



WISCONSIN  
CHAMBER  
ORCHESTRA



WISCONSIN  
YOUTH SYMPHONY  
ORCHESTRAS

MADISON  
SYMPHONY  
ORCHESTRA  
JOHN DEMAIN | MUSIC DIRECTOR

# ASSOCIATION OF WISCONSIN SYMPHONY ORCHESTRAS

2026 ANNUAL  
SPRING WORKSHOP

June 13<sup>th</sup> & 14<sup>th</sup>, 2026

# HOTEL PARTNER

**Hotel Indigo Madison Downtown by IHG**

901 E Washington Ave

Madison, WI 53703

**Phone:** (608) 256-0061

**Website:** <https://www.ihg.com/hotelindigo>



# WORKSHOP LOCATION

**WYSO Center for Music**

1118 E. Washington Ave.

Madison, WI 53703

**Phone:** (608) 733-6283

**Website:** <https://wysomusic.org>

# WORKSHOP ITINERARY

## DAY 1 10:00 AM - 6:00 PM

Enjoy a pre-workshop visit to the [Dane County Farmers' Market](#) starting at 7 am.

Time	Event	Location
10:00 AM - 11:30 AM	AWSO Board Pre-Meeting	Conference Room
11:30 AM - 1:00 PM	11:30 am: Registration Opens Welcome Reception 12:15 pm: Tour of WYSO Center for Music	1 <sup>st</sup> Floor Commons
1:00 PM - 2:00 PM	Opening General Session Michelle Kaebisch, Joe Loehnis, Robert Reed	Rabin Hall

\*See Workshop Slides For More Details

# WORKSHOP ITINERARY

## DAY 1 10:00 AM - 6:00 PM

<b>Time</b>	<b>Event</b>	<b>Location</b>
<b>2:15 PM - 3:15 PM</b>	Educate! Advocate! Repeat! Michelle Kaebisch	Rabin Hall
<b>3:30 PM - 4:30 PM</b>	Artistic Directors Panel John DeMain, Andrew Sewell, Kyle Knox, Ellie Chin	Rabin Hall
<b>4:45 PM - 6:00 PM</b>	Networking Reception	1st Floor Commons

\*See Workshop Slides For More Details

# WORKSHOP ITINERARY

## DAY 2 9:00 AM - 4:00 PM

<b>Time</b>	<b>Event</b>	<b>Location</b>
<b>8:30 AM - 9:30 AM</b>	8:30 am: Registration Opens 8:45 am: Tour of WYSO Center for Music	1st Floor Commons
<b>9:30 AM - 11:00 AM</b>	Breakout Sessions I	
<b>11:15 AM - 12:45 PM</b>	Presentation of Service to Music Award AWSO Annual Business Meeting Lunch	Rabin Hall

\*See Workshop Slides For More Details

# WORKSHOP ITINERARY

## DAY 2 9:00 AM - 4:00 PM

<b>Time</b>	<b>Event</b>	<b>Location</b>
<b>1:00 PM - 2:30 PM</b>	Breakout Sessions II	
<b>2:45 PM - 3:45 PM</b>	Closing General Session Michelle Kaebisch, Joe Loehnis, Robert Reed	Rabin Hall
<b>4:00 - 4:30 PM</b>	Shuttle to MSO Concert	Main Entrance

\*See Workshop Slides For More Details

# SESSION TITLES & INFORMATION

## Opening General Session

June 13<sup>th</sup>  
1 pm

### Welcome to the 2026 AWSO Conference!

In this session you'll have an opportunity to meet each other and share updates about the strengths as well as some of the challenges of your home orchestra. The session will shed light on some themes across the state orchestral landscape and give you some ideas to take with you throughout the rest of the conference. You will also get to meet your peers from around the state.

## General Session 2

June 13<sup>th</sup>  
2:15 pm

### Educate! Advocate! Repeat! - Michelle Kaebisch

School-based music education, long a rich source of future audiences, is undergoing significant post-pandemic changes that present new challenges for communities' symphony orchestras. Join Michelle Kaebisch for a heartfelt discussion on our essential work as community-based music educators and advocates.

