

Position Announcement: Music Director

The Delaware Symphony Orchestra (DSO) welcomes applications for the position of Music Director, available beginning in the 2025-2026 season.

The Position

The DSO Music Director's chief objectives are to advance the orchestra's artistic potential and deepen its engagement with communities in Delaware and beyond. To this end, their duties will include repertoire selection, programming, and artistic production. Active participation in the orchestra's fundraising initiatives is expected. Each of these activities serves to further the DSO's core values and mission. The Music Director will report directly to the Chief Executive Officer and work collaboratively with the Chief Executive Officer, Board of Directors, Musicians, and staff while respecting the purview of the organization's Collective Bargaining Agreement.

Candidate Profile

The ideal candidate will possess exceptional musicianship and conducting skills, significant professional conducting experience, and knowledge of a broad and diverse range of symphonic repertoire, including new works by American composers. They will succeed through strong interpersonal, leadership, and communication skills and possess the vision, passion, and ability to make symphonic music relevant and exciting for existing and new audiences. As the Association's artistic leader, they must build and sustain the orchestra's visibility and deepen its engagement with the community. A deep commitment to music education, community engagement, and the tenets of diversity, equity, and inclusion will be vital to that success.

The Orchestra

Now entering its 118th season, the remarkable performing group we know today as The Delaware Symphony Orchestra (DSO) traces its roots to the late 1880s, when Alfred I. du Pont, a prolific manufacturer and philanthropist, organized the Tankopanicum Musical Club, taking its name from a Native American word meaning "the rushing waters of the Brandywine River." This ad hoc group evolved in 1906 into the Wilmington Orchestra, an amateur organization led by violinist Harry Stausebach. By the end of the mid-1940s, the group's increase in members, concerts, and stature warranted the formation of an executive board of directors and incorporation as the Wilmington Symphony Orchestra, Inc. The WSO's conductor, Van Lier Lanning, successfully led the orchestra for 23 years. Reflecting its growing significance, the group changed its name to the Delaware Symphony Orchestra (DSO) on April 28, 1971.

Stephen Gunzenhauser was appointed Music Director and led the group for the next 23 years, a period which saw expansion and embraced new works by American composers. In 1985, the inauguration of the DSO's prestigious Alfred I. du Pont Award allowed the DSO to honor annually a distinguished

American composer or conductor who has contributed significantly to contemporary classical music. Among the awards' past recipients are luminaries of American music, including William Schuman, John Corigliano, John Adams, Andre Previn, Jennifer Higdon, Missy Mazzoli, Gunther Schuller, Philip Glass, Elliot Carter, and George Walker.

In 2003, David Amado was appointed the fifth Music Director of the DSO. Under his leadership, the DSO produced a Latin Grammy® Award–nominated recording on the Telarc label featuring the Los Angeles Guitar Quartet. In 2023, David Amado was named the first Music Director Laureate in the organization's history.

Today, as Delaware's only professional orchestra, the DSO draws audiences throughout the Delaware Valley region. Embracing its mission of "enriching lives through inspiring musical performances," the DSO offers Classics Series concerts at The Grand Opera House's Copeland Hall in Wilmington and Cape Henlopen High School in Lewes, Delaware. In addition, more intimate chamber music and chamber orchestra concerts are presented at various locations, including the DuPont Country Club and the Gold Ballroom of the Hotel DuPont.

The DSO is a per-service orchestra with a core of 68 tenured musicians drawn from Delaware and the Northeast corridor, including Philadelphia, New York City, Baltimore, and Washington DC. The musicians are represented by the AFM under a Collective Bargaining Agreement. Annual programming has traditionally included a classical series, chamber orchestra and chamber music programs, Young People's Concerts (the "Explorer Series"), and various smaller ensemble performances throughout the state. Responding to the COVID pandemic, the DSO embraced the opportunity to innovate and seek to expand its reach by building new relationships and performance opportunities in underserved communities.

The DSO operates on an annual budget of approximately \$1.8 million and has enjoyed a positive operating balance for the past three years. During these three years, the DSO has doubled its endowment accounts, and the organization carries no debt. The Board of Directors comprises 16 individuals with extensive backgrounds in finance, government relations, community services, executive leadership, education, health care, and law. They provide a broad representation of Delaware's business and community institutions. Chief Executive Officer J.C. Barker has led the full-time administrative staff of six for the past three years.

