

Concerto Competition

The RSO/RVC Concerto Competition will be held at Rock Valley College January 21, 2012. The winner receives a cash prize and the opportunity to perform on the spring concert of the RSYO. Information and applications are available on the RSO website at www.rockfordsymphony.com.

Attending RSO Concerts

RSYO members are entitled to a complimentary ticket for all Rockford Symphony Orchestra Classics Series concerts. To request a ticket, call the RSO box office at (815) 965-0049 by 4 p.m. on the Friday before a performance. RSO performances are held at the Coronado Performing Arts Centre, and begin at 7:30 p.m. One hour before each concert, RSO Music Director Steven Larsen gives a talk about the music to be performed.

Member volunteer opportunities

Community service hours may be earned in exchange for volunteering with the RSYO. Here are some examples of ways to help:

- Blog/newsletter writer- tell the story of the RSYO experience by writing articles or blog entries for the RSYO website, Facebook page, or newsletter.
- Outreach performances - perform in schools, demonstrate instrument at "petting zoo" presentations, etc.
- Office work - assist the RSO staff with mailings, photocopying, etc.
- Special talents: If you have skills in any area which you think could be of help to the RSYO, please contact Lorie Langan at (815) 972-2939 to find out how to contribute.



Become a fan of the RSYO and RSO! Post your photos and share your experiences!



Handbook for Members 2011/12 Season

The mission of the Rockford Symphony Youth Orchestra is to provide quality, full symphony orchestra education and performance opportunities to regional students.

Dear RSYO musicians and parents,

As the conductor of the Rockford Symphony Youth Orchestra, it is my honor and pleasure to welcome you to our 46th season!

The experience of playing in a youth orchestra when I was a teenager was one of the greatest experiences of my life, and besides helping to put me on the path to a musical career, it helped shape the very essence of my personality and character. My goal as the conductor of the RSYO is to create a similar experience of the highest caliber for you. We are aiming to provide not only an elite musical and artistic experience, but one which will build friendships and character and bring our musical community closer together - something for everyone to remember fondly later in life, whether continuing with a musical career or not.

Last year, the RSYO held its first ever Camp RSYO, and expanded our chamber music offerings by forming an Honors Woodwind Quintet. In 2011-2012, we will give everyone in the orchestra the opportunity to participate in chamber music with the creation of a chamber music program. In the Fall and early Spring semesters, we plan to collaborate with the Kantorei Boys Choir and the Rock Valley Children's Choir. All members of the RSYO will have an opportunity to audition again to perform side-by-side with the Rockford Symphony Orchestra in the Spring. And we will close our performance season with a tremendously ambitious piece that few youth orchestras are lucky enough to get a chance to perform: Beethoven's 9th Symphony.

As we begin this yearlong musical journey together, I am so glad that you will be a part of this experience. Let us look forward to making wonderful music together!



Daniel Black
Conductor, Rockford Symphony Youth Orchestra

Participation in other musical activities

The RSYO strongly encourages members to participate in other musical activities outside of the orchestra. Here are the most basic expectations:

- Participate in a band or orchestra program at school, or if home-schooled, in another music education program.
- Receive private instruction on the instrument they are playing in the orchestra.
- Listen to classical music and attend concerts of all kinds. The Rockford Area Arts Council offers students a limited number of tickets for \$1 (Project Full House) to concerts in the area. (See "Attending RSO Concerts" below)

Performance Opportunities

Sterling String Quartet- four outstanding string players comprise the Sterling String Quartet, and serve as ambassadors for the RSYO through performances in the Rockford community. In 2011 the quartet has been named in honor of William and Marian Sterling, long time supporters of the RSO, RSYO, and music education in our community. Membership in the Sterling String Quartet includes a full scholarship.

Honors Woodwind Quintet- similar to the String Quartet, but comprised of flute, oboe, clarinet, bassoon, and horn.

Chamber Music Program- chamber ensembles may be formed with support from the RSYO. These ensembles may organize their own performances contingent on recommendation by their coach. There is a small fee for participation. For more information, see the Chamber Music Program guidelines.

RSYO musicians are occasionally asked to perform for Rockford Symphony Orchestra events such as the Black Magic Ball. The Honors String Quartet, Woodwind Quintet and Brass Choir can expect to have several performance engagements at important RSO events throughout the year.

Tuition Reduction

A one-time \$50 rebate (\$25 per semester) can be earned for referring a musician who successfully auditions for the RSYO and who has not participated during the previous season.

A limited number of scholarships are available. To inquire about scholarships, download the form from the RSO website, RSYO home page, at www.rockfordsymphony.com, or contact Lorie Langan.

Fundraising

The true cost of participation in the RSYO is well over \$500 per member. To make up the difference, fundraising activities are essential. In addition to providing needed income, fundraising allows the RSYO to expand support within the community and to generate greater awareness of the RSYO's activities.