## Keynote

June 13<sup>th</sup>  
3:30 PM

### Artistic Directors Panel - John DeMain, Andrew Sewell and Kyle Knox. Ellie Chin, Moderator

Ellie Chin, CEO of Destination Madison, moderates a panel of the distinguished Artistic Directors of our three co-presenting orchestras: Madison Symphony Orchestra, Wisconsin Chamber Orchestra, and Wisconsin Youth Symphony Orchestras. Join us as we explore the cultural, social, and economic impact symphony orchestras make in support of our communities.

## Breakout Session A

June 14<sup>th</sup>  
9:30 AM & 1 PM

### Building a Culture of Philanthropy - Charles McLimans, Casey Oelkers, Cayla Minear

This session will focus on building a culture of philanthropy within your organization, including: How board leadership strengthens mission, sustainability, and impact; the importance of having a major gift program within your organization and how to start one; and developing relationships that lead to corporate or individual sponsorships of events and programs.

# SESSION TITLES & INFORMATION

## Breakout Session B

June 14<sup>th</sup>  
9:30 AM & 1 PM

### Board Development & Organizational Culture - Doug Hagerman, Joe Loehnis

Join Doug Hagerman and Joe Loehnis for an interactive discussion around board development and organizational culture. We will explore topics around board recruitment, what role does an arts board play in the organization, how to involve musicians in governance, different modes - fiduciary, strategic - boards operate in, and how to create a positive organizational culture while managing the extensive list of constituencies leaders must work with and lead. Participants will take away from the session ideas to strengthen the boards and cultures at their orchestra.

## Breakout Session C

June 14<sup>th</sup>  
9:30 AM & 1 PM

### Collaboration with Fellow Arts Organizations - Robert Reed, Linda Edlestein, Ria Hodgson

Join Linda Edlestein (Milwaukee Youth Symphony Orchestra), Ria Hodgson (Wisconsin Youth Symphony Orchestra), and Robert Reed (Madison Symphony Orchestra) as they discuss three unique collaborative projects that have led that has enhanced their communities. Learn more about MYSO's Violins of Hope project, WYSO's Music Makers project, and the MSO Centennial Weekend Festival to provide you inspiration. Regardless of project scale, creative thinking, strategic partnerships, community insight, and strong communication can yield engaging and impactful results.

## Breakout Session D

June 14<sup>th</sup>  
1 PM

### Roundtables - Mike George, Facilitator

This is your opportunity to network, share and learn with representatives of other organizations in facilitated small groups. You can choose from a menu of relevant topics for discussion: Partnerships, Board Development, Recruiting & Retaining Volunteers, Fundraising & Development. Youth Orchestra Attendees! This is your chance to meet and talk with representatives of other youth orchestras from around the state.

# KEYNOTE ADDRESS

with Moderator Ellie Chin, CEO of Destination Madison

Artistic Directors  
Discussion Panel  
June 13<sup>th</sup> at 3:30 PM



John DeMain  
Madison Symphony Orchestra



Andrew Sewell  
Wisconsin Chamber Orchestra



Kyle Knox  
Wisconsin Youth  
Symphony Orchestras



# FEATURED PRESENTERS

## JOHN DEMAIN

DeMain also serves as principal conductor for Madison Opera and in their 2024-2025 season conducted *The Barber of Seville*, *Don Giovanni* and *Opera in the Park*. This season he will conduct *La Bohème* and return next summer for *Opera in the Park*.

He has been a regular guest conductor with Washington National Opera at the Kennedy Center and has made appearances at the Teatre Liceu in Barcelona, New York City Opera, Michigan Opera Theatre, Los Angeles Opera, Seattle Opera, San Francisco Opera, Virginia Opera, Lyric Opera of Chicago, Aspen Music Festival, Portland Opera, Chautauqua Opera and Mexico's National Opera. He served as music director for 10 years at Opera Omaha.

During his distinguished 17-year tenure with Houston Grand Opera, DeMain led a history-making production of *Porgy and Bess*, winning a Grammy Award, Tony Award, and France's Grand Prix du Disque for the RCA recording. In spring 2014, the San Francisco Opera released an HD DVD of their most recent production of *Porgy and Bess*, conducted by John DeMain.

