization's capacity to serve YSSO musicians, helps sustain the mission of the YSSO, augments inclusion and access, and supports the YSSO's work with dedicated and deserving musicians from throughout the region. The YSSO governing board, staff, families, volunteers and musicians are grateful for this legacy gift.



OWEN AKIYAMA *Symphony, Bass*

Owen is the principal bass of the Youth Symphony. He is a senior at South Medford High School (SMHS). Owen began playing the cello when he was 11 years old, choosing it as his instrument because he says, “No one else was playing it.” At 13 he joined the YSSO. In addition to the Youth Symphony, Owen performs in the SMHS Chamber Orchestra, SMHS Jazz Band, and Information Jazz Club. He thanks his orchestra school music teacher Zoryn Thompson for sticking with him and being the best teacher he could ask for. Nathan Stokes is his school band teacher. Owen is the son of Kellen and Eva Akiyama. He is grateful for the funding his parents provide for his artistic pursuits and for his mom driving him everywhere. Owen plans to continue playing music while pursuing a degree in biology at the University of Oregon.

MILAYNA BARKER *Symphony, Clarinet*

A South Medford High School (SMHS) senior, Milayna Barker began playing the clarinet when she was 12 years old. She became a member of the YSSO in the eighth grade after Cindy Hutton visited her school to talk about the Youth Symphony of Southern Oregon. In addition to the YSSO, Milayna performs in her school Wind Ensemble and Jazz Ensemble conducted by Nathan Stokes, the SMHS Band Director. Milayna has studied clarinet privately with Clara Haptonstall for four years. Michael and Cathy Barker are Milayna’s parents.

A favorite YSSO memory for Milayna was performing Pyotr Tchaikovsky’s *Romeo and Juliet* with the Youth Symphony. Milayna also noted that she has enjoyed playing classical music with amazing musicians. Milayna will attend Rogue Community College where she will major in speech and hearing sciences and minor in music.



KELSY BIGGS *Symphony, Flute*

A North Medford High School (NMHS) senior, Kelsy Biggs has participated in the YSSO since the eighth grade. In addition to serving as principal flute of the Youth Symphony, she plays in the NMHS Wind Ensemble. Her NMHS music teacher is Steve Kessler whom Kelsy says is an incredibly inspiring band teacher. Her private teacher is Shelly Cox whom Kelsy says has helped her become a more confident, skillful player. Kelsy’s parents are Jerry and Rebecca Biggs. She is grateful for their support.

Kelsy’s advice to future YSSO musicians, “Don’t give up. The music is challenging. But that will only help improve your musicality.” She has enjoyed meeting other dedicated musicians through YSSO and has built lasting friendships. Since her freshman year, Kelsy has competed in the OMEA District Solo and Ensemble competition and has qualified each year to compete at the state level. She plans to attend college and become a high school mathematics teacher.

OLIVIA BONETTI *Symphony, Cello*

Olivia is a senior at Ashland High School. Her father is Eric Bonetti. She has played in both the Youth Orchestra and Youth Symphony. She is also a member of the Ashland High School Chamber Orchestra. Lauren Trolley is Olivia’s school music teacher at AHS. She studies cello privately with Gerry Paré.



SEAN BULLOCK *Symphony, Violin*

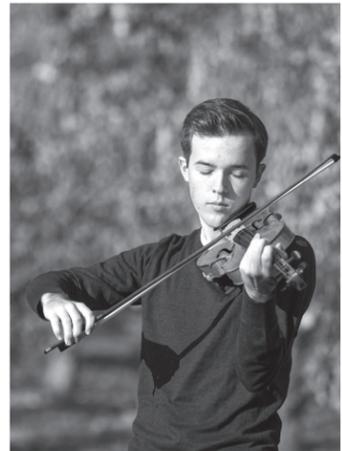
Youth Symphony concertmaster and a 2020 Concerto Competition winner, Sean is a senior at Grants Pass High School (GPHS). He is the son of David and Kirsten Bullock whom he thanks for fostering and supporting his passion in music. Sean performs in the GPHS Chamber Orchestra led by Krista Debolt. Cynthia Cournoyer has been his private violin teacher for seven years.

Sean began to study the violin in the fourth grade. He joined the YSSO the following year. He enjoys making music with his ‘amazing’ musical peers and is inspired by Cindy Hutton’s energy during rehearsals and on stage. The Jefferson Baroque Orchestra and the Oregon Music Education Association All-State Orchestra are ensembles with which Sean has performed. He plans to pursue a degree in engineering at college.

AIDAN PEARD *Symphony, Violin*

Aidan joined the Youth Orchestra five years ago with the encouragement of his violin teacher, Heidi Smith. He is a senior at St. Mary’s School and in addition to playing in the Youth Symphony he performs with Siskiyou Violins. Aidan is grateful for all the support and funding his parents, Garret and Elizabeth Peard, have provided for him.

