



CHARLOTTE SYMPHONY

CHRISTOPHER WARREN-GREEN
music director

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Robert Stickler, 704-714-5100 and RobertS@charlottesymphony.org
or Jamie Wolf, 704-714-5112 and JamieW@charlottesymphony.org

DONORS CONTRIBUTE \$2 MILLION TO CHARLOTTE SYMPHONY

FEBRUARY 14, 2013 | CHARLOTTE, NC – The Charlotte Symphony has received a \$2 million gift from a group of anonymous donors intended to ensure the viability of one of Charlotte’s most important cultural institutions.

The donors said they would provide additional funding in future years depending on improvement in the financial performance of the Symphony.

“We are enormously grateful to this group for stepping up and helping us to continue our mission to provide both musical concerts and educational and other support for the community,” said Emily Smith, chairman of the Symphony. “They understand the significant contribution the Symphony makes to the quality of life in Charlotte and, like me, cannot imagine our community without a symphony.”

As a result of a significant reduction in funding from public sources and other factors, the Charlotte Symphony has been running significant operating deficits in recent years. As at other American orchestras, revenue from tickets only covers about one-third of the cost of providing concerts and supporting the community. The rest must come from contributions.

The Symphony’s annual budget is more than \$9 million, and approximately \$6 million must be raised through “contributed income.”

“This generous gift gives us a solid foundation to move forward,” said Robert Stickler, the symphony’s interim executive director and president. “However, we still need considerable additional support to make our budget.”

To this end, the Symphony has been asking its subscribers and friends to make contributions to demonstrate the community’s support. During the first six months of fiscal 2013, the Symphony increased the number of donors by 10% and grew the number of League members (\$2,000 contribution and above) by 12%.

In addition, the Symphony has been seeking three-year pledges from donors in order to set a firmer foundation for future financial performance.

“The community has been very responsive to our story,” Stickler said. “But, we still have much work to do. We must raise about \$800,000 by June 30 to meet our budget.”

Founded in 1932, the Charlotte Symphony is the largest and most active professional performing arts organization in the central Carolinas, giving nearly 100 performances each season and reaching an annual audience of approximately 200,000 listeners.

About the Charlotte Symphony

The Charlotte Symphony serves its community through three broad initiatives:

1. It delivers compelling musical performances.
2. It creates collaborative and innovative concert programs that expand audiences and engage in new ways longtime patrons, families and children, young professionals, and first-time concert goers alike through four diverse concert series—Classics, Pops, family-focused Lollipops, and innovative KnightSounds—in addition to youth orchestra concerts, Summer Pops, and special events.
3. It improves the lives of Charlotte's youth through instrumental music education programs that feature hands-on participation and community-building experiences.

The Charlotte Symphony Family

Internationally acclaimed Maestro Christopher Warren-Green has led the Charlotte Symphony as Music Director since 2010 and recently renewed his contract through 2016. Sixty-two professional musicians are employed on full-time contracts, making the Charlotte Symphony the largest employer of individual artists in Charlotte.

The Symphony family also includes the 140-member volunteer Oratorio Singers of Charlotte, as well as the 180 children from fourth through twelfth grades who participate in the Charlotte Symphony Youth Orchestra and the Charlotte Symphony Junior Youth Orchestra.

Community Partnerships, Outreach, and Education

The Charlotte Symphony values partnerships with local organizations. It serves as the resident orchestra for the North Carolina Dance Theater and Opera Carolina, and partners with the museums at the Levine Center for the Arts to offer patrons the chance to engage with both the visual and musical arts.

The Symphony works with the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools to provide music education programs. Together they help to develop Charlotte's young people by nurturing their musical interests and talents, contributing to their academic achievement, and unifying diverse elements of our community.

Charlotte Symphony musicians visit elementary, middle, and high schools to introduce students to the instruments of the orchestra, deliver educational ensemble performances, and enhance what teachers are already doing in their classrooms by helping to integrate music into the study of core subjects. In Coaching and Master Classes aspiring student musicians work directly with Charlotte Symphony professionals to improve their playing techniques and discuss a wide variety of musical theory and topics.

School-based instrumental music partnerships include the Winterfield Elementary Youth Orchestra, which engages 70 at-risk students in grades two through five in a free, afterschool, instrumental music program, and the Instrumental Coaching Program at Northwest School of the Arts. Finally, Instruments for Kids encourages community members to donate used orchestral instruments to the Charlotte Symphony so that the instruments can be repaired and distributed to school band programs that could not otherwise afford them.

The Symphony last year provided 43 education and outreach concerts (serving 7,627 adults and 18,436 young people), and nearly 500 hours of non-concert educational and outreach services.

###