DeMain began his career as a pianist and conductor in his native Youngstown, Ohio. He earned his bachelor's and master's degrees at The Juilliard School and made a highly-acclaimed debut with the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra. DeMain was the second recipient of the Julius Rudel Award at New York City Opera and one of the first six conductors to receive the Exxon/National Endowment for the Arts Conductor Fellowship for his work with the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra.

DeMain holds honorary degrees from the University of Nebraska and Edgewood College and he is a Fellow of the Wisconsin Academy of Sciences, Arts and Letters. He resides in Madison and his daughter, Jennifer, is a UW-Madison graduate.



# FEATURED PRESENTERS

ANDREW SEWELL

Maestro Andrew Sewell is currently celebrating his twenty fifth season as music director of the Wisconsin Chamber Orchestra, and eighth season with the San Luis Obispo Symphony.

His previous appointments include tenures with the Wichita, Toledo and Mansfield, Ohio Symphonies. Known for his innovative programming and knack for discovering new talent, Sewell is a highly skilled orchestra builder with a wide knowledge and range of repertoire. In demand as a guest conductor, he has led the Toronto, Detroit, Milwaukee, Columbus, Syracuse, Illinois, Monterey, Gulf Coast and Eugene Symphony Orchestras, as well as the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra, Auckland Philharmonia, Christchurch Symphony, National Symphony of Mexico, Kyushu Symphony (Japan), City Chamber Orchestra of Hong Kong, OK Mozart Festival, WI Peninsula Music Festival and Masterworks Festivals in the US and London.



# FEATURED PRESENTERS

## KYLE KNOX

In the fall of 2018, Kyle Knox assumed the positions of Music Director of the Wisconsin Youth Symphony Orchestras and Associate Conductor of the Madison Symphony Orchestra.

Recent past and upcoming conducting credits include the Milwaukee Symphony (on both their Family and Connections concert series), the Madison Symphony's Beyond the Score (including Stravinsky's Rite of Spring and Mahler's Symphony No. 4), their full annual Education Series (including their Fall and Spring Youth Concerts, Community Concerts, Symphony Soup, and the Bolz Final Forte), as well as Concert on the Green. In works for the stage, Kyle led Mark Adamo's Little Women for Madison Opera, and later helped coordinate a studio artist showcase in the first ever collaboration between that company and WYSO. Other stage credits include Albert Herring, The Turn of the Screw, and Transformations with UW Opera, as well as Die Fledermaus, The Gondoliers and H.M.S. Pinafore with Madison Savoyards. Additionally he has conducted UW Music Clinic's High School Honors Orchestra.

He was formerly a clarinetist with the Milwaukee Symphony, Santa Fe Opera, and Philadelphia Orchestras, and on faculty at UW-Milwaukee. His festival credits include Tanglewood, Spoleto (Italy), Santa Fe Chamber Music, and Bowdoin Summer Music Festivals, as well as the New York String Orchestra Seminar. He has recorded for the Koch and Naxos labels and has been featured numerous times on NPR's Performance Today.

Kyle has premiered works by Osvaldo Golijov, Tan Dun, Sean Shepherd, Huang Ruo, and Jonathan Leshnoff, among many others. Nico Muhly's chamber work Service Music (2004) was written for and dedicated to him. His debut album, a recording of Conrad Susa's chamber opera Transformations (the work's world premiere recording) was recently released on Spotify.

Kyle studied conducting with James Smith, and clarinet with Ricardo Morales and Yehuda Gilad. He holds degrees from Juilliard and UW-Madison.



# FEATURED PRESENTERS

## DOUG HAGERMAN

Doug Hagerman is a music lover who attends over 100 concerts per year, from The Rolling Stones to Rachmaninoff. His hobby is learning about music history. He recently concluded seven years as Chair of the League's Board of Directors. He was also Chair of his beloved local orchestra, the Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra. Doug is a retired attorney and corporate executive who resides in Naples, Florida and Milwaukee, Wisconsin.



# FEATURED PRESENTERS

## JOE LOEHNIS

Joe became CEO of the Wisconsin Chamber Orchestra (WCO) in September of 2019. Prior to the WCO, Joe served as Executive Director of The First Tee of South Central Wisconsin (2013-2019), a global youth development organization teaching and reinforcing life skills through the game of golf.

