



August 1, 2022

Dear WYO Families,

What a scorching hot summer it's been! I trust you have found fun and relaxing ways to keep your family cool and safe. As the new president of the WYO Board of Directors, I happily welcome back our returning families –it's such a joy to see students continuing with us to further their musical studies. I'm especially happy to welcome the new families joining us for the first time or even rejoining us after a period away. Despite the enormous challenges that last year posed regarding an uncertain in-person launch to school because of the pandemic, our 2021-2022 season was a great success! A huge reason the last season was a success is because of the tireless work of our music directors, our Executive Director, our past WYO president (Dr. Song Kang), the incredible generosity of our donors who supported us during an uncertain year, and especially the students and families who banded together (see what I did there?) to create a warm and inviting environment for everyone to thrive even while COVID forced us to be socially distanced. I think our whole community deserves a big collective pat on the back!

I am pleased to announce that all the talented and dedicated people who have made WYO possible during the past year will be joining us again this year. They include Dr. David Grandis (Symphony), Mrs. Rebecca Nixon (String Orchestras), Mr. Jordan Stehle (Junior Concert Band and Wind Ensemble), and Mrs. Tanya Song as our Executive Director. Our past president, Dr. Song Kang, will stay on the WYO Board of Directors this year as well.

Enclosed are the Musician and Parent Handbook and calendar for 2022-2023. New member auditions and seating auditions for returning members will take place on **Saturday, August 20, 2022**, at Ewell Hall on the campus of William and Mary. The first regular rehearsal will be different from year's past, so please note that the first rehearsal will be on **Wednesday, September 7, 2022**, at Berkeley Middle School. However, our typical Monday evening rehearsals will resume starting on **Monday, September 12, 2022**. All registration forms and tuition payments for returning members should be turned in at the audition on **August 20**. New members should turn in their registration and tuition payment at the first rehearsal on **September 7**, at the latest.

I also want to direct your attention to our incredibly supportive sister organization: Williamsburg Symphony Orchestra (WSO). During this pandemic, WSO has been tremendously supportive of WYO with programs such as free virtual and in-person masterclasses and introductions for the Orchestra Residencies Program with Midori. We look forward to a continuation of these efforts into this year too. One of our most prized collaborations with the WSO is called the "Side-by-Side Concert" where members of the WYO and the WSO play side-by-side. This biennial experience for our students playing with a professional right next to them is truly special. That concert is on **Sunday, February 5, 2023, at 4:00pm**, so do mark that in your calendars!

In addition to supporting our educational efforts, the WSO has planned a superb season with their new music director, Michael Buttermann. I highly recommend that you take advantage of our affiliation with the Symphony and enjoy a great season of world-class music. To pique your appetite, I'll mention a few things they've planned: (a) superstar pianist, Natasha Paremski opens with Rachmaninoff's *Paganin Rhapsody*; (b) percussion sections don't often get a spotlight, but they will in October with a work called *The Glory and the Grandeur*; and (c) in November, WSO will be joined by the amazing performers of Cirque de la Symphonie. You can visit their website on www.williamsburgsymphony.org for more information.

Also, another event to look forward to features the trumpet! Remember last year's concert about movie soundtracks? Do you remember that we had some guest professional musicians play with our students? One of those guests, who is an alumnus of WYO, is Hamed Barbarji, who is a professional trumpet player. He will be returning for a guest performance with the WYO at the Fall Concert. We are still in the process of ironing out the details of that performance, so be on the lookout for news about this special performance. As a former trumpet player, myself, I'm quite excited about this!

You might be wondering about some of the important details, logistics, and policies regarding being a part of the WYO family. Details about everything from attendance policies, calendar, attire, and appropriate conduct can all be found in the handbook which is enclosed with this letter.

Of course, as a family, sometimes we need to have an "all-hands-on-deck" meeting so that we are all on the same page. That's why we will be holding the parent's meeting during **WYO's second rehearsal on Monday, September 12, at 7:15 pm**, at Berkeley Middle School. This meeting should last about an hour, and it gives us a chance to meet the people who make up the WYO family, find out more about this year's events, and to sign up for volunteer committees. It is critical to have the combined effort of all parents to make WYO successful. *This is the only mandatory parent meeting of the year, so please make every effort to join us.*

WYO has always been committed to making our programs accessible to all students who are dedicated to improving their musical skills. Tuition for all programs will stay the same as last year. Tuition for Symphony is \$400, while String Orchestras, Junior Concert Band and Wind Ensemble are \$350. There will be a \$20 activity fee for all students. We don't ever want financial hardships to be a hindrance to joining WYO for our students. As always, we have tuition assistance available to families in need, so please don't hesitate to inquire to our Executive Director. Also, families will continue to have a choice between selling raffle tickets for our spring fundraiser or making a tax-deductible \$50 donation per family at the time of registration to opt out of raffle ticket sales.

I am so thrilled for this upcoming season, and excited to see how much our individual students develop musically and as people. I'm also looking forward to seeing Williamsburg Youth Orchestra grow as a family. I am confident that our family can count on you to help make this season a success.

Sincerely,



Jason A. Chen
President, WYO Board of Directors