

# Youth Symphony of Southern Oregon

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## Membership News

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

After 18 months of remote classes and programs, Youth Symphony of Southern Oregon musicians were thrilled to be back on the concert stage this season. As the Youth Symphony of Southern Oregon (YSSO) organization concludes its thirty-fourth season, I would like to offer my gratitude to the individuals, foundations, and agencies providing financial assistance to the organization. The governing board, volunteers, families, musicians, and staff members appreciate each gift of support.

During a time of uncertainty and evolving environments, the importance of the arts in our lives has taken on even greater importance. Music resonates throughout communities and with people of all ages. Whether a career path or calling is that of an engineer, educator, nurse, physician, public administrator, civic or faith leader, professional musician, volunteer, parent, architect, attorney, accountant, or astronaut, each person is better prepared through teamwork, intellectual challenges, and social interaction. Involvement in the YSSO empowers young people, develops social cohesion, builds friendships, and nurtures positive habits.

Your investment helps the YSSO connect with young people and families, maintain high artistic standards, and 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.

As you consider a gift, please know that every contribution is impor-

tant to the YSSO. Contributions from individuals help pay for virtual classes and in-person training, rehearsal facilities, concert venues, music, 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 make a 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. Your gift may be tax-deductible. Please consult your professional tax advisor for details.

The public health crisis continues to have an impact on young people, families, businesses, organizations, and schools. It has also highlighted the positive impact cooperation and collaboration have on successful communities. The YSSO looks forward to renewing relationships and developing new partnerships as the nonprofit sector and arts organization reinvigorate programs and services in the coming years. The YSSO marks its 35th anniversary in 2022-2023 and as staff and board leaders plan special performances and activities to mark the milestone, the organization will emphasize best practices in instruction, community engagement, and decision-making. The Youth Symphony of Southern Oregon will re-emphasize its dedication to artistic quality, thoughtful governance and management, and careful stewardship of resources.

Thank you for investing in a remarkable organization and resilient young people.

Sharon Wilson  
Executive Director

# Quarter NOTES



## Youth Symphony of Southern Oregon 2021-2022 Concert Season concludes with works by Mozart, Bernstein, and Berlioz

The Youth Symphony of Southern Oregon's 2021-2022 Concert Season concludes with Spring Concert Series performances on May 6, 7 & 8, 2022. Music Director and Conductor Cynthia Hutton shared, "The Youth Symphony of Southern Oregon wishes to thank everyone for their support throughout the 18 month hiatus and for attending the performances this season. The resilience and dedication of the concert patrons, donors, volunteers, musicians, music coaches, teachers, and families sustained the YSSO as it returned to in-person rehearsals and concerts."

The Spring Concert Series includes a 7:30 p.m. performance on Friday, May 6 at the Oregon Center for the Arts Music Recital Hall at Southern Oregon University in Ashland, a 7:30 p.m. concert on Saturday, May 7 at the Performing Arts Center in Grants Pass, and a 3:00 p.m. performance on Sunday, May 8 at the Collier Center for the Performing Arts' Craterian Theater in Medford. Tickets are \$10 (general admission) and \$5 (students w/ID). Advance tickets for the May 8 performance in Medford are available through the Craterian Theater box office (541-779-3000). Tickets for the May 6 and May 7 performances will be available at the door.

The 70-member Combined Symphony-Orchestra will play two movements of the *Concerto for Horn in E-flat Major, KV 495* by W.A. Mozart (1756-1791). The featured soloist is 2022 Concerto

Competition winner, Ellie McGary. Also on the concert program are arrangements of *Roman Carnival Overture* by Hector Berlioz (1803-1869) and *Prelude to Carmen* by Georges Bizet (1838-1875).

In addition to the works by Mozart, Berlioz and Bizet, the musicians will play *Fiddler's Day* by Ralph Matesky (b. 1913), an arrangement of Meredith Willson's (1902-1984) *Seventy-Six Trombones* from the beloved musical *The Music Man*, and a special arrangement of selections from the musical *West Side Story* by Leonard Bernstein (1918-1990).

Accomplished public school, private school, home school and college brass, string, percussion, and woodwind musicians from Medford, Ashland, Grants Pass, Jacksonville, Central Point, Eagle Point, Talent, Phoenix, Klamath Falls, Williams, and other communities were selected to participate in the Combined Symphony-Orchestra this season.

