

# ASPEN LEADERSHIP GROUP

**DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT**  
**WISCONSIN YOUTH SYMPHONY ORCHESTRAS**  
**MADISON, WISCONSIN**



Aspen Leadership Group is proud to partner with Wisconsin Youth Symphony Orchestras in the search for a Director of Development.

The Director of Development will play a pivotal role in shaping the future of Wisconsin Youth Symphony Orchestras through strategic fundraising leadership, planning, and community engagement. Working closely with the Executive Director, the Director of Development will develop a comprehensive fundraising program that achieves revenue growth and sustainability, supports operational needs, and inspires endowment growth. The Director of Development will cultivate strong relationships with the Board of Directors, leveraging their talents and resources, while crafting compelling communication materials that promote WYSO's programs. With a focus on identifying new funding sources, managing a major gifts program, and overseeing grant proposals, the Director of Development will ensure effective planning and management of all development initiatives. As a key spokesperson for WYSO, the Director of Development will engage with the community and collaborate on strategies that elevate WYSO's presence and impact. Through a best-in-class donor stewardship program, the Director of Development will enhance relationships with alumni, parents, and friends, ensuring ongoing support for and engagement with the mission of Wisconsin Youth Symphony Orchestras.

Wisconsin Youth Symphony Orchestras was established in 1966 by Professor Marvin Rabin of the University of Wisconsin-Madison Music Department. More than 5,000 young musicians from communities throughout south central Wisconsin have participated in WYSO during its 50+ years of existence. Under the artistic direction of Kyle Knox, WYSO includes three full orchestras, two string orchestras, a chamber music program, a harp program, a percussion ensemble, a brass choir program, and the WYSO Music Makers program. WYSO enriches lives by providing transformational musical experiences and opportunities. Through their involvement with WYSO, young people are inspired to sustain a lifelong connection with music and to strive for personal excellence in music as well as in life.

Each year WYSO offers a full array of the finest instrumental training and performance opportunities to young musicians between the ages of five and 18. Three full orchestras, two string orchestras, and a variety of ensemble programs from Harp to Percussion to Brass Choir form the core of the WYSO Orchestral Program.

The *WYSO Orchestral Program* is perfect for the student who has been introduced to an orchestral instrument — and loves playing. This extension of school music and private lessons introduces musicians as young as eight years old to a community of players as passionate about music as they are. Students learn and grow alongside other musicians who travel to the Madison area from 19 counties in south central Wisconsin each Saturday for 33 weeks throughout the school year. Performances are integral to the program, from chamber music recitals to full orchestral programs, from the percussion extravaganza to community and international tours.

The *WYSO Chamber Music Program* is often called a conversation among friends as the music is written so that each instrument plays a unique part. Students take turns leading and following and learn to listen closely to each other.

The *WYSO Music Makers Program* supports students who would like to learn instrumental music in a non-competitive environment, regardless of ability to pay. The program provides instruments, music, and instruction, and performance opportunities to a diverse group of students who may not have any previous instrumental experience. In Music Makers, students find a diverse learning community of other students who are passionate about music. Almost 70% of the students speak a language other than English in the home, and at WYSO they truly discover that music is a universal language.

WYSO orchestras typically rehearse on Saturdays during the academic year, perform three to four public concerts per season, and tour regionally, nationally, and internationally. WYSO's Youth Orchestra has toured to Peru, Italy, Argentina, Central Europe, Canada, Japan, Scotland, Spain, France, Colorado, Iowa, and Washington, D.C.

WYSO alumni are an essential part of the WYSO family. From the first orchestra members in 1966 to the most recent high school graduates, alumni have stayed in touch to share where they are and what they are doing. From musicians to teachers to scientists to politicians, WYSO alumni are making a difference in the world.

### **WYSO CENTER FOR MUSIC**

For the first time in its history, WYSO has its own home at 1118 East Washington Avenue. The new \$33 million building adds to a growing youth arts corridor on the near east side of Madison, and joins the Madison Youth Arts Center, Madison Youth Choirs, and the Children's Theater of Madison. Construction on the project began nearly two years ago, and WYSO was able to begin occupying the building in December 2023. Collectively, philanthropists donated \$22.7 million to the project, with \$5.8 million contributed by 200 other community members. The building's design is intentional, outfitted with community spaces, sound-proofing technology, and rehearsal rooms that have acoustics suited for music-making. From the outside, the 40,000-square-foot structure is reminiscent of the curves of musical instruments. Upon walking inside, the hustle and bustle of traffic from East Washington Avenue fades away. WYSO's new home can accommodate all the organization's programs under a single roof including state-of-the-art rehearsal space for orchestras and ensembles of all sizes; studio teaching spaces for area musicians; administrative offices; a music library; space for all WYSO's current orchestras and Music Makers students; and room to grow programs, as well as welcome arts and community organizations to use the building.

### **REPORTING RELATIONSHIPS**

The Director of Development will report to the Executive Director. The Director of Development will oversee a team of two current staff with the opportunity to grow the team over time.

