

The Hartford Symphony Orchestra (HSO) transforms lives through the power of music, and the Learning and Social Impact (LSI) team deepens the HSO's community presence—building access, equity, and representation into educational and engagement programming that resonates across generations and neighborhoods.

Education in Action

Discovery Concerts

3 concerts | 48 Schools | 6,000 Students

Discovery Concerts engage thousands of students in vibrant, interactive performances that align musical themes with social-emotional learning.

"This program was fantastic. Student engagement was phenomenal from the very start. The academic connections that were made not only link the classroom to real world experiences but allow us to reference the concepts back in the classroom."

The HSO is a partner of Carnegie Hall's Link Up program—a national program that introduces students to symphonic music. The HSO invites 3rd grade students from Hartford and East Hartford public schools to perform at The Bushnell alongside the orchestra. The program includes a year-long curriculum that teaches students to play the recorder.



Symphony in Schools

23 Schools | 2,019 Students

HSO Musicians work in classrooms across Greater Hartford, supporting academic and social-emotional learning. Musicians connect with students by performing with ensembles, coaching bands and orchestras, and sharing about their careers.

"It was so cool that the programming and music aligned with our STEM theme! We had a great time working with the HSO musicians. I think this was a very valuable experience for our students."



Instrument Discovery Labs

8 Events | 750 Students

Families explore a variety of instruments with support of our musicians through our Instrument Discovery Labs. These workshops take place at Talcott Mountain Music Festival concerts and other community events.

Community Engagement

Through HSO Extended and a variety of free and sponsored programs, the Hartford Symphony Orchestra expands access to live symphonic music by reaching audiences where they are to share the power of music.

HSO musicians performed in health care facilities, senior centers, and senior living communities, offering moments of peace and connection through music.

Presented in partnership with Asylum Hill Congregational Church, **The Fierce Urgency of Now: MLK Tribute Concert** brought generations together to honor the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. through music, reflection, and community.

Strings of Hope brought HSO string quartets into sacred community spaces for evenings of inspiration and connection. The intimate concerts invited spiritual reflection through classical music, underscoring the power of music to uplift and unify.

Free **Family Community Concerts** at the Hartford Library, Avon Library, Charter Oak Community Center, and Artists Collective brought orchestral music into local communities and inspire audiences of all ages.

The HSO's popular **Press Play** series continued to attract new and diverse audiences through casual, genre-blending concerts in collaboration with J Under the Dome. These performances celebrate musical variety—from the 90s to Anime to Rock Anthems and I'm Every Woman, a celebration of female artists.

The Joyce C. Willis Artist in Residence

31 Events | 2,410 Students

Through the generosity of the J. Walton Bissell Foundation and the Henry Luce Foundation, the Joyce C. Willis Artist in Residence program honors Joyce's enduring commitment to the arts and equity by featuring Black artists. This year's artist, Curtis Stewart, inspired students' school visits and community concerts.

"The cultural relevance in his conversations was a highlight... Students made real connections with the music... felt accomplished when they were able to identify particular themes and melodies"

"It was especially meaningful to see someone who looks like them achieving excellence in music."



Year in Review

Across schools, hospitals, parks, and performance halls, the HSO Learning and Social Impact team continues to foster creativity, spark connection, and create moments that matter. Through music, students discover new possibilities; seniors find comfort, and communities come together.

"Our collaboration with the HSO brought our school community together through the power of music."

Let's keep inspiring, educating, and uplifting together.

For more information or to support HSO's Learning and Social Impact initiatives, please contact Andrew Robbin at arobbin@hartfordsymphony.org