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Founded in 1988, the Youth Symphony of Southern Oregon is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to providing young musicians with opportunities to expand their knowledge of classical music by learning and performing challenging repertoire. The YSSO provides exceptional performance experiences and training for young musicians under the leadership of a professional conductor and professional musicians, and fosters lifelong appreciation of music and the arts.

For more information, please contact the Youth Symphony of Southern Oregon, P.O. Box 4291, Medford, OR 97501, 541-858-8859, [info@yso.org](mailto:info@yso.org) or visit: [yso.org](http://yso.org).



Photographs are by Cari Baker Photography.

### Governing Board Officers

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Youth Symphony of Southern Oregon

Youth Symphony of Southern Oregon  
P.O. Box 4291  
Medford, OR 97501-0163  
(541) 858-8859  
[www.yso.org](http://www.yso.org)  
[info@yso.org](mailto:info@yso.org)

**Youth Symphony of Southern Oregon**  
2022-2023  
Season Auditions

The Youth Symphony of Southern Oregon staff is working on the audition schedule for next season. Please watch your e-mail for details and or visit the YSSO website (yso.org). We hope to have information available and posted online by no later than mid-July. Next season is the organization's 35th concert season. We are planning special repertoire and programming in honor of the milestone.

**Ellie McGary**  
2022 Concerto  
Competition Winner

A senior at North Medford High School (NMHS), Ellie McGary has been involved in the Youth Symphony of Southern Oregon since she was in the seventh grade. Currently, Ellie is principal French horn of this season's Combined Symphony-Orchestra. She has played in the Youth Orchestra and the Youth Symphony in previous seasons, and she has participated in the YSSO Chamber Music Series program and performances. Her music teacher at NMHS is Steve Kessler where she is a member of the NMHS Wind Ensemble and Jazz Ambassadors. She studies horn privately with Dr. Cynthia Hutton. A multi-instrumentalist, she also plays the trumpet and mellophone in addition to the French horn.



**Important Information**

**Concert Season Foundation Funding, Legacy Gifts and Endowment Fund**

The YSSO was honored to receive support from numerous foundations and other funding sources this season. **The Carpenter Foundation, Carrico Family Foundation, Cow Creek Umpqua Indian Foundation, Dunlap Silsby Family Foundation, James F. & Marion L. Miller Foundation, Joe and Frances Naumes Family Foundation, the Oregon Arts Commission** (with funding from the State of Oregon and the National Endowment for the Arts), **Pacific Power Foundation, Sharkey Foundation, and Trust Management Services/Braemar Charitable Trust.**

In 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.** The annual distribution from this permanent fund helps underwrite tuition and lesson assistance for participating YSSO musicians with financial need.

Bequests from **Robert T. Kuntz** form the core of a new Reserve Fund. This fund will help sustain the community benefit mission of the YSSO, support capacity-building initiatives and operations, help facilitate music opportunities for young people, and strengthen the organization's financial position.

The YSSO governing board, staff, families, volunteers, and musicians are grateful for these legacy gifts, as well as 2021-2022 season funding awarded by the foundations noted above.

The financial support of family funds, foundations, agencies, and individuals helped underwrite training, concerts, and operations. The YSSO returned to in-person rehearsals and performances, offered access to participation regardless of financial circumstances, presented outstanding concerts, and maintained operations. The Youth Symphony of Southern Oregon extends its thanks and appreciation to these funders and all donors for their support of and faith in the YSSO and its services for young people.

The governing board of the Youth Symphony of Southern Oregon entered a formal partnership with The Oregon Community Foundation (OCF) in 2006 to manage and administer an **Endowment Partner Fund** for the YSSO organization. The OCF is a statewide nonprofit foundation established in 1973 as a vehicle for Oregonians to

increase philanthropy. The OCF works with individuals, families, businesses, and organizations to create charitable funds to support the critical work of nonprofits in Oregon. The OCF has more than \$2 billion under management through 2,000 charitable funds. In a community foundation, donors pool their funds under shared management. Donors may tailor individual gifts to giving objectives. Funding from the estate of Robert Johnson and gifts from individuals provided the seed money for the YSSO's initial investment with The OCF. Contributors to the YSSO Endowment Fund include Penny Lee Austin, Alan Bergstrom, Hardt Family Fund of The Oregon Community Foundation, Robert Johnson Estate, Michael Klein, Sharon Minchow, Neil and Davida Stockton, Ron and Lynda Weinhold, and Sharon Wilson. To learn more about The Oregon Community Foundation, please visit [www.oregoncf.org](http://www.oregoncf.org).



