Jackson Symphony Orchestra
Strategic Plan: FY 2023-2028

Let’s music together!!

Mission

1. All things music, so close to you OR
2. The world of music, so close to home[1] (To provide world-class music and music education, so close to home.)

Vision

The JSO is the musical leader in the greater Jackson area. We innovate and collaborate in ways that enrich and elevate our community and beyond.

JSO Key Goals

1) Build-back and retain the JSO audience to pre-COVID-19 numbers while optimizing each of our offerings (Signature Series, Music on Tap, Pops Concerts, Nutcracker, Education Concerts, Bach’s Lunch, and Student Recitals) to achieve new levels of diverse participation.

Narrative--Innovative artistic programming is the lifeblood of any musical organization. Our long-term goal is to provide programming that is artistically fulfilling and popular enough that it becomes self-sustaining. Offering many types of musical experiences allows us to interact with a wide variety of community members including families, and populations that have not traditionally been represented in the audiences of the JSO. This diversification will truly allow us to be all things music to Jackson. It will also give us a diverse range of income streams that we can rely on to support our long-term growth.

2) Build-back, retain and then increase Community Music School enrollment while increasing access by maintaining our current rate of student tuition subsidization.

Narrative--Student access to music education in schools has been on the decline for over two decades. While this might not seem like a problem that impacts everyone, the lack of music education can have broad, negative consequences. Music education has been shown to enrich the quality of student’s lives, promote cultural awareness, create social bonds, and promote pride of accomplishment. In addition, music education promotes responsibility, raises student achievement, develops self discipline and greater confidence, and provides constructive entertainment. Through group classes, private lessons and in-school programs, the JSO is helping
to fill the void left by cutbacks in in-school music programs. In addition to these benefits for our students and for the community at large, the number of students taking music lessons in our Community Music School impacts the financial and operational health of the JSO positively, and it provides the next generation of patrons and donors for our artistic programming. A healthy and diverse music school will lead to the long-term health and diversity of the organization.

3) Build an organizational infrastructure and financial model that achieves significant growth in the numbers of people we serve by growing our endowment through planned giving and high-impact gifts.

Narrative--The gift from the Estate of Faith Small of close to $2,000,000, and the commitment of a $2,000,000 gift from Ron and Marvel Jones, underscores the importance of planned giving and legacy gifts for the long term sustainability of the JSO. Donations of this type allow us to operate boldly while annually achieving positive financial results. Our goal is to run free from the burden of selling tickets, which will make our product more accessible to our community members and allow for more creative freedom in our programming. Simply put, the broader our reach.

**Strategies**

**Performance**

- Expand the demographic and geographic reach
  - Perform in new venues and locales
  - Explore different concert formats
  - Run out concerts
  - Explore meaningful collaborations with minority populations
  - House Concerts
  - Investigate a JSO string quartet scholarship for university students
  - Work with schools and colleges

- Elevate Music-on-Tap
  - Identify season headliner
  - Identify dates that facilitate maximum attendance

- Expand Pops offerings
  - Collaborate with other downtown organizations for a Halloween concert
  - Investigate demand and feasibility of Jeans n Classics, Family concerts and Star Wars

- Replace musical instruments
  - Purchase new timpani - DONE
  - New chimes

**Education**
• Investigate Carnegie Link up!
  ○ Enhance the recorder programs at local elementary schools with this capstone performance
  ○ Research how many schools offer recorder in 2020-2021

• Improve and augment the CMS curriculum
  ○ Investigate or visit at least 3 community music schools to gain insight and best practices during the 2020-2021 season
  ○ Review (Keep, Stop, Start) CMS Class offerings
  ○ Match our class offerings to our community
  ○ Expand string team to a multi-year program that eventually connects to the JYSO
  ○ Investigate an honors band

• Determine the relationships we want to have with other music organizations including schools

• Improve registration and record keeping process

**Operations**

• Adjust the organizational chart to represent the current and future needs of the organization
  ○ Divide Executive Director and Music Director responsibilities
  ○ Define development position and determine characteristics of the ideal candidate - DONE
  ○ Use independent contractors

• EOS
  ○ Traction Library

**Marketing**

• Expand awareness
  ○ Invest time to develop our Instagram presence
  ○ Survey to find and refine what’s working best
  ○ Solicit audience, musician, teacher, staff, parent and student testimonials for social media
  ○ Evaluate pricing to stay competitive in our market
  ○ How do you “music” with us?

• Implement the California Symphony Audience Development pyramid
  ○ Define our customer segments
  ○ Determine metrics to track according to goals
  ○ Refine reporting
  ○ Create systems for the subscriber journey
Development These four strategies seem ones that need further fleshing out, especially if one of the goals is to operate freely of the burden of ticket sales.

● Implement a system for cultivating major gifts - Yes
● Revisit our “Sponsored Musician Chair” program to enhance financial stability
● Use house concerts to cultivate individual donors - good tool in a post-covid world
● Create systems to steward individual donors (California Symphony model)

Facility

● Plan a follow up to the Weatherwax Hall renovation
  ○ HVAC
    ■ Regulating heating/cooling for consistency
  ○ Bathrooms
  ○ Box Office
  ○ Hall Performance Lighting - DONE
  ○ Curtains - DONE
  ○ Practice Rooms and Classrooms
  ○ Hydraulic Elevator
  ○ Outside facade and signage
  ○ Video lesson studio
  ○ Recording studio
  ○ Evaluate instruments, equipment and technology

75th Anniversary

● Celebrate our history
  ○ Plan and execute a significant, artistic statement event
    ■ high profile performance
      ● EX: Joint/MoT concert - Bela Fleck, Chris Thile, Ben Folds
    ■ venue
    ■ guest artist
    ■ Reunion concert
    ■ Commission
      ● Musical work by high profile composer
      ● Video history or written history of the JSO

● Double the Endowment by 2025
  ○ Campaign
Governance

- Refine Board Composition
  - Ideal Board member characteristics-Get generative strategic thinkers on the board and use their time and talents wisely.
  - Composition is representative of the community at-large.
- Re-evaluate Board Development
  - Orientation
  - Evaluation
  - Improvement
  - Recruitment
- De-couple philanthropy from governance.
  - Ex: Give to the JSO at the same level you give other top orgs...if you give United Way $20,000, you give JSO $20,000 (or $200 for each, etc).
- Make meetings engaging and cohesive.
  - Board interactions with one-another to become a more cohesive unit.
- Use task forces for unique problems (instead of committees- task force is time bound and outcome driven).