
PROJECT SUMMARIES

SEASON 21/22

Youth and Continuing
Education
Programming

 **JOHNSTOWN**
SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA
JAMES BLACHLY, MUSIC DIRECTOR





Johnstown Symphony Youth Orchestra
David Anderson, Director (bio attached)

The Johnstown Symphony Youth Orchestra began in 1958 and is an ensemble of our region's most promising young musicians, molding them into citizens who learn to listen to each other, develop discipline, and collaborate as close-knit community.

“Overall, the study found that taking music lessons in childhood was a significant predictor of a higher IQ in young adulthood and a history of better high school grades. For the younger children, the study found a positive association between music lessons and higher school grades and higher scores on achievement testing in mathematics, spelling and reading.”

From “Music lessons may boost IQ and grades” by C. Munsey, American Psychological Association, June 2006, Vol 37, No. 7



How the Music Gets Made

How the Music Gets Made is a mentorship program for High School students curious about the details of what goes into a full symphony orchestra performance. Participating students attend rehearsals, gaining unique insight into how the orchestra approaches refining their collaborative sound. The students engage with and observe management professionals including the Orchestra Manager, lighting and sound technicians, the conductor and musicians. On performance night, the students are invited to observe every aspect of the symphonic experience. They will learn the full breadth of work entailed in staging a production for our audiences from before our musicians take the stage until the house lights go up at the end of the evening.

How the Music Gets Made encourages young musicians to deepen their commitment to their craft through mentorship and the ability to experience what happens from behind the scenes with professionals in the field. Music teachers who lead these young adults also benefit from the enthusiasm their students demonstrate after learning *How the Music Gets Made*.



Young People's Concerts

Noting the economic pressures that adversely affect our children's access to art education, the JSO takes its responsibility to the region's children seriously. Our Young People's Concerts welcome children from every socio-economic sector of our region to the Pasquerilla Performing Arts Center.

Our educational partners in public schools are provided with a focused mini curriculum and accompanying materials to prepare students for what is, for many, a first concert experience. Approximately 2,000 area 5th-graders attending the series represent about 40 school districts in Somerset, Cambria, and Indiana counties. Because of the scope of this effort, many students from underserved communities, many of whom have behavioral and mental health issues, have access to high level art-making experiences.



Share the Music

Our Share the Music program works closely with public school music teachers to identify promising students with limited resources to connect them with low cost private lessons and instruments.

“Socially and economically disadvantaged children and teenagers who have high levels of arts engagement or arts learning show more positive outcomes in a variety of areas than their low-arts-engaged peers.”

The Arts and Achievement in At-Risk Youth: Findings from Four Longitudinal Studies, The National Endowment for the Arts, Research Report #55, by James S. Catterall with Susan A. Dumais, and Gillian Hampden-Thompson



Inclined to Sing

Valerie E. Galczynski, Director, Bryan Lohr, Pianist (bios attached)

For children who choose singing as their form of expression, we offer our youth chorus, Inclined to Sing, for ages 5-15. Now celebrating its twentieth year, Inclined to Sing provides children with a comprehensive musical experience and the opportunity to sing with the orchestra as well as at community events such as Tomahawks games and the annual tree-lighting in Central Park.

“...musical activities are often social. Indeed, it has been proposed that the evolutionary function of music has always been to increase cooperation, coordination, communication, co-pathy, contact, social cognition and cohesion between the members of a group (Koelsch, 2010). It seems that one of these effects is the fact that a certain form of social synchronization is instilled, implying the respect of and adaptation to each other. In fact, in empirical studies it has often been described that acting in synchrony with a partner may increase prosocial commitment (Kokal et al., 2011), social affiliation (Hove and Risen, 2009), trust (Launay et al., 2013), cooperation (Wiltermuth and Heath, 2009) and feelings of compassion (Valdesolo et al., 2010; Valdesolo and Desteno, 2011).”

From “How musical training affects cognitive development: rhythm, reward and other modulating variables” by Ewa A. Miendlarzewska and Wiebke J. Trost, *Frontiers in Neuroscience*, January 20, 2014.