As a strong supporter of equity and accessibility in the arts, Joe has led the WCO to be 1 of only 20 orchestras in the country to be selected to receive a 3-year Catalyst Incubator grant from the Mellon Foundation and League of American Orchestras to do extensive work in equity, diversity, and inclusion. The WCO also participates in the League's Inclusive Stages program, becoming the only orchestra in the country to be involved in both the Catalyst Incubator and Inclusive Stages programs.

Joe earned an MBA in Finance from the University of Wisconsin-Madison and holds a Bachelor's degree in Cello Performance from Lawrence University. He served on the Advisory Board at UW-Madison's Business School and gave its commencement speech. Joe captained the men's golf team at Lawrence University and became the only golfer in the school's 160-year history to be named to the All-American Golf Team.

As a cellist, Joe played for the Green Bay Symphony from 2000-2006. Joe has soloed with three orchestras and had a teaching studio for 15 years, teaching over 50 cello students.

Recent recognitions include Destination Madison Distinguished Achievement Award Finalist (2023), Wisconsin School of Business Alumni 8 to Watch (2023), Lawrence University Athletic Hall of Fame (2022), and IN Business Magazine 40 Under 40 (2021).

An active volunteer, Joe currently serves on the Downtown Rotary of Madison Foundation, Destination Madison, and Temple Beth El (Madison) boards. Additionally, he Chairs the Overture Center of the Arts Resident Company Advisory Council and is an Advisory Board Member for the League of American Orchestras. Joe has served on panels and been the featured speaker on a broad range of arts and non-profit topics locally in Madison and across the U.S.

Joe lives in Madison with his wife Evan, son Levi, and daughters Sunny and Dell.

# FEATURED PRESENTERS

## ELLIE CHIN



Ellie Westman Chin is the President & CEO of Destination Madison, where she oversees the mission to increase the impact of the tourism economy on businesses, workforce and the quality of life for Madison, WI.

She oversees a team of 30 whose efforts bring meetings, events and leisure visitors to the greater Madison region.

Westman Chin was formerly President & CEO for Visit Franklin in Tennessee, where she was named the 2018 Greater Nashville Hospitality Association Woman in Hospitality & Tourism Leader of the Year. Westman Chin has a successful track record of increasing the economic impact of visitor spending; working with city leaders to continue to develop exceptional attractions; and has shown a deep commitment to resident education and community outreach on the impact of tourism.

Westman Chin serves or has served on the boards of the U.S. Travel Association, Destinations International Foundation, Nashville Predators Foundation, Greater Nashville Hospitality Association, and the Williamson County Chamber of Commerce as well as on the Tennessee Tourism Committee and the Franklin Public Arts Commission. Prior to joining Visit Franklin, Westman Chin was vice president, business development & corporate events for the Atlanta Convention & Visitors Bureau. She previously worked for Empire Force Events in New York City and started her career assisting with the creation of the Nashville Sports Council for the Nashville Convention & Visitors Corporation. In that role, she supported the city's efforts to attract the NFL and NHL to Nashville.

# FEATURED PRESENTERS

## RIA HODGSON



A passionate advocate for music education, Ria is a Suzuki-certified violin and viola teacher and has studied string pedagogy with Rolando Freitag, Edward Kreitman, and Mimi Zweig. Ria maintains a studio of private violin and viola students in Madison, WI and has been a guest sectional and chamber coach for youth ensembles throughout the Midwest. She is proud to have been a part of the WYSO Music Makers program since 2017.

Ria earned a Bachelor of Music from Arizona State University, where she studied with Nancy Buck, and a Master of Music degree from DePaul University where she was a student of Rami Solomonow. Additional training comes from her postgraduate study with Sally Chisholm at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. As a chamber and orchestral player, Ria performs regularly with a wide variety of ensembles, including the Superior String Alliance Chamber Players, and the Rockford, Quad City, and Madison Symphony Orchestras. Ria has also been a guest artist of summer festivals throughout the US and abroad, including the Tuscia Opera Festival, the Vianden Music Festival, the Pine Mountain Music Festival, and Midsummer's Music Festival. She is a founding member of the Tuuli Quartet, which celebrates the music of contemporary and classical composers as a tool for community building and communication.

# FEATURED PRESENTERS

## LINDA EDELSTEIN



As Chief Executive Officer of Milwaukee Youth Symphony Orchestra (MYSO), Linda Edelstein provides strategic leadership across all facets of the organization, including strategic planning, board recruitment and engagement, donor cultivation and fundraising, financial and managerial controls, and human resources.

