



Mission

We nurture, challenge, and inspire young minds through music, profoundly changing lives and our community for the better.

Chief Philanthropy Officer Posting

Since 1956, youth development through music has been the core of the Milwaukee Youth Symphony Orchestra's (MYSO) mission. Through the power of ensemble music, our work establishes positive character development, where participation reinforces creativity, how to work in teams, and how to solve problems among peers. We develop empathy and respect for one another's unique voices, balancing confidence with humility, working toward success through momentary failure, we become brave and tenacious while learning the value of discipline.

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.

Join our dynamic team, changing lives, and creating community leaders every day!

You will be joining a fiscally strong organization with a deeply committed and engaged board of directors, leadership team, and staff while embracing our values of excellence, inclusion, respect, and collaboration. Our Chief Philanthropy Officer will partner with our visionary CEO, leadership team, and board of directors to share our vision, impact, and opportunities to transform young lives and our community while developing, cultivating, stewarding, and growing our philanthropic partners.

MYSO is the largest and one of the most successful and respected after school youth orchestra programs in the nation. Our 40 ensemble and enrichment programs – from symphony and string orchestras to jazz and steel bands to music theory, composition, and international tours – provide high-quality experiences to youths with varying interests and skills.

MYSO never turns away a student in need; we ensure that all musicians have access to the resources required to succeed in our programs. A core component of MYSO's curriculum and mission, our 11 Community Partnership Programs promote diversity, equity, and inclusion by providing access to participatory music study to youths who otherwise lack access.

Research shows that the programs greatly benefit students and alumni – developing social, emotional, and cognitive skills essential to success in any walk of life.

We charge low fees (covering a fraction of the cost) and provide financial aid – \$620,000 projected for all students in 2026-27 – for membership, instruments, private lessons, and other services.

MYSO serves students ages 8 to 18 from as many as 200 schools, 60 communities, and 14 counties in southeastern Wisconsin and northern Illinois.

About the Role (Position Summary)

The Milwaukee Youth Symphony Orchestra seeks an experienced, strategic philanthropy leader to oversee the organization's continued fundraising growth and success. Supervising a team of 3 fundraising professionals, the Chief Philanthropy Officer (CPO) will be a key member of the organization's leadership team, a partner with our visionary CEO, and liaison to the organization's effective and engaged Philanthropy Committee.

In addition to a loyal and generous individual donor pool, MYSO is supported by robust grant revenue and support from United Performing Arts Fund (UPAF), which supports its 14 member performing arts organizations in the Greater Milwaukee Area. MYSO has been a member of UPAF since its beginning in 1967. Together with these partners and building on the momentum of our highly successful fundraising efforts, the incoming Chief Philanthropy Officer will build and implement a strategy to raise \$3-4 million in FY2026 in support of MYSO's mission.

MYSO is led by a strong and engaged board of directors, representing the diversity of our region, including 54% women and 21% people of color, leaders in their respective fields, who utilize their wisdom, vision, and talents to further MYSO's community impact.

The organization is fiscally sound, with significant net assets supporting our community commitments.

Reporting to the CEO, the Chief Philanthropy Officer will lead all initiatives related to MYSO's philanthropic, fundraising, and advancement efforts, and in partnership with the CEO, will represent MYSO with donors and the broader community. Current revenue streams include individuals and foundations; grants and planned giving; and special events.

The CPO will be a dynamic leader with a deep understanding of fundraising principles, methods and tactics, who has the ability to effectively work at both a strategic and administrative level. This leader will promote a culture of philanthropy among the board and staff.

Key Responsibilities:

- Strategic Leadership
- Revenue Development
- Leadership role in Board and Donor relations
- Leadership and Team Development
- Representing MYSO in the community
- Donor Stewardship
- Branding and Marketing, in partnership with Marketing team
- Finance and Administration, as it relates to Philanthropy and in partnership with the Chief Financial Officer

What it takes to be our Chief Philanthropy Officer:

- Bachelor's degree (or equivalent) with demonstrated success in fundraising, community, and board relations in progressively responsible leadership positions, with at least 5 years in a senior leadership role successfully driving strategy, operational, and performance outcomes. Graduate degree in a relevant field preferred.

MYSO's Impact

- 1,000 student musicians served weekly
- 6,000 young people reached through 25+ free community and school concerts
- With a deep commitment to provide access to all, MYSO reflects and embraces the diversity of our region with 50% of students coming from diverse and traditionally under-represented areas; more than 40% receive financial aid.
- More than 150 MYSO concerts every year, reaching an audience of nearly 30,000
- Independent research confirms MYSO's impact:
 - 73% growth – character skills
 - 87% growth – cognitive skills
 - 91% growth – musical skills

- Verified record for meeting or exceeding measurable fundraising goals in a medium-to-large, fast-paced nonprofit environment.
- Demonstrated ability to build strong, lasting relationships with a diversity of donors through a multiplicity of strategies, as well as work collaboratively with the Chief Executive Officer, Board, staff, and volunteers.
- Excellent written and oral communication and networking skills with the ability to engage, inspire and educate in personal meetings, group settings, public speaking settings and in written form.
- Proven experience in leading people and managing systems to achieve fundraising goals and substantial increases in revenue.
- Ability to critically assess current processes and recommend improvements to the CEO.
- Visionary, innovative thinker, with a track record for translating strategic thinking into concrete action plans and results.
- Passionate about the mission, vision, values, and goals of MYSO and possess an understanding of how this position contributes to our organization's success.
 - Bring humility and a deep commitment to philanthropy and empathy for those we serve.
 - Ability to work evenings and weekends to represent the organization at meetings and events.
 - Access to transportation to visit donors, prospects and attend events.

Salary will be commensurate with experience and skills.

What We Offer:

- A collaborative and creative work environment, with a strong and effective leadership team.
- Comprehensive benefits package, including health, life, short & long-term disability, and savings retirement plan.

Interested in joining our Team?

To apply for the Chief Philanthropy Officer position, please send letter of interest and resume to Rachael Copeland, HR Director at rachaelcopeland@myso.org. No telephone calls or walk-ins please.

Final candidates must pass MYSO's post offer, pre-employment testing, including a criminal background check.

The Milwaukee Youth Symphony Orchestra is an Equal Opportunity Employer, dedicated to a policy of non-discrimination in employment on any basis including race, color, religion, gender, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, national origin, genetics, disability, age, or veteran status.