



Courtney Lewis
Music Director
Haskell Endowed Chair

Matthew Marcin, CFA
Board Chair

Steven B. Libman
President & CEO

MILESTONE GIFT: SYMPHONY SECURES LARGEST DONATION EVER WITH \$5 MILLION CONTRIBUTION

Jacksonville, Fla. (October 24, 2024) – The Jacksonville Symphony is proud to announce an extraordinary \$5 million gift from longtime supporters Preston and Joan Haskell. This is the largest single gift in the Symphony’s 75-year history, and it will have a lasting impact on its future. The donation will support the Symphony’s endowment fund and capital improvements to Jacoby Symphony Hall.

The gift will provide a stable financial foundation for the Symphony and will help ensure that the Jacksonville Symphony continues to deliver world-class performances, expand arts education programs and foster meaningful community engagement for generations to come.

“We are deeply grateful to Preston and Joan Haskell for their unwavering support and visionary leadership,” said Steven B. Libman, President and CEO of the Jacksonville Symphony. “This gift not only honors their decades-long relationship with the Symphony but also ensures that we can continue to share the beauty of music with future generations. Many years ago, Preston and Joan created the Haskell Endowed Chair for the music director position, and this latest gift continues the arc of their extraordinary support.”

Preston and Joan Haskell have a rich legacy of championing the Jacksonville Symphony and the broader arts community. Preston Haskell has served multiple terms as president of the Symphony’s Board of Directors, and his visionary leadership played a pivotal role in shaping the organization’s future. He was instrumental in the creation of Jacoby Symphony Hall, leading the \$22 million campaign in 1993 that brought the Symphony’s new home to life while also significantly expanding the Symphony’s endowment. Joan Haskell’s leadership has been equally impactful, having served as president of the Symphony Guild from 1976 to 1978, where she helped advance the Symphony’s mission and its community outreach. Together, the Haskells’ continued support to the Symphony has left an impact for generations to enjoy.

“Every great city has a great orchestra, and the Jacksonville Symphony is a cultural gem in our community,” said Haskell. “The arts are essential to the human experience, and not only enrich individuals but also stimulate economic growth and make cities more attractive places to live and work.

Preston Haskell, now an Honorary Director of the Symphony’s Board, reflects on his contributions to the Symphony, noting that his key accomplishments include the completion of an endowment campaign and working closely with the CEO to strengthen the Symphony’s operations. Together with Joan, their commitment to education is evident through the Joan and Preston Haskell Scholarship, supporting young musicians in the community.

“This transformative support from Preston and Joan Haskell allows us to dream even bigger,” said Courtney Lewis, Music Director of the Jacksonville Symphony. “It will enable the Symphony to continue performing at the highest level, bring world-class musicians to the hall, strengthen educational programs and foster even greater artistic innovation. The Haskell’s passion for the arts and their belief in the power of music to transform lives are values we share deeply, and their generosity ensures that we can continue making meaningful connections through music for years to come.”

As the Symphony celebrates its 75th Anniversary Season, this gift lays a solid foundation for the organization’s continued impact and relevance in the community. “We are profoundly grateful to Preston and Joan Haskell for this remarkable gift, which reflects not only their deep commitment to the Symphony but also to the cultural vitality of Jacksonville as a whole,” said Matthew Marcin, Chair of the Jacksonville Symphony Board.

For more information, contact Savannah Silliman, Marketing and Public Relations Manager at ssilliman@jaxsymphony.org or 904-356-0426.

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About the Jacksonville Symphony:

The Jacksonville Symphony is North Florida’s leading nonprofit performing arts organization offering live performances at Jacoby Symphony Hall in the Jacksonville Center for the Performing Arts and other venues throughout the area. Led by President and CEO Steven Libman and Music Director Courtney Lewis, the Jacksonville Symphony reaches over 165,500 individuals through over 95 performances each season. 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.