Johnstown Symphony Orchestra Music Director James Blachly

James Blachly is a conductor dedicated to artistic excellence and broader accessibility. He currently serves as Music Director of the Johnstown Symphony Orchestra, Music Director of the [Experiential Orchestra](#), and Music Director of Geneva Light Opera. Dedicated to finding new ways of empowering audiences, he is also in demand as a speaker on *Listening as Leadership*, bringing his expertise as a conductor and passion for music to Fortune 500 companies, schools, and other organizations.

Mr. Blachly's innovative programming aims to increase audience engagement and empower audiences. With the Johnstown Symphony, he has conducted the orchestra in three former or active mills. The first such concert, in 2017, was featured on Katie Couric's *America Inside Out*, and in three seasons the orchestra has increased season ticket sales by 43% and expanded audience involvement as a part of his initiative to "bring the symphony to the city." With the Experiential Orchestra, he has invited audiences to dance to Stravinsky's *Rite of Spring* and Tchaikovsky's *Nutcracker*, sit within the orchestra at Lincoln Center, and engage with *Symphonie fantastique* and *Petrouchka* with circus choreography in an ongoing collaboration with The Muse in Brooklyn. He has been featured in the New York Times, Symphony Magazine, TimeOutNY, and the Washington Post.

A strong supporter of composers of our time, Mr. Blachly has commissioned and premiered more than 40 works from composers such as Jessie Montgomery, Courtney Bryan, Kate Copeland Ettinger, Patrick Castillo, Viet Cuong, Brad and Doug Balliett, and many others. In recent seasons, he has collaborated with soloists Julia Bullock, Andrés Cárdenes, Michael Chioldi, Karen Kim, Andrew Yee, Owen Dalby, Janna Baty, Patricia Kopatchinskaja, and more.

Recent guest conducting engagements include Williamsburg Symphony, Lima Symphony, Spokane Symphony, Danbury Symphony, Odyssey Opera (Boston), Trinity Church Wall Street (New York City), and performances at Roulette, National Sawdust, Carnegie Hall and Lincoln Center.

As a part of a broader effort to encourage an expanded orchestral repertoire, he is proud to be named as editor for the Schirmer/MusicSales edition of Dame Ethel Smyth's career-culminating masterpiece, *The Prison*, which he recorded in 2019 with the Experiential Orchestra, set for worldwide release in 2020 as a celebration of the 100th anniversary of the 19th Amendment.

Also active as a composer, he studied at Mannes with Robert Cuckson and privately with Charles Wuorinen and John Corigliano. His compositions have been celebrated as "vigorous and assured" by Chamber Music America, and a "splendidly crafted...tour de force" by the Miami Herald Tribune, and have been performed at The Stone, Zankel Hall, in Europe and across the US, in an audience for the Pope, and broadcast live on the CBC.

Dedicated to music education, he regularly conducts workshops and clinics for the New York Philharmonic, and served as Ensemble Director for the Baltimore Symphony's *OrchKids* program. From 2010 to 2015, he performed benefit concerts of Mahler symphonies with New York freelancers to launch what is now Make Music NOLA, a thriving El Sistema-Inspired program in New Orleans.

He trained with Donald Schleicher, Larry Rachleff, Marin Alsop, and Gustav Meier, and traces his first inspiration to conduct to Claudio Abbado.

Johnstown Symphony Youth Orchestra Director David Anderson

David Anderson is thrilled to begin his third season as conductor of the JS Youth Orchestra! Before relocating to Pittsburgh in 2014, Anderson served for seven years as Philharmonia Conductor of the Elgin Youth Symphony Orchestra, working with young musicians from the Chicago suburbs. During this time, he helped to establish the EYSO program as one of the premier regional youth orchestras in the Midwest. In addition to his work advancing the musicianship and artistry of Philharmonia, Anderson served as the EYSO's Chamber Music Institute Director from 2007 to 2012. Through his leadership, enrollment in CMI more than quadrupled, expanded school-day concerts provided performance and recruiting opportunities, and a series of community concerts was initiated to help the EYSO bring chamber music to a wider audience. Beginning with the 2017-18 season, the JSYO launched two honors chamber music ensembles to provide the unique experience of playing in small settings to students in the Johnstown region.

Anderson begins his eighth season as Music Director for the Lake Geneva Symphony Orchestra in Southern Wisconsin and is on faculty at Seton Hill University, where he teaches the complete music theory sequence and serves as a staff accompanist.

