



# ANNUAL REPORT

2019 – 2020

**MYSO**

MILWAUKEE  
Youth Symphony  
Orchestra



## WHY I SUPPORT MYSO.

“I support MYSO because of the way they build life skills while nurturing and supporting young musicians seeking a higher level of excellence. The MYSO experience has been a touchstone for my son, connecting him with peers and growing his passion for music in a fun atmosphere.”

– Steve, community member and MYSO parent

“We proudly support MYSO! It brings together kids from diverse economic, ethnic, and racial backgrounds to work toward common goals. The fostering of equality, cooperation, tolerance, and shared joy will follow them throughout their lives. This has always been valuable, but more important than ever in recent years.”

– Erik and Carol, community members

## WHY WE JOIN MYSO.

“MYSO has not only made me into a better musician but helped me become a better person. It has taught me about responsibility.”

– Kendrick, MYSO student

“It has truly changed his life. He was able to do what he loved in a safe and encouraging environment with people that love performing just like he does. It has given him true happiness and joy and he does not want to stop coming at all. No matter what was going on in his private life he always wanted to go to MYSO... His true and only best friends he had were there.”

– Jazz Studies parent



“My favorite thing about MYSO is the people. We’re all different, but working toward the same goal, and the result is almost as magical as the music we play.”

– Gabriela, violinist; String Orchestra Central

Through your support, you make it possible for us to implement our ladder and skill-based approach to youth development through ensemble training to nurture, challenge, and inspire young minds through music. The essential life skills our students learn at MYSO—collaboration and teamwork, critical thinking and problem solving, confidence, focus, and discipline—last a lifetime, providing a critical foundation for their success.

Thanks to your generosity, we continue to build community in the greater Milwaukee area. MYSO is recognized regionally, nationally, and internationally for its artistic and educational excellence. Serving more than 7,000 students through direct programming and community outreach annually, MYSO is the largest after-school youth orchestra program in the U.S. More than 25,000 audience members are served through more than 100 formal concerts each season. Today, 50% of students represent populations of color and nearly 40% of students receive financial aid to support their membership, private lessons, and so much more.

The past fiscal year ended with the tumultuous challenge of COVID-19, forcing MYSO to cancel 28 performances and 325 rehearsals, losing nearly 20,000 student rehearsal hours in the process. Seven outreach concerts were eliminated, affecting 2,650 children not receiving these programs. Thanks to the ingenuity, creativity, and dedication of our artistic and administrative teams, we immediately pivoted to online instruction and continued to provide programming to our 1,000 students through the remainder of our scheduled season.

Your support helps our musicians achieve their goals, aspirations, and dreams. On behalf of our entire organization, the students, families, and community we serve, thank you for making it all possible.

In gratitude,

A handwritten signature in black ink.

Mark J. Goldstein,  
Board Chair

A handwritten signature in black ink.

Linda J. Edelstein,  
Executive Director

## THE BEGINNING

1956



An orchestra of 30 musicians was first established in 1956 within the Children's Arts Program (CAP) and was originally called the CAPsters.



This organization was sponsored by the Junior League of Milwaukee, the Rotary Club of Milwaukee, and The Milwaukee Art Institute.

30 YEARS



In 1960 the program was renamed Music for Youth, and then renamed once more to Milwaukee Youth Symphony Orchestra in the late 1980s.

## TODAY

2020



In May 2020, the Junior League of Milwaukee and the Rotary Club of Milwaukee were named as our **2020 Collaborative Spirit honorees** to recognize the vision and devotion of their predecessors that led us to where we are today.

60+ YEARS



In its 60+ years, MYSO has become the largest and most extensive after-school youth orchestra program in the country with 1,000 young musicians enrolled.

1,000  
MUSICIANS

25,000 AUDIENCE  
MEMBERS



In addition, MYSO's Community Concert series reaches more than 6,000 students each year, and our formal performances draw more than 25,000 audience members annually.



# WHO WE SERVE



20% COME FROM LOW  
TO MODERATE INCOME  
NEIGHBORHOODS IN  
CITY OF MILWAUKEE

CLOSE TO  
40% RECEIVE  
FINANCIAL AID

25,000 AUDIENCE  
MEMBERS SERVED  
THROUGH MORE  
THAN 100 FORMAL  
CONCERTS



NEARLY 50% OF MUSICIANS REPRESENT  
POPULATIONS OF COLOR



1,000 MUSICIANS  
WEEKLY

6,000 STUDENTS  
REACHED IN 30  
COMMUNITY SCHOOL  
CONCERTS IN  
MILWAUKEE



## Margery Deutsch retires after 34 years of leading MYSO's flagship Senior Symphony.

Margery Deutsch retired at the end of the 2019-20 season after 34 years of leading MYSO's flagship Senior Symphony as Music Director. In her day job, Ms. Deutsch served as Director of Orchestras and Professor of Conducting at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee from 1984-2012, and she was named Professor Emeritus in 2012.