**Thank you for your support of the Youth Symphony of Southern Oregon Music Coaches, Adjudicators, Accompanists**

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, guest musicians and mentors, and accompanists this season:

Stacy Brubaker, Lindan Burns, Lori Calhoun, Shelly Cox, James Dyson, Jodi French, Linda Harris, Mark E. Jacobs, Kristin Kessler, Eric Knox, David Miller, Faina Podolnaya, Jody Schmidt, Tiffany Schmidt, Emily Severson, Nancie Linn Shaw, Kathleen Strahm, Alexander Tutunov, and Alwyn Wright.

**Your Support is Appreciated!**



**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. Please 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. 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.

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P.O. Box 4291  
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**ELLIE MCGARY** *Combined Symphony & Orchestra, Horn*

Ellie McGary, 2022 Concerto Competition winner and principal of the Combined Symphony-Orchestra horn section, fell in love with the French horn as a child while listening to *Peter and the Wolf* by Sergei Prokofiev, a work in which the horn represents the wolf. Ellie was eleven when she began playing the instrument. She joined the YSSO in the seventh grade. She is a senior at North Medford High School (NMHS) where she performs with the NMHS Wind Ensemble and Jazz Ambassadors. Her school music teacher is Steve Kessler. She studies horn privately with Cynthia Hutton. Ellie is the daughter of Michael McGary.

Ellie has participated in the Oregon Music Educators Association (OMEA) All-State Orchestra for two years and the Western International Band Clinic (WIBC) for four years. She competed in the OMEA District Solo and Ensemble contest and won first place in her senior year. She was selected to participate in the Pacific Honours Ensemble Program, jointly hosted by WIBC and Youth Conservatorium (Queensland Conservatorium Griffith University) in Brisbane, Australia. A multi-instrumentalist, she also plays the trumpet and mellophone.

**EVA MITCHELL-VARGUS** *Combined Symphony & Orchestra, Violin*

Eva has been a member of the YSSO since she was in the first grade. She is a senior at Ashland High School where her school music teacher is Lauren Trolley. Her private violin teacher of 12 years is Ai Devore. Eva is grateful for the unwavering support of parents Steve Mitchell and Marcela Vargas, especially her dad who constantly pushed her to practice.

Eva has enjoyed the community of YSSO musicians pulling together to master and perform beautiful music. She currently serves as Assistant Concertmaster of the Combined Symphony-Orchestra. She is enormously thankful for Cindy Hutton, YSSO Music Director and Conductor, who has motivated the musicians to tackle advanced music while making it a fun endeavor. Her advice to future YSSO musicians is to throw yourself into the music, cherish it, be passionate and make bold mistakes, and challenge yourself. Eva has been selected to play in the Oregon Music Educators Association All-State Orchestra for three years. She plans to attend college and pursue a degree in medicine.



**HANNAH POISSON** *Combined Symphony & Orchestra, Violin*

Hannah is a senior at St. Mary's School. As a first grader she was encouraged to join the YSSO Youth Strings by her private violin teacher, Faina Podolnaya. Hannah has studied with Faina for twelve years. She continues to be inspired by Faina's artistry and genuineness. Her school music teacher is Chris Bingham. Hannah thanks her parents Brett and Denise Poisson for supporting her through high school and life in general. A personal mentor Hannah wishes to acknowledge is her Aunt Emelye, who taught her compassion and perseverance.

Hannah cites *The Composer is Dead* by Nathaniel Stookey with text by Lemony Snickett as one of two favorites during her tenure with the YSSO. The work was narrated by Dennis Smith in the Youth Symphony's performances. She also noted that the Sound of Music selections from the musical by Richard Rodgers and Oscar Hammerstein was another highlight for her. Hannah gives this advice to future YSSO musicians, "Stick with your instrument no matter how hard it gets...you will realize how big a part of your life music has become and will find a new kind of happiness in your art." Hannah also performs with Siskiyou Violins. She plans to attend college and pursue a degree in elementary education.

**T.J. SNYDER** *Combined Symphony & Orchestra, Violin*

T.J. Snyder, a senior at Grants Pass High School (GPHS), was encouraged to join the YSSO by his private violin teacher Cynthia Cournoyer when he was in the eighth grade. This season, he is a member of the first violin section of the YSSO's Combined Symphony-Orchestra. In addition to his involvement in the YSSO, T.J. is a member of the GPHS Chamber Orchestra. His school music teacher is Krista Debolt. T.J. is the son of Sally Snyder and Travis Snyder.