He performs as the JSO's principal pianist.

Inclined to Sing Director Valerie E. Galczynksi

Valerie E. Galczynksi the new *Inclined to Sing* program director – Mrs. G – is a retired music educator from the Cambria Heights School District. Valerie is committed to making high quality choral music accessible to everyone. She will continue to build excellence in music and teamwork with the children and give of that music to the community.

Valerie is an accomplished singer/soloist who performs with the Johnstown Symphony Chorus. She has previously sung with The Mendelssohn Choir of Pittsburgh under the leadership of the late Dr. Robert Page. Valerie has performed throughout the United States and Europe. She is also a cantor/soloist at St. Benedict Catholic Church in Carrolltown.

As a music educator, Valerie has directed the choral program in grades five through twelve, taught elementary general music, high school music electives and started an elementary music theatre program in the Cambria High School District. She has also served as adjunct professor of music at both Mount Aloysius College and Saint Francis University.

Valerie received degrees from The Pennsylvania State University and Saint Francis University. She pursued additional graduate certificates in music theatre from Rider College and received her administrative papers, and principal certification, kindergarten through grade twelve, from Saint Francis University.

Valerie is an avid Penn Stater and currently sits on the Alumni Society Board of Directors for the Altoona Chapter!

Johnstown Symphony Chorus Director Jeffrey L. Webb

Jeffrey L. Webb is thrilled to begin his second year as the conductor of the Johnstown Symphony Chorus in the 2019-2020 season. Since 2001, Mr. Webb has been Associate Professor of Music and Director of Choral Activities at the University of Pittsburgh at Johnstown. He holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in music from Allegheny College and a Master of Music degree in choral conducting from Binghamton University.

At the University of Pittsburgh at Johnstown, Mr. Webb has taught courses in Music Theory, Western Art Music, Critical Listening, Jazz and Popular Music, and conducts the Pitt-Johnstown Choirs. In addition to his work at Pitt-Johnstown, Mr. Webb was the Artistic Director of the Blair Concert Chorale (Altoona, PA), from 2004-2013. Under his baton, the Blair Concert Chorale performed such works as Faure's Requiem, Vivaldi's Gloria, Schubert's Mass in G and the Broadway musicals Sweeney Todd and Chess. Mr. Webb is active as a composer, guest conductor and vocal clinician. He has guest conducted festival choirs in Pennsylvania, New York and New Zealand and presented his research on vocal health for both the Pennsylvania and Virginia Music Educators Associations. Mr. Webb's research has led to publications in both *The Choral Journal* and *Music Educators Journal*.

Mr. Webb is also active as a vocal soloist, accompanist and musical director. His recent vocal performances include Camille Saint Saens' Christmas Oratorio and Beadle Bamford in the musical Sweeney Todd. Mr. Webb has served as musical director and accompanist for several musicals, recently including Ain't Misbehavin, Godspell, Little Shop of Horrors and My Way: A Tribute to Frank Sinatra.

Community Strings Director Elizabeth Pile

Elizabeth Pile is a native of Cincinnati OH, she holds a Bachelor of Science in Music Education from Gettysburg College and a Master of Music Education from the Pennsylvania State University. She taught music for 7 years in Williamsport (PA) Area School, and has held positions as long-term substitute for three different public school districts in the Johnstown region, teaching elementary and/or junior high music. She taught strings at a local parochial elementary school for 23 years. Ms. Pile has been Director of Music at the Friedens Lutheran Church since moving to the area in 1989 where she is responsible for the children's, youth and adult choirs.

Ms. Pile has maintained a private studio of primarily violin/viola with occasional cello students since graduation from college, teaching mostly at home in addition to several local studios (no longer in business), and under the auspices of East Hills Recreation in Johnstown.

Ms. Pile studied violin as a high school student and as a member of the Cincinnati Youth Symphony where her teachers included Sigmund Efron, concertmaster of the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra (CSO) and Ronald Konieczka, member of the CSO. She was a member of the Johnstown Symphony Orchestra (JSO) for 27 years, and served as Manager of the JS Youth Orchestra for 18 years. Beth is now the Orchestra Manager and Librarian for the Johnstown Symphony Orchestra.