Aidan would encourage future YSSO musicians to enjoy the experience while you’re still doing it. He will remember playing amazing pieces, hearing the different parts in the symphony, the friends who made the experience fun, and the crazy sounds conductor Cindy Hutton made while counting. Aidan has been honored with the Excellence in the Arts Award, Mercy Flights Explorer Post 131 Explorer of the Year, and the Excellence in English Award. He is an AP Scholar with Honor. He will study biochemistry in college.



JENNA ELIZABETH ROBINSON *Symphony, Violin*

Youth Symphony principal second violin, Jenna is a senior at Grants Pass High School (GPHS). After being encouraged by parents Jon and Kelly Robinson, Jenna began playing the violin when she was nine years old. She performs with the Grants Pass High School (GPHS) Chamber Orchestra in addition to the YSSO. Jenna’s school music teacher is Krista Debolt. She is especially thankful for her parents and teachers whom she says have believed in her.

Jenna noted that her favorite work performed with the Youth Symphony was the *Overture to William Tell* by Gioachino Rossini. “It’s such a grandiose exciting piece. How can you not love it!” she says. She has loved working hard together on challenging music with an advanced ensemble. Jenna has been awarded the Rotary Student of the Year, The Kiwanis Student of the Month, and has played in the OMEA All State Orchestra for two years. Brigham Young University is the college Jenna plans on attending where she will major in biology and pre-medicine.



EMILY SHIMA *Symphony, Trombone*

Youth Symphony principal trombone, Emily is the daughter of Kriko and Mika Michaels. She is a senior at Ashland High School (AHS) where she performs with the Wind Ensemble, Jazz Band, Brass Quintet and Chamber Winds. Travis Moddison is her school music teacher. She studies privately with Mark Jacobs. Emily says, “My parents and music teachers really encouraged me to both put in my best effort and to also have fun with music.”

Emily shared, “A memory I’ll look back fondly on is playing measure 268 of *The Composer is Dead* (music by Nathaniel Stookey with text by Lemony Snicket), because that was the first time I used the plunger mute, which creates one of the funniest sounds.” She has enjoyed the opportunity to perform challenging pieces with other musicians who are passionate about music. Emily’s post high school plans include attending college.



MIRIYA SLAYTON *Symphony, Flute & Piccolo*

Miriya is a senior at Eagle Point High School. In addition to the YSSO Miriya performs in the Eagle Point High School Wind Ensemble and Jazz Ensemble under the direction of Jeremy Durst. She studies flute privately with Sherril Wood. Miriya’s parents are David and Randi Slayton.



ALEX BURNS *Symphony, Oboe*

Youth Symphony principal oboe Alex Burns joined the YSSO nine years ago. He won the 2019 YSSO Concerto Competition and as a soloist performed Domenico Cimarosa's *Concerto for Oboe & Strings* with the Youth Symphony in the 2019 Fall Concert Series. He is a home schooled senior and a student at Rogue Community College. Alex studies oboe with Kristin Kessler whom he thanks for her many years of musical guidance, advice and mentorship. Alex is the son of Ramon Burns and Sharon Reagan. He wishes to offer his heartfelt appreciation to his parents and family, especially his mother, for their support and encouragement, and for ensuring his participation in music programs, lessons, and performances.

Alex has played in Camelot Theater and One Eleven Theater Company productions and has participated in the Western International Band Clinic, Sequoia Chamber Music Workshop at Humboldt State University, the Ashland Chamber Music Workshop and Woodwinds at Wallowa (music camp). He intends to continue his involvement in music following graduation and pursue an interest in welding.



NOAH CHAMBERS *Symphony, Trombone*

North Medford High School (NMHS) senior, Noah is the son of Dave and Rachel Chambers. In addition to the YSSO Noah performs in the North Medford High School Jazz Ambassadors, Marching Band and Pep Band. His school music teacher and conductor at NMHS is Steve Kessler.



LUCAS COOK *Symphony, Cello*

Lucas has performed with the YSSO since his sophomore year after a recommendation from his school music teacher Krista Debolt. He is now a senior at Grants Pass High School (GPHS). Lucas plays in the GPHS Honor Orchestra, Orchestra, and Strings. Teresa Northcross is his private teacher. The deep sound of the cello is what drew him to the instrument when he was nine years old. Lucas thanks his grandparents, Robert Keyes and Vivian Keyes, for supporting his desire to play the cello and experience the opportunities YSSO has provided him.

Lucas' advice for future YSSO musicians is, "Work hard and practice. That's what it takes to achieve success." Lucas plans to study welding at Linn Benton Community College.