*Hungarian Dances No. 5 and No. 6* by Johannes Brahms were two of the first pieces T.J. performed with the YSSO. He shared he loved the works so much he memorized them without really trying. He also enjoyed playing Tchaikovsky's *1812 Overture* because of its melodies, contrasts in mood, and its unforgettable ending. A favorite YSSO memory for T.J. is working closely with his musical peers on beautiful music for the Chamber Music Series. His advice to future YSSO musicians is "When you get new music, listen to it." T.J. plans to study violin performance in college.



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

Sharon Wilson, Executive Director

I wish to offer my appreciation to the musicians, families, and governing board directors who endured difficult circumstances and persevered through uncertainties and challenges during the organization's hiatus. Bravo to all for your resilience! Although the organization was proud of the virtual classes and programs offered last season, it was a thrill to return to in-person rehearsals and performances and interact with musicians, families, and audience members this season.

**Musicians & Families:** To the musicians, thank you for participating in the YSSO's programs. Thank you to the YSSO families for supporting the organization and the musicians during a stressful time. The YSSO offers its thanks to school music teachers and private instructors for providing guidance, support, and music opportunities for young people.

**Governing Board:** The organization offers its thanks to governing board directors Stacy Brubaker, Tisha Wolf, Shanée Von Strahl, Sally Snyder, Tanya Kerr, Mary Jane Morrison, Charla Crawford, Jill Savino, Chiharu Sai, Clay Alumbaugh, and Ben Wayman for their arduous work, patience, and commitment as we navigated the return to in-person activities. A heartfelt thank you and appreciation goes to Stacy Brubaker and Jill Savino both of whom retire from the board as of June 30, 2022, after six years of devoted service. The members of the staff and your board colleagues will miss you! Although board and committee meetings have been conducted remotely for the most part again this season, directors and staff came together to oversee programs, monitor financial position, and discuss ideas.

**Operations:** The YSSO offers its appreciation to Angel McDonald for her work on the newsletter, Ingrid Perry (NP Bookkeeping by ID, LLC) for bookkeeping assistance and KDP Certified Public Accountants, LLP for preparing annual reports. The YSSO offers its appreciation to Mark Jacobs for providing program notes and the music coaches and teachers who mentored the young musicians. Thank you to Patty Klein for her work on administrative tasks, senior profiles, concert music, and the YSSO's music collection. Thank you to David Johnson and Caleb Landis for their concert production work.

**Funders:** In addition to annual gifts and contributions from individuals and families, the YSSO received funding from the Carpenter Foundation, Carrico Family Foundation, 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 and the National Endowment for the Arts, Pacific Power Foundation, Sharkey Foundation, and Trust Management Services/Braemar Charitable Trust, and a distribution from the Roger G. Hewitt Fund for Youth Symphony of Southern Oregon of The Oregon Community Foundation. Bequests from Robert T. Kuntz continue to help underwrite capacity-building initiatives and operating costs.

**Facilities & Venues:** Thank you to Mary Jane Morrison for facilitating and coordinating live-



streamed Community Outreach Concerts for the residents of the Rogue Valley Manor and Bert Chumbler for Manor concert publicity. The YSSO would also like to thank the Medford School District Facilities Office and the staff at North Medford High School, Grants Pass High School Performing Arts

Center, the Craterian Theater at the Collier Center for the Performing Arts, the Oregon Center for the Arts at Southern Oregon University, and the staff of Jacksonville's First Presbyterian Church.

Thank you to all for your commitment to the work of cultural arts organizations in our communities, as well as music education programs, affordable and accessible concerts. Thank you for transforming lives and for contributing to 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.



by Patty Klein

**CHLOE SKYE** *Combined Symphony & Orchestra, Violin*

Chloe joined the Youth Symphony in the fall 2019 as a sophomore. She is now a senior at Ashland High School (AHS). She is the daughter of Sascha Skye. In addition to her involvement in the Youth Symphony of Southern Oregon, Chloe plays with the AHS Chamber Orchestra, conducted by Lauren Trolley. Chloe studies violin privately with Faina Podolnaya.

**BLAKE OLSEN** *Combined Symphony & Orchestra, Trombone*

Blake Olsen is a senior at South Medford High School (SMHS). He joined the Combined Symphony-Orchestra trombone section this season. Mandy Martin and Nathan Olsen are his parents. His music teacher at SMHS is Erik Osberg.