The Community

Situated along the East Coast of the United States, the State of Delaware stands out as a unique blend of urban and rural communities, mild weather, a robust economy, and a diverse population.

Geographically, Delaware showcases a remarkable variety of landscapes within its compact borders. Popularly known as "the nation's summer capital," Delaware boasts a scenic coastline stretching along the Atlantic Ocean. Its world-class beaches draw tourists from the Mid-Atlantic region, and its many favorable characteristics attract retirees to the fast-growing coastal cities. Inland, one can find rolling hills, lush forests, and rivers that provide ample opportunities for outdoor recreation and exploration. The Delaware State Parks system consistently ranks among the nation's top five. An extensive bicycle

and walking trail network links almost the entire state. Delaware's strategic location between the major metropolitan areas of Philadelphia and Baltimore and proximity to New York City and Washington DC contributes to its accessibility and attractiveness.

The economy of Delaware thrives across multiple sectors, propelling the state's prosperity, keeping property taxes low, and eliminating the need for any sales tax. Renowned for its business-friendly environment, Delaware is a haven for corporations, particularly in finance, insurance, and banking. Delaware's advantageous tax structure and strong legal system have made it a favored destination for businesses seeking incorporation and judicial protections. Delaware also has a significant presence in the pharmaceutical, chemical, and healthcare industries, with numerous research facilities and major companies calling the state home. Delaware has enjoyed a net population growth for many years. Its citizens are characterized by remarkable diversity, with people from various ethnicities, cultural and socio-economic backgrounds. A substantial portion of Delaware's population has achieved advanced education degrees and professional status, and the state boasts one of the nation's highest percentages of financially secure and highly educated retirees. Continuing education and active retirement opportunities abound.

Education plays a vital role in Delaware's development and success. The state prides itself on its excellent educational institutions, from prestigious universities and colleges to innovative vocational programs, robust private and parochial schools, and an excellent public education system. Delaware's commitment to providing quality education ensures an engaged population and a skilled workforce that meets the demands of a rapidly evolving economy.

Arts and Culture

Delaware's arts and culture sectors are remarkably robust. The Delaware State Arts Council receives significant annual support from the state government, consistently placing it among the top five states for per capita investment in the arts. Private support across the full range of arts and culture reflects the population's high education and earning levels. Volunteerism in the state is at an all-time high. The region is the home of world-renowned arts institutions such as Winterthur Museum, Gardens and Library; Delaware Art Museum; the Brandywine Museum of Art; and Longwood Gardens. Smaller but unique additional treasures include the newly created Delaware Botanic Gardens with its Piet Oudolf (New York City Highline) designed gardens; The Delaware Contemporary art museum; historic New Castle; beautiful public and private golf courses and clubs; an award-winning statewide library system; The Music School of Delaware; and a particularly active continuing education system.

The performing arts are especially well-represented in Delaware, with standout companies in theatre, dance, opera, chamber music, and popular entertainment. The Delaware Symphony's home is in the historic 1,200-seat Grand Opera House. Built in 1871 and restored to its historically accurate beauty and new functionality, The Grand was one of the leaders in America's historic theater revival movement.

Compensation

Compensation, including benefits, is competitive and commensurate with experience, scope of duties, and qualifications.

Applications

For full consideration, the application deadline is **Friday, September 29, 2023**.

Preliminary applications should include the following:

- Cover letter describing the candidate's interest in the position and vision for the role of an orchestra in the community
- Resume
- Four concert programs recently conducted by the candidate (including at least one education program)

Delivery by electronic means is preferred.

Candidates who advance beyond the initial screening should be prepared to supply three professional references, recordings, links to online content, and a full season of recommended programming (detailed instructions will be provided).

No phone inquiries or unsolicited references, please.

The Delaware Symphony Orchestra is an equal opportunity employer and encourages diverse individuals to consider joining our team.

Critical Date Availability Periods

A select group of candidates will be invited to interview with the search committee via Zoom. Interviews will take place between **October 30 and November 3, 2023**.

Applicants must confirm their availability for the interview period in their application.

All interviews will be recorded.

Submit Applications to:

mdsearch@delawaresymphony.org

Delaware Symphony Association, 100 W. 10th Street, Suite 1003, Wilmington, DE 19801