



Kansas City Symphony Extends Musicians' Contract through 2023

*Musicians, management add 2 years to current contract early
and without attorneys present for second consecutive time*

KANSAS CITY, Mo. | July 30, 2019 — The Kansas City Symphony and its musicians have reached an early extension of their collective bargaining agreement.

The two-year extension to the current four-year agreement takes the agreement through June 2023.

The advance agreement was part of ensuring a smooth “changing of the guard.”

“This extension is an example of our organization’s forward-thinking and collaborative approach to the future,” said outgoing Symphony Executive Director Frank Byrne.

“Knowing we had transitions this summer in both executive and board leadership, we proactively proposed the extension to our musicians, who were very receptive. It is in our mutual interest to extend the contract, and we are very grateful to our musicians and board for their enthusiastic approval of the agreement.”

The extended agreement continues the Symphony’s strong investment to attract and retain superb musicians in a highly competitive market.

The two-year extension calls for a 4% increase to the musicians’ base salary in the 2021-22 season and a 3% increase for the 2022-23 season, bringing the base salary in the final year to \$67,800. With contractually guaranteed electronic media payments, musicians will make a minimum of \$69,186 in the 2022-23 season.

Viewed another way, the base musician salary will have increased nearly 32% over the course of seven seasons — from a base of \$51,527 in the 2015-16 season to \$67,800 in the 2022-23 season, averaging a 4.5% increase per year.

“We have successfully cultivated an internal culture based on full communication, respect and trust for decades,” said outgoing Symphony Board Chair William Lyons. “As a result, we have been able to reach an agreement regarding the extension of the musicians’ contract both effectively and efficiently at an important time in the evolution of the organization. Even more important, we have been able to again increase, in a meaningful way, the compensation of our exceptional musicians, a very important strategic goal for the board.”

Byrne said he is pleased that the musicians and Symphony management reached the extension with such harmony and efficiency.

“Reflecting on my time as executive director, I am very proud of what we have accomplished together,” Byrne said. “It is a very special and positive environment that allows us to do our best work and to strive together for an even better future.”

Byrne concluded his nearly 19-year tenure with the Symphony on July 26 with Daniel Beckley taking over as executive director on July 29. Beckley is the former general manager of the Indianapolis Symphony.

“The culture of true collaboration and trust permeates this organization” Beckley said. “The Symphony is exceptionally well positioned to fuel a new era of artistic ambition.”

Musicians’ Negotiating Committee Chair and Symphony trumpet player Brian Rood said the extension reaffirms the collaboration between the musicians, board and management.

“Together, we look forward to reaching even greater artistic success and financial stability,” Rood said. “As we welcome incoming Executive Director Daniel Beckley and Board Chair Patrick McCown, we salute Frank Byrne and William Lyons for their extraordinary leadership and service. Through their vision and dedication, the Symphony has become one of Kansas City’s favorite performing arts organizations.”

New Board Chair Patrick McCown agreed the great partnership of the leadership and musicians sets the organization up for success moving forward.

“I am grateful and proud of the spirit of cooperation, collaboration and transparency the entire organization has preserved in extending the musicians’ collective bargaining agreement for another two years,” McCown said.

To learn more and view the upcoming 2019-20 season, visit kcsymphony.org.

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About the Kansas City Symphony and Chorus

Founded in 1982, the Kansas City Symphony has established itself as a major force in the cultural life of the community. Praised for performances of uncompromising standard, the orchestra is the largest in the region and enjoys a national reputation under the artistic leadership of Music Director Michael Stern. The Kansas City Symphony Chorus is a volunteer, 160-member ensemble led by multi-Grammy® Award-winning conductor, Charles Bruffy, that continues its long tradition of excellence as the choral voice of the Kansas City Symphony. The Kansas City Symphony performs more than 130 concerts each year, welcomes guests of international acclaim as part of its Classical and Pops series, and serves as the orchestra for the Kansas City Ballet and Lyric Opera of Kansas City.

Complementing its full schedule of concerts, the Symphony enriches the lives of Kansas City residents by providing music education opportunities for children and adults, such as KinderKonzerts, Young People’s Concerts, an instrument petting zoo and concert comments. Highlights each season include a range of free master classes, events and concerts reaching more than 250,000 community members, including the annual Bank of America Celebration at the Station concert each Memorial Day weekend and the Symphony in the Flint Hills performance every June.

The Symphony has released six highly praised CDs to date with Reference Recordings, with the most recent release featuring the music of contemporary composer Adam Schoenberg. The Symphony and Michael Stern also have recorded for the Naxos label. Every Thursday from 9-10 p.m., Kansas City’s NPR affiliate (KCUR 89.3 FM) broadcasts Kansas City Symphony performances. More information on the Kansas City Symphony is available at kcsymphony.org.