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**ZIA BRANDSTETTER** *Combined Symphony & Orchestra, Clarinet*

Co-principal of the Combined Symphony-Orchestra clarinet section, Zia is a senior at Ashland High School (AHS) where she is a member of the AHS Wind Ensemble led by Travis Moddison. She is grateful for her school music teacher's care of and concern for his students' musical and personal growth. She cites her private teacher Lori Calhoun as her mentor on her musical journey. Scott Brandstetter and Karen Oppenheim are Zia's parents. She is thankful for their unconditional support.

When asked what she most enjoyed about playing in the YSSO, Zia responded, "I love all the people that I've gotten to meet and play with. I have absolutely loved the music we have [played] and the artistry and dedication of the musicians." She admires Dr. Hutton's determination and commitment to the YSSO musicians. Zia has performed with the Western International Band Clinic Honor Band, the SOU Honor Band, is a winner of the Southern Oregon Music Educators Association District Solo and Ensemble competition and is a member of the National Honor Society. Zia plans to attend college where she will pursue a bachelor's degree in political science and minor in music.



**FAITH CLARK** *Combined Symphony & Orchestra, Flute*

Faith Clark is a senior at South Medford High School (SMHS). Her school music teachers include Erik Osberg and Zoryn Thompson. In addition to the YSSO, Faith is a member of the SMHS Wind Ensemble. Her parents are Ron and Carole Clark. Faith is serving as co-principal of the Combined Symphony Orchestra's flute section this season.

**CLARA DYSON** *Combined Symphony & Orchestra, Oboe*

Clara began playing the oboe when she was 11 years old after seeing that her middle school was offering to teach students how to play. She joined the YSSO in the seventh grade at the encouragement of her parents, Peter Halt and Rebecca Dyson. She is now the principal oboe of the Combined Symphony-Orchestra. Clara is a senior at Ashland High School (AHS) where her music teacher is Travis Moddison. She studies oboe privately with Kristin Kessler. When asked who inspires her Clara answered, "My music teachers."

Favorite YSSO memories for Clara include playing cards with friends prior to concerts and playing *The Planets, Suite for Large Orchestra* by Gustav Holst in the last concert of the 2018-2019 season, after the departing seniors had been acknowledged. Clara was selected as the Southern Oregon Music Educators Association (OMEA) District Solo Contest (oboe) winner in her freshman and junior years and district winner in the OMEA Ensemble contest her sophomore year. She has participated in the Western International Band Clinic and the OMEA All-State Wind Ensemble. Clara intends to earn a college degree in astronomy.



**SYDNEY GODWIN** *Combined Symphony & Orchestra, Violin*

Sydney has participated in the YSSO for 11 years. She has been a member of Youth Strings, Youth Orchestra, Youth Symphony, the Combined Symphony-Orchestra, and the Chamber Music Series program. She was six years old when she began learning how to play the violin. She studies privately with Faina Podolnaya and plays in Siskiyou Violins. Sydney is a senior at St. Mary's School. Her parents are Steve and Ann Godwin whom she wishes to acknowledge for supporting and encouraging her to do what she loves.

When asked what she enjoyed most about playing in the YSSO Sydney responded, "I enjoyed making new friends, learning about different instruments, and expanding my repertoire." A favorite piece that Sydney will remember was Andrew Lloyd Webber's *Phantom of the Opera*. Her advice to future YSSO musicians is, "Listen to the instruments around you as much as you listen to your own part."



**HANNAH JOHNSTON** *Combined Symphony & Orchestra, Clarinet*

Hannah Johnston, who served as co-principal of the Combined Symphony-Orchestra clarinet section during her participation, is a senior at South Medford High School (SMHS). In addition to the YSSO, Hannah plays in the SMHS Wind Ensemble conducted by Erik Osberg. She studies clarinet privately with Chris Pearson. Hannah is the daughter of Dan and Melissa Johnston.

**ADRIANA MONTES DE OCA** *Combined Symphony & Orchestra, Viola*

Adriana is the daughter of Francisco Montes de Oca and Beatriz Montes. She is a senior at South Medford High School (SMHS). In addition to her participation in the Youth Symphony of Southern Oregon, Adrianna performs with the SMHS Chamber Orchestra. Her school music teacher is Zoryn Thompson. Adriana joined the Youth Symphony viola section as a sophomore in the fall 2019.

