



ORCHESTRA & CHORUS

Annual Report

Season 53

FROM THE VALLEY SYMPHONY

Dear fellow music lover,

Thank you for joining us for a wonderful year of joyful music! Season 53 was a landmark season, from welcoming Artistic Director Troy Raper to his first full season as our orchestra conductor to saying farewell to our beloved Chorus Director, Katy Kristofferson. From cartoons to children's choirs, this season took us on many beautiful musical journeys and left us all excited for things to come.



As we look towards Season 54 and beyond, we would like to share both additional information about Season 53 and our plans for the future. In this Annual Report (formerly the Gratitude Report) you will find information about our mission, vision, membership, finances, strategic plan, future programming, and more. This information is meant to be shared as widely as possible to help more people understand how our magical musical moments are made. Please share this report with anyone you believe would be interested or might benefit from this information!



We are excited to announce our upcoming Season 54 which will explore the musical idea of Heritage. From Big Band music to holiday favorites to music written right here in Colorado, this season promises to be just as musically rich and heartfelt as last season. We can't wait to see you at one of our concerts, whether you are onstage, in the lobby, or in the audience.



If you haven't yet connected with our musical community, we'd love to get to know you! On the final page of this report you will find information on ways to get involved with us. From playing an instrument to helping people find their seats to purchasing new instruments, our community members are the heart and purpose of the Valley Symphony Association. We would love to have you join us!



Sincerely,



Stephanie Helleckson, Executive Director

Play!

Season 53

2024-2025

Celebrate!
Sounds of Summer



Celebrating summer in America with uplifting, toe-tapping tunes

Laugh!
Saturday Morning Soundtracks



Carefree fun for all ages, from classic cartoon themes to video game soundtracks

Snow!
A Winter Wonderland



The VSA is in a flurry! Join us for a blizzard of carols and holiday cheer

Sing!
Epics and Idols



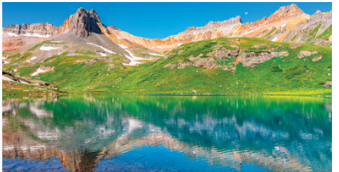
Presenting beloved masterworks in monumental proportions

Connect!
Past, Present, and Future



Blending new and seasoned musicians in an extravaganza of orchestral music

Water!
Find the River



Dive in and experience water's impact on our hearts, minds, and spirits

Season 53 focused on the joy of making music together

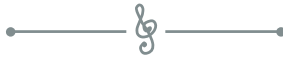
This was our first themed season, which helped to clarify our messaging and create consistency in how we collectively spoke about the season.

MISSION

The Valley Symphony Association is a 501(c)3 nonprofit volunteer orchestra and chorus serving Colorado's Western Slope through connective live music experiences for all generations of musicians and audiences.

VISION

Connecting our communities through transformative live musical experiences



On June 29, 2024, the VSA Board and Staff spent an entire day talking about what we wanted to focus on next. The resulting strategic plan identified four areas of focus that we will be working on from now until 2028.



STRATEGIC PLAN

Audience and Membership

Expand audiences and ensembles by diversifying programming, outreach, partnerships, and ticketing while increasing visibility and musician recruitment.

Financial Sustainability

Build financial sustainability through diversified income, balanced budgets, efficient fundraising, and stronger grant support.

Leadership Support

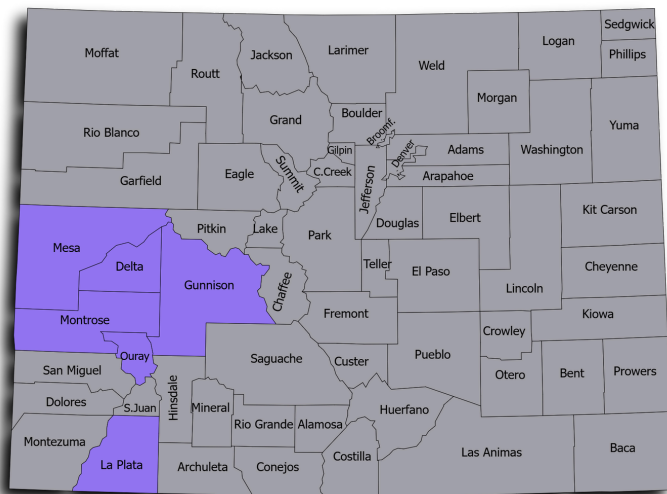
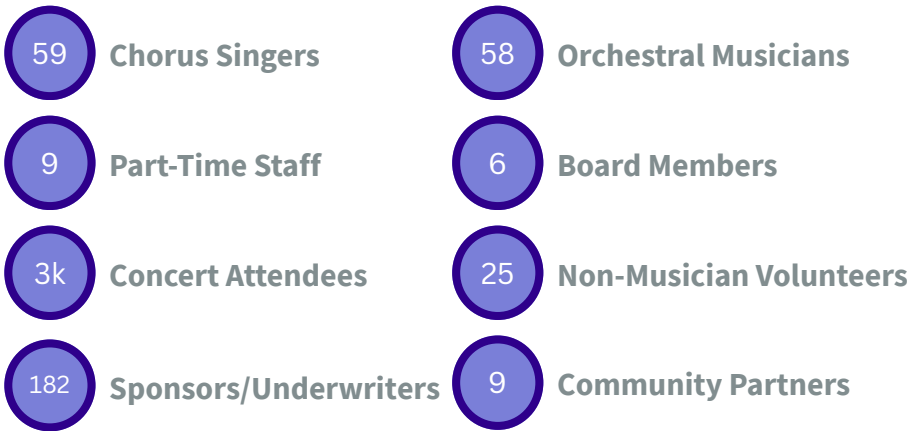
Strengthen leadership with clear roles, equitable pay, strong communication, effective policies, and skill-aligned board and staff development.