*"...there is that joy when you realize you're part of that learning process that allows them to achieve something greater than they could by themselves. And they get that. Most of them really get that... that what they're doing is very special."*

She is actively involved with high school-age musicians throughout the country as a guest conductor, clinician, and adjudicator. At MYSO, she elevated the musical standards of Senior Symphony to a level that earned national and international recognition of excellence, and led the evolution of our international tours from playing in churches and outdoor venues to performing in some of the finest music halls in the world.

**"Her excellence and understanding of how to bring young people into an environment where they can create great music and experience the best of the art form has been enduringly consistent."**

– Carter Simmons, Artistic Director

### 34 YEARS AT MYSO... BY THE NUMBERS

2,000+  
MUSICIANS  
TRAINED

5,000+ HOURS IN  
REHEARSALS AND  
PERFORMANCES

13 TOURS,  
10 OF THEM  
INTERNATIONAL

12 COUNTRIES  
TOURED ON  
4 CONTINENTS



## Impact of COVID-19

COVID-19 fundamentally changed MYSO in the spring of 2020. In just two weeks, from March 16 – March 31, our organization completely transformed how we operate. Through developing and immediately implementing online learning, shifting to online auditions, and pivoting our major fundraiser to an online auction with livestream event, our artistic and administrative teams have once again proven their ability to think critically, solve complex problems, and work in teams—all the things we instill in our young musicians.

### Programming

- MYSO switched from traditional in-person to online auditions, something we had never done before. Through collaboration and agility, the team set up the new process in just two weeks.
- MYSO also scrambled to institute online learning. We were delighted by one of the positive unintended consequences.

“A silver lining of all this (online learning) is that our students, through being forced to record themselves, are acquiring an incredibly useful tool. This is something most of us cannot cajole them into learning under normal circumstances. Recording, and listening back, is the quickest way to improvement.”

– *Ravenna Helson, Progressions Teaching Artist*

### Administration

- Our financial team worked swiftly to obtain a Paycheck Protection Program loan which enabled us to keep all teaching artists, faculty, and administrative staff in place to continue musical training online for the remainder of the 2019 – 20 season.
- In a move to conserve funds, all artistic and administrative teams were furloughed for four weeks in mid-June.



THE  
EARLY  
YEARS



CREATING A  
COMMUNITY  
OF CHANGE



THE LIVES  
BEHIND THE  
INSTRUMENTS



OUR  
PROGRAMS

## Google Arts

MYSO gained an international footprint for the first time with Google Arts & Culture’s Milwaukee Project which celebrated Milwaukee on its global platform in the summer of 2020. Milwaukee was the 2nd city in the U.S. to appear on the Google Arts and Culture platform, and only the 5th city in the world. MYSO was invited by Visit Milwaukee to join one of 16 cultural partners in Milwaukee’s debut.

Google Arts & Culture is a non-profit initiative whose mission is to work with cultural institutions and artists around the world to preserve and bring the world’s art and culture online so it’s accessible to anyone, anywhere.

Google Arts & Culture US Lead Simon Delacroix said in a press release, “From its murals and manufacturing to its breweries and fine art museums, Milwaukee’s vibrant cultural scene deserves to be shared with a global audience.”

The debut of Google Arts and Culture’s Milwaukee Project was picked up by many local television, radio, and print media channels as well as being featured on our partners’ websites.

*To visit the Google Arts and Culture Milwaukee site, enter this url:*

<https://artsandculture.google.com/project/milwaukee>

Click on the MYSO logo to see our exhibit.