**ASHER HOWELL** *Combined Symphony & Orchestra, Bassoon*

Co-principal of the Combined Symphony-Orchestra's bassoon section, Asher is a senior at South Medford High School (SMHS). His parents are Nathan Howell and Randi Howell. Asher considers his private bassoon teacher, Tiffany Schmidt, and SMHS band director Erik Osberg, mentors for their inspiration and for their help nurturing his musical growth.

When asked what YSSO piece he found most difficult to play Asher cited the *Overture to William Tell* by Gioachino Rossini. Its fast articulations were a special challenge in his first year playing the bassoon. He also cited this piece as his favorite work. Asher's advice to future YSSO musicians is, "Make sure you practice [because] the music we play is hard. Have fun." The friendships he made with other YSSO musicians and performing classical music with the string players will be favorite YSSO memories. He has participated in the Western International Band Clinic, the SOU Honor Band, the Oregon Music Educators Association All-State Wind Ensemble, and he is a member of the National Honor Society. Asher's college plans are to obtain a bachelor's degree in composition.



**DANIEL KERR** *Combined Symphony & Orchestra, Violin*

The son of Marcus and Tanya Kerr, Daniel is a senior at Grants Pass High School (GPHS) where he plays in the GPHS Honor Orchestra and GPHS Chamber Orchestra. Daniel is grateful for the support of his parents and grandparents and for their attendance at all his performances. He also thanks his school music teacher, Krista Debolt and his private music teacher, Cynthia Cournoyer for believing in him and drawing him out of his comfort zone. A member of the YSSO for several years, Daniel is principal of the second violin section of the Combined Symphony-Orchestra.

In the spring of 2017, an arrangement of music from *The Phantom of the Opera* by Andrew Lloyd Webber was performed by a combined Youth Symphony and Youth Orchestra. Daniel was in the seventh grade. As a young musician, he found the piece challenging with its dark tone and bold dynamics. The performance of the work is his favorite YSSO performance. Throughout his involvement in the YSSO, Daniel has enjoyed the comradery, laughter, and feeling of accomplishment after a successful performance. He has also played in the Oregon Music Educators Association All-State Orchestra. Daniel plans to attend Rogue Community College and pursue a real estate license as well as Southern Oregon University where he will work toward a degree in business.



**NATE KESSLER** *Combined Symphony & Orchestra, Horn*

A senior at North Medford High School (NMHS), Nate is the son of Steve and Kristin Kessler. At the age of five Nate began playing the violin. He joined the YSSO's ensemble for string players, Youth Strings, in the fourth grade. From grade five through the fall of his ninth-grade year he performed with the Youth Orchestra and Youth Symphony in the violin sections. An interest in jazz and the sound and feel of the French horn lead him to join the Youth Orchestra horn section for the Winter 2019 Concert Series. Throughout high school he has been a member of the Youth Symphony and Combined Symphony-Orchestra horn sections.

Nate's school music teachers include Steve Kessler and Erik Osberg. His private horn teacher is Cindy Hutton. In addition to his involvement in the YSSO, Nate has participated in the NMHS Concert Symphonic and Wind Ensemble, NMHS Jazz Cadets, and NMHS Jazz Ambassadors, as well as the Western International Band Clinic, the Oregon Music Educators Association All-State Symphonic and Jazz Band, and the SOU Honor Band. Nate will be attending the University of Oregon where he will study physics and music.



**HEATHER LANEY** *Combined Symphony & Orchestra, Flute*

Daughter of Justin Laney and Laura Villa, Heather is co-principal of the Combined Symphony-Orchestra flute section. She is a senior at South Medford High School (SMHS) where she plays in the SMHS Wind Ensemble and Marching Band. Her school music teacher is Erik Osberg. Heather studies flute privately with Shelly Cox. She joined the YSSO in 2019 and has enjoyed playing in a full symphony orchestra as well as forming new friendships. A favorite YSSO memory is sitting backstage talking and laughing with the flute section, waiting to go on stage, forming a bond she will never forget. She is grateful for the inspiration of the flute section crediting them with renewing her passion for playing the flute after the lengthy hiatus due to the pandemic. Heather thanks all the music educators in the community who continued to support young musicians through the difficulties of the last two years.

Heather has participated in the Rogue Valley Youth Choruses Youth Ensemble, the Oregon Music Educators Association All-State Wind Ensemble, SMHS Chamber Choir and she is a member of the Academic Honor Roll. She plans to pursue an undergraduate degree at the University of Oregon.