



*Hearing is believing*

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**CONTACT: Sara Torrey**  
**storrey@esy.org**  
**(w) 518-382-7581**  
**(c) 518-956-3534**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**More than \$16,000 in awards given to  
Empire State Youth Orchestras Musicians for 2015-16 Season**

Empire State Youth Orchestras (ESYO) believes in the power of music to transform lives for the better. To that end, it has long believed that no young musician who successfully auditions for ESYO should be denied access to ESYO's program because of financial hardship.

This past August, 30 musicians, almost 10 percent of ESYO's membership, were awarded financial assistance to help defray the cost of tuition for the coming season. The average size of an award was slightly over \$500 with a total of \$16,270 being granted.

The majority of the funding for these awards came from a \$12,000 grant to ESYO from the Alfred Z. Solomon Charitable Trust. This is the second time the Alfred Z. Solomon Charitable Trust has provided a grant of this size for ESYO's tuition assistance program. Additional funds came from individual donors.

Although ESYO intentionally keeps its tuition low to provide access to its program for as many children as possible, there are families to whom tuition presents a financial challenge. Donations from the community and charitable organizations such as the Alfred Z. Solomon Charitable Trust help remove barriers to participation, for which ESYO is very grateful.

***About Empire State Youth Orchestras:*** 300+ talented youth from the Capital Region of New York and western New England are selected by audition each year for positions in ESYO's program of high-level music education and performance opportunities for young musicians. Well known for its Youth Orchestra's participation in CBS 6's *Melodies of Christmas* (benefit concerts for the pediatric cancer program at Albany Medical Center), ESYO actually has a total of nine performing ensembles that collectively give approximately 30 public performances a year. ESYO reaches out to the community with an annual free concert for senior citizens, concerts for young people, and ESYO's CHIME™, a free music education program for inner-city, low-income youth in Albany and Schenectady. Founded in 1979, ESYO has been recognized as a premier music education/performance program for youth and has received three prestigious ASCAP awards. A not-for-profit organization governed by a volunteer board of directors, ESYO was named Tech Valley Nonprofit Business Council's Nonprofit Organization of 2013 (for organizations of fewer than 75 employees) in recognition of ESYO's positive contributions to the vitality of the region. For more information, visit [www.esyo.org](http://www.esyo.org).