## FROM THE PRESIDENT, BOARD OF DIRECTORS

*In a historic period of growth, the Wisconsin Youth Symphony Orchestras is embarking on the search for a Director of Development to serve as a collaborative partner to the incoming Executive Director.*

*WYSO has supported youth music education in our community with five incredible youth orchestras, an award-winning chamber music program, a nationally recognized percussion ensemble, and the WYSO Music Makers, a program for students across diverse populations that provides instruments, lessons, and ensemble opportunities.*

*Our students have achieved critical acclaim in world renowned symphony orchestras, as composers and conductors, as outstanding music educators and as experts in educational policy. We have engaged and committed parents, students, staff, and board members in the WYSO programs. The new WYSO Center for Music is a world class facility that serves as the platform for transformative experiences as students create music together and form new friendships.*

*We hope you consider applying for the Director of Development position and join us in our mission and vision!*

—Mary S. Gerbig, President, WYSO Board of Directors

## PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITIES

### **Fundraising Leadership**

The Director of Development will

- lead and contribute to, in partnership with the Executive Director, WYSO's development strategy and campaign in order to achieve revenue growth and sustainability, support program operations, maintain strong cash reserves, and build the endowment fund held by the WYSO Foundation;
- manage collaboration with campaign and fundraising consultants to complete current campaign initiatives and launch future campaigns;
- build trusting relationships with the Board of Directors and its committees in order to leverage their time, talent, and resources;
- develop compelling case statements, appeal letters, and media and social media resources in support of WYSO programs;
- plan and execute WYSO's annual giving and develop strategies to grow audience;
- identify new sources of individual, corporate, and foundation support;
- develop and lead a major gifts program that includes prospect research, cultivation, proposal preparation, and solicitation;
- oversee the researching of grant prospects, proposal preparation, solicitation proposals, final reports, and reports to funders; and
- lead and support the goals and activities of the WYSO Development and event committees.

### **Planning and Management**

The Director of Development will

- work with leadership to prepare and implement annual development goals and a plan;
- work with leadership and committees to develop long-range plans for development that meet the needs of the organization;
- prepare, maintain, and communicate an up-to-date development calendar;
- work collaboratively and effectively with staff and volunteers in support of WYSO programs and development plans;

- monitor all donor information and utilize the donor database to prepare reports for leadership, committees, and the board; and
- develop and maintain the development program’s financial projections and budgets

### **Stewardship**

The Director of Development will

- design and implement strategies that support a best-in-class donor stewardship program;
- oversee contributed gift processing, acknowledgements, reminders, and follow-up; and
- utilize WYSO events as well as related community events to cultivate and sustain donor and prospective donor relationships.

### **Community Engagement**

The Director of Development will

- maintain a visible presence in the community as a key WYSO spokesperson;
- collaborate with the Communication Manager and program staff to prepare materials that effectively communicate WYSO’s activities, brand, and impact;
- collaborate with the Communication Manager on a digital media strategy designed to demonstrate the impact and the value of WYSO in the community;
- stay informed of development and philanthropic trends and events and take advantage of emerging and evolving opportunities; and
- develop and sustain a plan that engages WYSO alumni, parents, and friends — utilizing WYSO communications, events, and other opportunities.

### **Team Building**

The Director of Development will

- serve as a visible, effective leader with an ability to recognize talent while building and retaining a successful team.

## **PREFERRED COMPETENCIES AND QUALIFICATIONS**

Wisconsin Youth Symphony Orchestras seeks a Director of Development with

- a sincere interest in committing to the mission of Wisconsin Youth Symphony Orchestras — to enrich lives by providing transformational musical experiences and opportunities for young people, inspiring them to develop a lifelong connection with music and to strive for personal excellence in music and in life;
- experience developing and executing comprehensive fundraising strategies that achieve revenue growth and sustainability;
- an ability to build and maintain trusting relationships with board members, donors, and community stakeholders;
- exceptional written and verbal communication skills including an ability to create compelling case statements, appeal letters, and marketing materials;
- experience planning, executing, and evaluating fundraising campaigns, including annual and major gifts programs;
- experience researching grant opportunities, preparing proposals, and reporting to funders;
- an ability to prepare and manage development budgets, ensuring alignment with organizational goals;
- experience developing long-term development plans in collaboration with executive staff and committees;

- an ability to train, supervise, and motivate staff and volunteers to further development efforts;
- an ability to serve as an effective spokesperson and representative of WYSO within the community;
- an ability to develop and implement digital media strategies that effectively communicate organizational impact and engage stakeholders;
- knowledge of the various options available for charitable giving and their purposes, advantages, and tax consequences;
- experience designing and implementing donor stewardship programs that enhance donor retention and satisfaction; and
- knowledge of current philanthropic trends and best practices needed to identify and capitalize on new fundraising opportunities.

A bachelor's degree or an equivalent combination of education and experience and at least five years of fundraising or business development experience, preferably within the nonprofit performing arts sector, is preferred for this position. Wisconsin Youth Symphony Orchestras will consider candidates with a broad range of backgrounds. If you are excited about this role and feel that you can contribute to WYSO, but your experience does not exactly align with every qualification listed above, we encourage you to apply.

#### **SALARY AND BENEFITS**

The salary range for this position is \$100,000 to \$115,000 annually. WYSO offers a comprehensive package of benefits.

#### **LOCATION**

This position is in Madison, Wisconsin.

#### **APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS**

All applications must be accompanied by a cover letter and résumé. ***Cover letters should be responsive to the mission of Wisconsin Youth Symphony Orchestras as well as the responsibilities and qualifications presented in the prospectus.*** Review of applications will begin immediately and continue until the successful candidate has been selected.

To apply for this position, visit: [Director of Development, Wisconsin Youth Symphony Orchestras.](#)

To nominate a candidate, please contact [Patrick Key.](#)

*All inquiries will be held in confidence.*