

JACKSONVILLE SYMPHONY PRESIDENT & CEO TO DEPART

ROBERT MASSEY LEAVES BEHIND A LEGACY OF CELEBRATED ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Jacksonville, FL (Thursday, January 10, 2019) – Jacksonville Symphony President and CEO Robert Massey has announced that he will step down from his position in early 2019. The Symphony Board of Directors will begin a nationwide search for his successor.

“Robert leaves behind a legacy of considerable accomplishments at the Jacksonville Symphony,” said Board Chair David Strickland. “Under his leadership, the Symphony has seen a period of enhanced artistic excellence, deepened community relevance and the creation of our *Vision 2020 Campaign* for future success. He will be missed by the Board, the staff, the musicians, our patrons and the Jacksonville community.”

Massey joined the Jacksonville Symphony in January 2015 and with then-new Music Director Courtney Lewis, led the organization through the creation and execution of a strategic plan that saw the addition of new programs in and outside of Jacoby Symphony Hall, notably *Symphonic Night at the Movies*, *Symphony in 60*, *Community Concerts*, *Digital Concert Hall*, *Fanfare! Opening Night*, the annual *Symphony Gala* and the *Daily's Place Symphony Series*. The expansion of such innovative and diversified programming saw the Symphony's annual impact grow from 160,000 to 290,000 in just three seasons.

In addition to new main stage programs, Massey oversaw the implementation of new technology, expanded student and adult music education initiatives, added new staff conductor and composer-in-residence positions, bolstered the administrative staff, and brought the organization to the national spotlight with invitations to perform at the John F. Kennedy Center, on public radio's *Performance Today* and a Jacksonville Symphony Youth Orchestra tour to the Los Angeles International Music Festival.

The pride of his tenure was the role he played in reversing a decades-long trend of concessionary contracts with the musicians of the orchestra. In 2017, the Symphony Association and American Federation of Musicians Local 444 ratified a transformative five-year collective bargaining agreement that added seven musicians to the Symphony's roster, made all musicians full-time and expanded the performance season.

The achievements mentioned above were made possible thanks to a substantial enhancement in revenue. In addition to increasing ticket sales in each of the last four seasons, the Symphony has raised more than \$30 million in contributed income as part of its *Vision 2020 Campaign*. Its Net Assets have increased from \$13 million to \$21 million, which has allowed for increased infrastructure and endowment support.

"I'm very grateful for this community's support of the Jacksonville Symphony," said Massey. "At a time when performing arts organizations around the world are struggling, it's encouraging to see what can be accomplished when constituencies align behind a strong vision. While I will miss working with Courtney, the musicians, Board and an incredible administrative staff, I look forward to following their continuing success."

In addition to his success at the Jacksonville Symphony, Massey has built a reputation as one of the performing arts industry's most innovative leaders through his work with dozens of cultural organizations across the country, including symphony orchestras, museums, theaters, opera companies and ballet troupes. He is a frequent speaker and panelist at conferences and conventions around the world.

Massey is a graduate of the Leadership Jacksonville Class of 2016, serves on the Board of Governors for the Jacksonville Chamber of Commerce and is a member of Downtown Rotary. He has been recognized by the Jacksonville Business Journal as a 2015 Innovator in Education, a 2016 Veteran of Influence and a 2018 "Ultimate CEO."

"I can't imagine a better partner than Robert," said Music Director Courtney Lewis. "Every aspect of what we do at the Jacksonville Symphony has been improved beyond recognition thanks to his vision, leadership and integrity. Our community owes him a great deal, and I wish him every success in the future."

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The Jacksonville Symphony is North Florida's leading music nonprofit offering live performances at Jacoby Symphony Hall in the Times-Union Center for the Performing Arts and other venues throughout the area. In addition, the Symphony provides music instruction for youth and operates the Jacksonville Symphony Youth Orchestras. For more information about the Symphony, visit JaxSymphony.org, like them at [facebook.com/JaxSymphony](https://www.facebook.com/JaxSymphony); follow them on Twitter at [@jaxsymphony](https://twitter.com/jaxsymphony), on Instagram at [JaxSymphony](https://www.instagram.com/JaxSymphony) and on YouTube at [JacksonvilleSymphony](https://www.youtube.com/JacksonvilleSymphony).