

\$1 MILLION GIFT MADE TO ENDOW THE JACKSONVILLE SYMPHONY'S DIRECTOR OF MUSIC EDUCATION POSITION

Jacksonville, FL (October 21, 2020) – **The Jacksonville Symphony is pleased to welcome Marianne Rice as its first “Lory Doolittle Endowed Director of Music Education.” Lory Doolittle endowed the position with a \$1 million gift to create a lasting impact on the organization’s education and community engagement program.**

“We are beyond thrilled to receive Lory’s incredibly kind and generous gift,” says Symphony President & CEO Steven Libman. “The director of music education position holds the keys to connecting us with our surrounding community. This gift exemplifies Lory’s dedication to symphonic music, education, and to her community.”

Lory Doolittle has been a dedicated philanthropist in the Jacksonville community since moving here with her late husband Pete in 2006. She is a member of the Symphony’s Conductor’s Club giving society, a subscriber to the Florida Blue Masterworks Series, and has been the lead donor in multiple Symphony match campaigns. The culminating gift of \$1 million to endow such an impactful position reaffirms her passion for education and dedication to the Jacksonville Symphony and arts within the community.

“The Pete and Lory Doolittle Family are pleased to be able to help with the establishment of the director of education position at the Jacksonville Symphony,” says Doolittle. “The expansion of music education in Jacksonville aligns with the philanthropic goals of the Doolittle Family. We are excited about extending the opportunities for the students of greater Jacksonville to access music and music education. The Jacksonville Symphony, under the direction of our fine, young, energetic Music Director Courtney Lewis, contributes to making the city an important cultural community. Music plays a vital role in the lives of everyone and the Symphony education director will allow musical opportunities to grow and enrich our population.”

Marianne Rice is a lifelong educator and joins the Symphony directly from Duval County Public Schools. Rice comes with experience teaching all grade levels, designing and implementing curricula, and working specifically with performing arts to create education programs. She holds a Bachelor of Arts in English from Benedict College and master’s degrees from both Norfolk State University (Music Education) and Old Dominion University (Secondary Education). Rice previously served as an education program specialist for Dr. Marlena Smalls and The Hallelujah Singers of Beaufort, South Carolina. She has also published “Music Education Through Gullah: The Legacy of a Forgotten Genre” as well as a children’s book called “Anire’s Adventures.”

“Music has been my foundation since I was a child,” says Rice. “Coming from a family where my Grandmother was a musician and my mother a vocalist, has inspired me to continue the rich legacy of the performing arts, and as a former teacher with Duval County Public Schools, the Jacksonville Symphony gives me the opportunity to impart my music education background with the community of Jacksonville. I am excited about taking on the position of director of music education & community engagement for the Symphony and look forward to the adventures and opportunities it presents for our local schools.”

As the director of music education, Rice will oversee and coordinate successful partnerships with Communities in Schools, and Students at the Symphony, a program giving free access to the concert experience for students and families. While Rice will take on a leading role in expanding the Symphony’s community engagement initiatives, she will also work closely with Symphony Assistant Conductor and Jacksonville Symphony Youth Orchestras (JSYO) Principal Conductor Deanna Tham to continue building the JSYO’s reach within the community.

“She is the perfect fit!” says Tham. “We are lucky to have someone as passionate and experienced as Marianne to lead the Jacksonville Symphony’s commitment to music education. We at the symphony believe that the arts are an important part of a student’s growth, and it is essential that we as an organization contribute as much to it as we can. Marianne has extensive experience and a passion for bringing people together through music. She understands how much power the arts hold in uniting communities - something that Jacksonville greatly values.”

The **Jacksonville Symphony’s music education and community engagement programs** include multiple opportunities for students of all ages to engage with live orchestral music, from hands-on learning with the Instrument Zoo and Youth Orchestra, to the Jump Start Strings Program, Ensembles in Schools and sites throughout the community, to field trips to Jacoby Symphony Hall through Students at the Symphony. Some of these programs have been put on hold until COVID-19 restrictions safely allow them to start again. In past seasons, the Symphony has reached more than 35,000 students through education and community engagement initiatives.

This season the Jacksonville Symphony will offer virtual educational ensembles for any school to take advantage of. These “exploring the music” videos will feature an ensemble of the Jacksonville Symphony performing and talking about music in a 30-minute format. Schools will have the option to choose which ensemble they would like to learn from. The Symphony will also record longer programs with the full orchestra as an alternative to their Young People’s and Preludes Concerts.



COURTNEY LEWIS

MUSIC DIRECTOR
HASKELL ENDOWED CHAIR

DAVID M. STRICKLAND

CHAIR

STEVEN B. LIBMAN

PRESIDENT AND CEO

“Lory’s gift will make a lasting impact on the Jacksonville Symphony, and in turn, the Symphony’s impact on the community,” says Symphony Board Chair David Strickland. “Her endowment of this position is another example of her ability to build and expand relationships: this time between the Jacksonville Symphony and students throughout Northeast Florida. Her generosity will make an impact for generations to come.”

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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 through 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 @jaxsymphony, on Instagram at JaxSymphony and on YouTube at JacksonvilleSymphony.