

CREATING IMPACT THROUGH EDUCATION AND ENGAGEMENT

For over 81 seasons, the Hartford Symphony Orchestra (HSO) has connected, educated, and inspired through the transformative power of music. With a focus on equity and inclusion, the Learning and Social Impact (LSI) team develops innovative programs that reflect the diversity of our communities and create meaningful connections through education and social engagement.



HARTFORD
SYMPHONY
ORCHESTRA

Education in Action: Inspiring the Next Generation

Empowering students through the transformative power of orchestral music

2023-2024 Discovery Concerts
3 Concerts
44 Participating Schools
185 Participating Musicians
4,155 Students Served

Discovery Concerts introduce students to the magic of live symphony through storytelling and interactive experiences. This season, HSO removed barriers to access by providing transportation for Alliance District students, ensuring they could attend despite logistical challenges. The program expanded the Link-Up initiative, engaging Hartford and East Hartford 3rd graders in performances alongside the HSO, while also creating Exploring Emotions, a Discovery Concert tailored to students with special needs.



2023-2024 Symphony in Schools

19 Locations
22 Performances
62 Musicians Participating
2,390 Students Served

Meanwhile, **Symphony in Schools** brought live music directly into classrooms, blending music with academic and social-emotional learning. These performances highlighted composers of diverse racial, ethnic, and gender identities, fostering cultural understanding while engaging students through programming designed to resonate with their lives and experiences.

Instrument Discovery Labs

7 Events
701 Students Served

Instrument Discovery Labs offer children hands-on opportunities to explore and play orchestral instruments, sparking curiosity, creativity, and a lifelong connection to the joy of making music.

Community Engagement: Healing and Uplifting Through Music

Bringing joy, solace, and connection to every corner of our community.

Through **Musicians Care**, HSO musicians brought joy and solace to hospitals, retirement communities, and senior living centers. Recent performances at Seabury, Duncaster, and St. Francis Hospital offered healing and connection to patients, residents, and staff.

The annual **MLK Tribute Concert**, *The Fierce Urgency of Now*, celebrates the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. through powerful music and reflection. This year's concert, held on January 23, 2025, at Asylum Hill Congregational Church, will feature vocalist Schautice Marshall, guest artists, and Music Director Carolyn Kuan, uniting the community in hope and dialogue.

HSO also reached new audiences through **HSO Extended** at Thomas Hooker Live, a casual concert series combining symphonic music with craft brews in a lively atmosphere. Themes include celebrating a variety of music and artistry, including *I'm Every Woman*, highlighting female artists, which was performed during Women's History Month. Coming this February, during Black History month, *A Strings Celebration of Soul* will bring together audiences for an orchestral twist on popular tunes.



The Joyce C. Willis Artist in Residence Program: Music for the Community

Elevating Black artists and celebrating diversity on and beyond the HSO stage.

Visiting Artists in the Community

25
Events

1,633
Students Served

The **Joyce C. Willis Artist in Residence program**, established in 2020 by The Roberts Foundation for the Arts, honors Joyce C. Willis, a champion of Hartford's arts and Black culture. This initiative elevates Black artists by showcasing their talents on the HSO stage and in the community. This year's resident, Clayton Stephenson, inspired audiences with powerful performances and outreach at schools and community groups. The program reflects HSO's commitment to equity and inclusivity, celebrating Black artistry while continuing Joyce's legacy of advancing excellence in the arts.

**ROBERTS
FOUNDATION
FOR THE ARTS**

Last year alone, the Learning and Social Impact team hosted 78 events, serving approximately 10,800 people across schools, hospitals, and community spaces. Through innovative programs and meaningful connections, the HSO continues to inspire, educate, and uplift, ensuring that symphonic music remains a vibrant and accessible force in our community.



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