Fundraising activities vary with each season and goals are set with concert venue and production expenses in mind. If goals are not reached, additional fundraising activities may be necessary to balance the budget. **It is expected that each family participate in fundraising.**

RSYO Boosters

All parents are considered members of the RSYO Boosters. Four officers of the Boosters are elected by the parent body annually and serve as leaders of the group. The primary responsibility of the Boosters is to promote the orchestra and fundraise for RSYO.

Boosters direct all fundraising activities associated with RSYO, plan post concert receptions and the Annual Awards Dinner, and assist with logistical help for concerts and Camp RSYO.

Booster officers solicit volunteers to serve on the various committees and as committee chairs. Parent volunteers are essential to coordinating RSYO activities under the direction of the RSO staff who are responsible for administering the program.

About this Handbook

The RSYO Members Handbook is the basic guide for orchestra membership, and should be the first place to look in case questions arise during the course of the season.

New for 2011-2012

Chamber Music Program - all members of RSYO are invited to form chamber ensembles of at least 3 members. For a small additional fee, the RSYO will find a coach to help each group get started and provide musical direction. For more information, please see the guidelines included with your acceptance letter, or visit the RSYO web page.

Contact Information

Questions, comments or concerns may be directed to the following personnel:

- Daniel Black, Conductor: cell- (847) 924-0604, email: dblack@rockfordsymphony.com
- Lorie Langan, RSO Director of Education: office- (9 a.m.- 5 p.m. M-F) (815) 972-2939; home (815) 262-2427; email llangan@rockfordsymphony.com
- Vicki Hastings, Brass Choir coach: (815) 713-8948
- RSO Office: (815) 965-0049
- RSYO Website: www.rockfordsymphony.com/rsyo

If a member is unable to attend a rehearsal, or becomes ill on the day of the performance it is the member's responsibility to notify the conductor personally and as soon as possible!

Code of Conduct

Members of the RSYO are representatives of the organization, and the behavior of each individual reflects upon the whole. At all RSYO events, including rehearsals and sectionals, members will be expected to act in a professional manner and to show respect and consideration for others.

Rehearsals

The general orchestra rehearsal begins promptly at 1:45 p.m. Members are expected to be warmed up and ready to play five minutes before the start of rehearsal.

It is the members' responsibility to bring music to every rehearsal, and to come prepared to work. This means: a) having

practiced and listened to recordings of the repertoire, b) having a pencil in hand, and c) arriving at rehearsal with a fresh mind and a good attitude.

Cell phones and/or pagers should be turned off during rehearsal. (No texting, internet, etc.).

Food or gum in rehearsal is prohibited. Water bottles are OK.

More detailed information on the rehearsal schedule will be distributed separately.

Rehearsal Location

All regular rehearsals are held at Christian Life High School located at 5950 Spring Creek Rd. The Band Room is in the back of the building, on the northwest side.

Performances

The RSYO performs at a variety of concert venues. Directions and details will be given well in advance of each concert event.

RSYO musicians are expected to attend a dress rehearsal at the concert venue before the concert. CALL TIMES will be distributed in advance. RSYO members are expected to be warmed up and prepared to play at the time specified as CALL. Please check directions to the performance venue and plan your travel time accordingly.

Audio recording of concerts is not allowed. Professional recordings are available for purchase after concerts.

Concert Dress

Personal appearance should be neat and professional.

Young men are expected to wear: black slacks (with a belt), black suit jacket, black calf-length socks, black shoes, white shirt and long dark tie.

Young women are expected to wear: full-length black dress; or knee-length skirt (no mini-skirts), or dress slacks (not jeans), with a black top. Tank tops, halters, camisoles, and spaghetti straps are NOT appropriate. Legs should not be bare; dark hosiery is requested and black shoes are required. Use discretion with jewelry and make-up.

Music

Photocopied music is mailed to each member well before the beginning of each semester. Members are responsible for bringing this music to each rehearsal, sectional, and performance. In addition, professional recordings of the RSYO's repertoire are posted on the RSYO website, members portal. The purpose of posting these recordings is to aid in individual practice and preparation. At the conclusion of each semester, music must be returned in good condition to the librarian.

Attendance

Each member will be allowed a maximum of THREE excused absences per semester, for any reason, as long as no more than two occur consecutively. Please notify the conductor by email as far in advance as possible if you know you will not be able to make a rehearsal.

Members missing more than three rehearsals, or more than two consecutively, regardless of the reason, will be asked not to play the concert.

Absence from the dress rehearsal will only be excused under extreme circumstances, and must be discussed with the conductor. Unexcused absence at the dress rehearsal will result in the member being asked not to play the concert.

Members are expected to be on time - meaning in their seats with instruments out, tuned and ready to play, by the beginning of rehearsal or the call time for concerts. Excessive/chronic tardiness may result in the member being asked not to play the concert.

Tuition

Tuition is due by the first rehearsal of each semester. This fee covers over 50% of orchestra expenses including the conductor, music, sectional rehearsals coaches, and the librarian.

Prompt payment of tuition is vital to the smooth function of the RSYO. Non-payment may result in members being asked not to play the concert.

Multiple-payment arrangements are possible. However, these arrangements must be made in advance by contacting Lorie Langan at (815) 972-2939.