Clear Branding

Develop a unified brand and digital strategy that highlights our mission, leaders, and musicians while consistently engaging with our community.

SEASON 53 DEMOGRAPHICS

During Season 53, the VSA included...



■ VSA members present
■ No VSA members

Our musicians hail from 15 townships across 6 counties, including Montrose, Olathe, Delta, Cedaredge, Eckert, Austin, Hotchkiss, Paonia, Grand Junction, Palisade, Ouray, Ridgeway, Crested Butte, Gunnison, and Durango

Season 53 represented over 12,000 volunteer hours, including rehearsal time, personal practice, drive time, performance time, and setup/breakdown for all rehearsals and concerts

SEASON 53 FINANCES

BUDGET
\$129,300

----- TOTAL INCOME: 103% -----

ACTUAL
\$133,699

BUDGET
\$124,840

----- TOTAL EXPENSES: 104% -----

ACTUAL
\$129,669

\$4,030 (3%)

Net Gain

AREAS OF GROWTH

- General donations came in at 228% of budgeted
- Program ad income came in at 180% of budgeted
- Underwriting came in at 120% of budgeted
- Venue rentals were almost entirely donated
- The Phil the Cello campaign brought in an unexpected \$5k
- Foundations and grants were 133% of budgeted

AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

- Medal sponsorships came in at 46% of budgeted
- Single ticket sales came in at 73% of budgeted
- Season ticket sales came in at 89% of budgeted
- Graphic design cost 251% of budgeted
- Printing costs came in at 174% of budgeted
- The budget didn't account for inflation (3%) in service costs

100% Giving Goal Progress

Board
100%

Staff
100%

Orchestra
30%

Chorus
44%

LOOKING FORWARD

Seasons 54 and beyond include some exciting updates in leadership, personnel, repertoire, community partnerships, financial initiatives, and more. Here are a few highlights from our strategic plan fulfillment process.

🎵 Season 54: Heritage 🎵

Audience and Membership

Season 54 will be the first season to resemble a pre-pandemic year, both in performance distribution for ensembles and ticket pricing for the audience. Troy has programmed more exciting, engaging repertoire for a wide range of audience members and musicians, and we've adopted a new ticketing system, Humanitix, to improve the box office experience for patrons.

Financial Sustainability

Thanks to a generous legacy gift from former violinist Vivienne Cheney, the VSA will launch its first endowment in Season 54. Funds from Vivienne's estate will match other donations to grow this long-term stability fund.

Leadership Support

In Season 54, the VSA will hire both its first full-time administrative staff member and a new Chorus Conductor. We are also raising pay for all positions towards regional benchmarks and conducting a technology audit to ensure leadership has strong software support.

Clear Branding

For the first time, we have **two** seasons planned in advance, improving our long-term communication strategy. Themed seasons will continue with Heritage in Season 54 and Legacy in Season 55, alongside major updates to our website, social media, and branding.

🎵 Season 55: Legacy 🎵

Season 55 will explore musical legacies, starting with a featured performance at the America 150/Colorado 250 celebration in Montrose on July 4.

GET INVOLVED



🎵 Make Music

We'd love to have you join us in either the chorus or the orchestra! Contact the director of the relevant ensemble to schedule an easy, low-stress listening audition.

For chorus: chorus@valleysymphony.net

For orchestra: artisticdirector@valleysymphony.net

🎵 Donate

Your donation goes directly to support the important work we do. Visit our website at valleysymphony.net/donation for more information.

🎵 Volunteer

We're always looking for non-musician volunteers to help us as greeters, ushers, and ticket sellers. To get more information about volunteering, email info@valleysymphony.net or call 970-765-8323.

🎵 Partner

Our partnerships with local businesses and organizations connect their resources with our music lovers to strengthen the cultural heartbeat of our region. Every partnership is unique - if you have an idea for a partnership with your business or organization, contact development@valleysymphony.net

🎵 Spread the Word

Help us bring music to more of the Western Slope by subscribing to our Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube channels and sharing our concert and event information!

ValleySymphony.net | 970-765-8323 | info@valleysymphony.net

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