



2008 Conductor of the Year ■ 2000 / 2007 Youth Orchestra of the Year ■ 2005 / 2015 Programming of the Year ■ 2001 Elgin Image Award

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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New Campaign Lets Supporters Share Stories and Donations Online

Elgin, IL (May 21, 2020) – Finding ways to connect—when we are required to remain separate—is challenging. Since 1976, Elgin Youth Symphony Orchestra (EYSO) has been a place of connection and belonging for hundreds of young people. EYSO families deeply value the sense of community, making coming together and forging ahead even more important. In March, EYSO suspended in-person rehearsals (in line with Gov. Pritzker’s “stay at home order”), then pivoted to distance learning via what they called *Zoomhearsals* (rehearsals using Zoom video conferencing) without missing a single Sunday afternoon of scheduled activity. More recently, the May 10th season finale concert, *Folklorico*, was presented in an online format. Conductors, coaches and students worked enthusiastically and passionately toward this reimagined virtual performance which can be experienced at eyso.org/concert.

Now, EYSO is moving more than programming online with the [Stories Behind the Music campaign](#) through the month of May.

“Stories Behind the Music allows people to join the EYSO family by sharing their story, or donating, or both,” said Eric Larson, Executive Director

Not being able to gather in public spaces makes fundraising for a performance art organization a challenge, but not impossible. Those closest to EYSO understand the organization’s intrinsic value. Phrases like “hidden gem” are common when referencing EYSO. This campaign gives the public a glimpse into why EYSO has been so special to hundreds of families for over 40 years.

In addition to raising awareness, the campaign is aiming to raise \$30,000, ensuring EYSO continues to fill a critical niche educating young people through music as we navigate through the COVID-19 crisis.

Experience personal stories from EYSO staff, students, alumni and board members, then share your own.. Learn how EYSO impacts the personal growth and development of students and why EYSO has been a place of refuge, connection, and belonging to hundreds of families since 1976.

You can visit the campaign at [EYSO.org](https://www.eyso.org) and click the “Stories Behind the Music” button under the banner image. Interested in joining? Visit [EYSO.org/join-eyso](https://www.eyso.org/join-eyso), audition videos are due on May 27th.

About EYSO

The mission of EYSO is to create a community of young musicians, enriching their lives and the lives of their families, schools, communities and beyond, through the study and performance of excellent music. EYSO serves nearly 400 students from 70 Chicagoland communities and has a national reputation for providing students with an engaging musical experience and a comprehensive learning environment of curiosity, imagination, critical thinking, and collaboration. Students explore a thematic curriculum each season—one which helps students develop artistically and technically, and prepares them for a future of complex ideas, creative risk-taking, and leadership as global citizen. This approach has led hundreds of alumni to successful careers as professional musicians, educators, and strong leaders in every field. The 2019-20 season theme was MOVE. It explored the rich traditions of Dalcroze, ballet, and folk dance including collaborations with Joffrey Ballet artist Luis Vazquez. To learn more, visit <https://www.eyso.org> or call (847) 841-7700.

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