ELEANOR CRAWFORD *Symphony, Cello*

Ellie is the daughter of Michael and Charla Crawford. She is a senior at Grants Pass High School (GPHS) where she performs in the Chamber Orchestra and Cello Choir. Ellie joined the YSSO in her freshman year after hearing from her school music teacher, Krista Debolt, that more cellos were needed. For eight years she has studied cello privately with Hillary Brownell. Ellie is grateful for her parents support. "They push me to be the best musician I can be!" she says.

The YSSO has given Ellie the opportunity to work collaboratively with other accomplished young musicians. She states that she has enjoyed how well and how hard everyone works to perform the amazing repertoire. She has made lifelong friends in the YSSO, from other schools as well as her own. Ellie will attend Rogue Community College to pursue an associate degree.



ASPEN DENNEY *Symphony, Clarinet*

Daughter of Dan and Patti Denney, Aspen is a senior at North Medford High School (NMHS). She started playing the clarinet when she was 12 years old and joined the YSSO in the eighth grade. Aspen studies privately with Gwen Hutchings. Her school music teacher is Steve Kessler of whom Aspen said, "He has inspired me to be a great musician and a great person." Ensembles in which Aspen participates include the NMHS Wind Ensemble, NMHS Jazz Ambassadors, and the Ashland City Band.

A favorite YSSO memory of Aspen's was, while in Youth Orchestra, watching the collaborative performance by the Youth Symphony and Brava! Opera Theater's guest singers. As she watched, she was inspired, motivated, and fell in love with music even more. Aspen is a member of the Torch Honor Society and has participated in OMEA All State Ensembles, the Ashland Jazz Festival, and the Southern Oregon University (SOU) Honor Band.





DANIEL DENNEY *Symphony, Clarinet*

Principal clarinet of the Youth Symphony, Daniel is a senior at North Medford High School (NMHS). His school music teachers have included David Sommers and Steve Kessler, his current teacher at NMHS. In addition to his involvement in the YSSO, he plays in the NMHS Wind Ensemble and Jazz Ambassadors. He joined the YSSO after a school visit by Cindy Hutton to his eighth grade class. He has played the clarinet since the sixth grade. His parents are Dan and Patti Denney whom he thanks for their support of his music endeavors. Daniel studies privately with Daryl Fjeldheim.

Daniel found Heitor Villa L6bos' *Bachianas Brasileiras No. 4* amazing. "It was technically challenging. It had beautiful sweeping melodies and it is a piece I will never forget," he said. Daniel has participated in OMEA All State Ensembles. He plans to attend Yale University and pursue a degree in either chemistry or biochemistry and minor in clarinet performance.

GAGE GONSALVES *Symphony, Trumpet*

Gage Gonsalves, a senior at North Medford High School, is the co-principal trumpet of the Youth Symphony. In addition to his involvement in the YSSO, Gage is a member of the North Medford High School Wind Ensemble and NMHS Jazz Ensemble conducted by Steve Kessler. He is the son of Damian and Samantha Gonsalves.



CALEB HUTCHINGS *Symphony, Bassoon*

South Medford High School (SMHS) senior Caleb Hutchings, winner of the Youth Symphony of Southern Oregon's 2018 Concerto Competition and principal bassoon of the Youth Symphony, has been playing the bassoon since he was in the seventh grade. In addition to his involvement in the Youth Symphony, he is a member of the SMHS Wind Ensemble under the direction of Nathan Stokes. Caleb also plays in the Rogue Valley Symphonic Band. He studies bassoon privately with Tiffany Schmidt. In 2018 he placed second in the Oregon State Activities Association Solo Music Championship. Last summer he participated in the Fresno Summer Orchestra Academy. Caleb's parents are Tim and Gwen Hutchings. He plans to attend a music conservatory next year.

BENJAMIN LEWIS *Symphony, Bass*

A member of the Youth Symphony's bass section, Benjamin Lewis is a senior at Ashland High School. Travis Moddison is his school music teacher who conducts him in the Ashland High School Jazz Ensemble. Benjamin studies bass privately with Dave Miller. Julian Lewis and Sarah Adams are his parents.



KINSEY LOVICH *Symphony, Viola*

A senior at St. Mary's School, Kinsey is the daughter of Steve Lovich and Tracy Samples. Kinsey joined the YSSO when she was seven years old at the urging of her older sister who was in the Youth Orchestra at the time. Kinsey studies viola privately with Pat Berlet whom she says has taught her to be a more skillful player.

Jupiter, The Bringer of Jollity from *The Planets* by Gustav Holst is a work that Kinsey enjoyed performing with the Youth Symphony. Its beautiful melodies made it a fun and dynamic piece to play. She states that she has been impressed by how a group of talented, young musicians come together in a performance after weeks of rehearsal. Kinsey will attend the University of Oregon in the fall studying Human Physiology while minoring in Spanish and chemistry.