



# GRACE NOTES

Oakland Symphony | Oakland Symphony Youth Orchestra | Oakland Symphony Chorus

## Dear Friends,

Despite all the challenges that 2020 has brought, it's been heartwarming to see how steadfast your support has been.

This issue of *Grace Notes* celebrates you, our generous donors, and everything that your gifts made possible in our recently completed 2020 fiscal year (July 1 - June 30).

I hope you will enjoy remembering some musical memories. Thank you, again, for your loyalty and generosity through these difficult times.

Warmly,



Dr. Mieko Hatano  
Executive Director

## Q&A with Don Rigler



Don Rigler, Oakland Symphony Board Member and Treasurer

### What was your first introduction to Oakland Symphony?

My daughter, Allison, played trombone in the Youth Orchestra, and my wife and I went with the Orchestra on their China tour last year.

### What inspired you to get more involved as a volunteer?

I saw what a wonderful impact the program had on my daughter -- uplifting her musical aspirations, her confidence, how she was thinking about her career. Also my employer, Salesforce.com, has a strong culture of philanthropy and we're encouraged to get involved in the community.

### What message do you, as treasurer, have for our donors?

Donors are more important than ever to our sustainability, and every gift, no matter the size, matters. Even though the Symphony is currently unable to perform, we're still building programs, working in the community -- activities that those donations support. We can't foresee all the ways CoVID will impact Oakland Symphony, but we can be certain that philanthropic support is crucial to our getting back onstage and dealing with the "new normal."

Michael Morgan, Music Director



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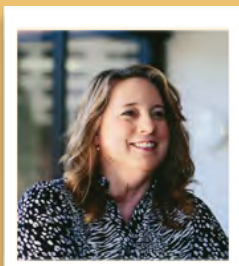
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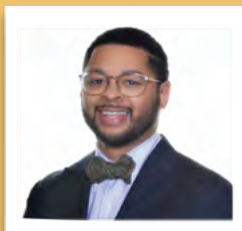
Bernard J. Tyson's Playlist, January 2020

**New Board Members!**

In Fiscal Year 2020 Oakland Symphony welcomed four new board members.



**Carol Pereira**, CFO, Altamont Capital Partners



**Brandon Purnell**, Digital Risk Solutions Manager, PriceWaterhouseCoopers

**Mark Moss**, Community Volunteer, Member Oakland Symphony Chorus

**Don Rigler**, Vice President M&A Finance, Salesforce.com

**Your Greatest Hits! Bernard J. Tyson's Playlist**



Vocalists **Moorea Dickason**, **Trance Thompson** and **Viveca Hawkins**

Oakland Symphony's groundbreaking Playlist series is an annual concert co-curated by Michael Morgan and some of the great thinkers—and doers—of our time, focused on their personal musical touchstones.

The Playlist collaborator for the 2020 concert was the late **Bernard J. Tyson**, a global leader in healthcare and CEO and President of Kaiser Permanente.

Maestro Michael Morgan says, "besides being so important in Oakland, he was the embodiment of the big thinker who is not in the field of music but for whom music is important." The concert became a moving remembrance of Tyson's life, with friends, family, and colleagues sharing their stories.

**"It was wonderful, wonderful, wonderful. It helped to fill some of the sadness I still feel with joy. Make a joyful noise."** Denise Tyson

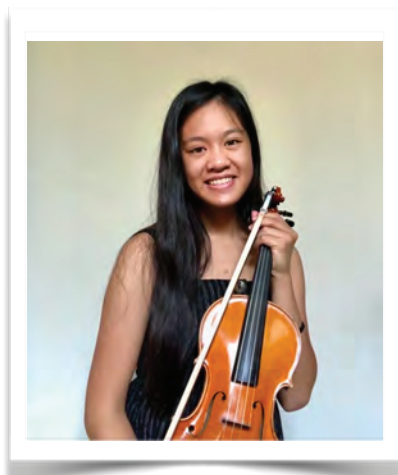
**Violinist Reflects on OSYO**

During my time at OSYO, it has constantly been a major role in my life by helping me to become better not only as a musician, but also as a better person, bonding with people while having numerous opportunities to play amazing repertoire with amazing musicians.

During rehearsals, it's a time where I can openly express my love for music with those around me.

As a student, OSYO has always been a great opportunity to develop my abilities in a musical sense that opens a brand new perspective on music, while teaching me to become a better leader, musician, and a communicator.

-Isabel Pulido (Violin)



OSYO Violinist Isabel Pulido

**MUSE Education Adapts to COVID**



Beth Vandervennet performs with MUSE student

The 2019/2020 school year marked our 22nd year partnering with the Oakland Unified School District (OUSD) to offer programs that expose students to the arts, create meaningful opportunities for them to engage with professional musicians serving as Teaching Artist Mentors, and foster their continued growth as musicians and students. March 2020 marked the onset of distance learning due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

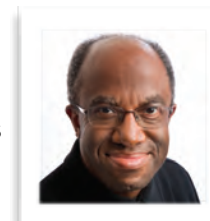
"The phrase I keep using is 'creative adaptability'" observes Beth Vandervennet, Oakland Symphony cellist and lead teaching artist for MUSE. With Oakland's K-12 students reachable only via the internet, MUSE educators are reinventing how they reach students.

"I approach the challenges of CoVID in a creative way. If we're saying, 'We're not able to do it the way we've been doing it,' we're not thinking creatively." New strategies include a song collection curriculum, inviting students to bring in cherished family music passed across generations.

"We will continue our relationships with our students, families and OUSD teachers. The music will not stop. The relationships will not stop."

**Maestro Michael Morgan Reflects...**

Our last concert before the pause brought together two areas of the repertoire that haven't shown up much on our concerts lately. In the Mahler I thought the orchestra especially rose to the occasion. The presence of the *Violins of Hope* instruments just made it all the more moving.



Maestro Michael Morgan

**Donor Remembers Friend for Emergency Musician Relief Aid**



Donor **Georgine O'Connor** and **Ann Eliassen**

Concert cancellations beginning in March with the CoVID shutdown have severely curtailed the livelihoods of our musicians. In response, donors like you rose to the occasion and contributed nearly \$40,000 for an emergency relief fund for Oakland Symphony musicians.

Donor **Ann Eliassen** dedicated an emergency fund gift in memory of her dear friend **Georgine O'Connor**.

They were frequent companions at Oakland Symphony concerts for more than 20 years.

Ann says: "We both enjoyed the new artists and culturally diverse music the Oakland Symphony provides."