Ms. Edelstein leads a team of more than 75 full and part-time administrative and artistic staff, managing a budget of \$4.5 million with endowment and reserves of \$12 million. Under her leadership, MYSO serves more than 7,000 students from 14 counties, 90 zip codes, and more than 200 schools across southeastern Wisconsin, presenting more than 150 concerts annually to 30,000 audience members. She also serves as Vice President of the Milwaukee Youth Arts Center (MYAC). Together with the Executive Artistic Director of First Stage and the MYAC Board of Directors, Ms. Edelstein provides administrative leadership for the Milwaukee Youth Arts Center, including budget oversight, fundraising, personnel, security, scheduling, and public relations. She currently serves on the board of directors for the Association of Wisconsin Symphony Orchestras and has previously served on the boards of the Youth Orchestra Division of the League of American Orchestras (holding leadership roles as Vice Chair and Secretary), Frankly Music, and as President of the Elmbrook Rotary Club (2017-18).

Ms. Edelstein was honored to receive the 2025 Arts Advocate Betty Award from Milwaukee Magazine for her commitment to the arts and its impact throughout the community.

# FEATURED PRESENTERS

## CAYLA MINEAR



Cayla Minear joins the Wisconsin Chamber Orchestra as Director of Development. She brings 15 years of nonprofit fundraising experience and a strong commitment to advancing the arts and community engagement in Madison.

For the past nine years, Cayla served at Overture Center for the Arts in a variety of development roles, most recently as Director of Institutional Giving. In that position, she managed a broad portfolio of corporate and foundation partners while leading initiatives to strengthen and expand institutional support.

Cayla holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in Public Relations and Advertising from the University of Wisconsin–Whitewater and is active in the community as a troop leader with Girl Scouts of Badgerland.

In her spare time, Cayla enjoys spending time with her daughter, Ruby, attending concerts and live theater, reading, and visiting record stores.

# FEATURED PRESENTERS

## CASEY OELKERS



Casey Oelkers is the Director of Development for the Madison Symphony Orchestra, a role which blends her passions for orchestral music and philanthropy. Since 2013, guided by Casey's leadership, the Madison Symphony Orchestra's contributed annual revenue has more than doubled, and the organization's endowment has more than tripled.

Casey first joined the MSO as a Development Associate in 2008 after having served three years as Operations Coordinator for the Wisconsin Youth Symphony Orchestras. She holds a Bachelor of Music in Flute Performance from the University of Maryland - College Park, and a Master of Arts in Arts Administration from Florida State University. Before she moved to Madison and while still in school, Casey held seasonal positions and internships at the Schwarz Center for Performing Arts at Emory University, the Marlboro Music Festival, Tanglewood Music Center and the New York String Orchestra Seminar.

Casey is a member of the Rotary Club of Madison, TEMPO Madison, the Association of Fundraising Professionals Greater Madison Chapter, Luther Memorial Church, and the Madison Flute Club. She lives on the east side of Madison with her husband and two teenage children. She enjoys spending time with her family, and attending live music, theater and dance in Madison and beyond.

# FEATURED PRESENTERS

## CHARLES MCLIMANS



Charles McLimans has an extensive track record of leadership experience as a corporate and nonprofit executive. He is currently the President and Co-Owner of New Health Chiropractic & Integrated Healthcare in Fitchburg and formerly served as CEO of Holy Wisdom Monastery in Middleton, Wisconsin, and President & CEO at The River Food Pantry in Madison, Wisconsin.

For the past 20 years he has devoted his professional and volunteer time and attention to food and income equality, diversity, equity, and inclusion issues, and the arts.

He is a Past President of the Rotary Club of Madison, and President Elect of the Madison Rotary Foundation. He also serves on the Madison Symphony Orchestra Friends of the Overture Concert Organ board as President-Elect, the Bach Dancing & Dynamite Society board, and formerly the Wisconsin Youth Symphony Orchestras board.

Charles has a lifelong passion for classical music and grew up playing the organ, piano, and singing. He enjoys helping organizations achieve their highest potential through organizational leadership, philanthropy, community engagement, and strategic planning.