Financials | 2019 – 2020

(\$000s)

REVENUE

Contributed	\$ 1,071
Earned	1,228
UPAF	379
Investments	203
Total	\$ 2,881

EXPENSES

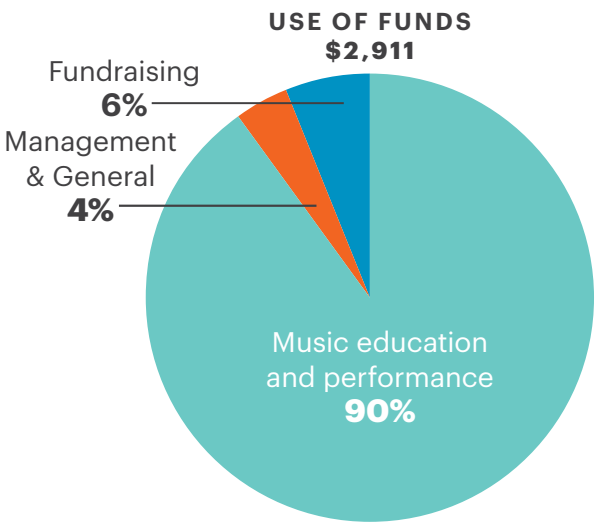
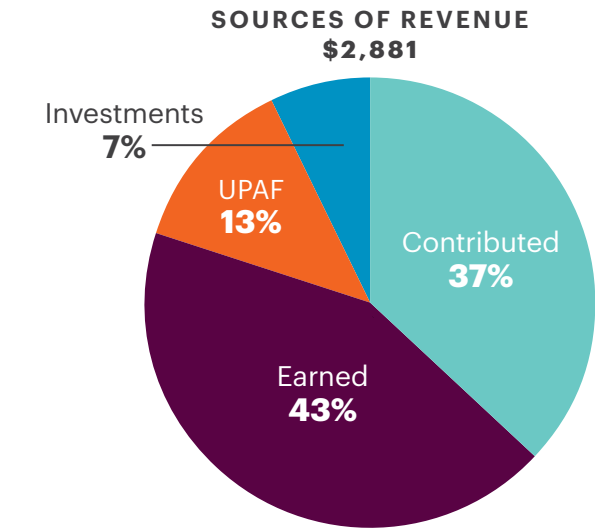
Music education and performance	\$ 2,608
Management & general	128
Fundraising	175
Total	\$ 2,911

NET ASSETS

Revenue less Expenses	\$ -30
Net Assets, Beginning of Year	7,774
Net Assets, End of Year	\$ 7,744

Milwaukee Youth Symphony Orchestra is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.

Our financial statements are audited annually by Wegner CPAs, LLP.



Since 1956,

Milwaukee Youth Symphony Orchestra (MYSO) has been nurturing, challenging and inspiring generations of students, profoundly changing lives and our community for the better.

MYSO is recognized regionally, nationally, and internationally for its artistic and educational excellence. Serving more than 7,000 students through direct programming and community outreach annually, it is the largest after-school youth orchestra program in the U.S. More than 25,000 audience members are served through more than 100 formal concerts each season.

In 2015, MYSO received the National Arts and Humanities Youth Program Award, the highest honor of its kind for after school youth arts and humanities programming in the nation.

Today we offer more than 40 ensembles and supplemental training programs, ranging from symphony and string orchestras, and jazz and steel pan bands to music theory, composition, and international tours, providing quality musical experiences for a wide range of skill levels.

MYSO is a proud founding member of the United Performing Arts Fund and is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.

Milwaukee Youth Symphony Orchestra  
2019-20 Board of Directors

Mark Goldstein, *Chair; Goldstein Law Group, S.C.*

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# Thank you to our generous donors.

Donations to MYSO are the crucial funding source that allow us to nurture, challenge, and inspire young minds, profoundly changing lives and our community for the better. We are tremendously grateful for these important gifts.

This list recognizes gifts of \$250 or more that were received in the 2019-20 year (between July 1, 2019, and June 30, 2020). We encourage you to call Rebecca Owen, Development Director, at 414-267-2927 with questions or corrections—or to learn how to make a much-appreciated gift to MYSO.

**ENERGICO**  
*Energetic, strong*  
**\$350,000+**  
United Performing Arts Fund



**APPASSIONATO**  
*Passionate*  
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*Majestic*  
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*With fire*  
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*Lively*  
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*Gracious*  
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Richard Walters  
Waukesha County Parks  
Les Weil and Jodi Peck  
Duane Wilcox









## OUR VISION

Uniting us through the power of music, MYSO will be an inviting and inspirational place for young minds that fosters excellence and character through ensemble musicianship, along with lifelong learning about how we see ourselves, each other, and the world around us.

**MYSO** MILWAUKEE  
Youth Symphony  
Orchestra

**myso.org**

325 West Walnut Street  
Milwaukee, WI 53212

414-267-2950

*Photos by Ron Oshima except:*

*Black and white photos: MYSO archives*

*Photo of Malik (on Google Arts page, third photo down): Supplied by his family*

*Photo on page 14 (row 1, column 3): by Mary Pat Michels*

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