



For immediate release April 3, 2026

For additional information, contact:

Liz Madeja, Executive Director, info@ilcouncilorchestras.org

Illinois Council of Orchestras Announces Annual Awards

ILLINOIS COUNCIL OF ORCHESTRAS

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Michelle Seibert, President

Brian Baxter, Vice President

Christina Salerno, Treasurer

Susan Lape, Secretary

Timothy Corpus, Past President

Benjamin Firer

Beth Hoover

Carlos Javier

Terell Johnson

Michael Mishra

Jackie Mitra

Allen Tinkham

www.ilcouncilorchestras.org

The Illinois Council of Orchestras is pleased to announce the recipients of its annual awards for excellence in the field of music performance and for support of musical organizations. An awards panel of judges drawn from the Illinois Council of Orchestras Board of Directors and independent professional musicians reviewed nominations representing orchestras, youth orchestras, and chamber ensembles from throughout Illinois.

2024/2025 ICO Award Winners:

Orchestra of the Year (Professional) Chicago Philharmonic

Orchestra of the Year (Community) Lake Forest Civic Orchestra

Orchestra of the Year (Youth) Encore Music Academy Youth Orchestra

Conductor of the Year (Professional) Stilian Kirov,
Illinois Philharmonic Orchestra

Conductor of the Year (Community) Gregory Hughes,
Lakeview Orchestra

Volunteer of the Year Kathryn Macal
West Suburban Symphony Society

Executive Director of the Year Tim Corpus,
Hyde Park Youth Symphony

Musician of the Year Richard Zili, Lakeview Orchestra

Programming of the Year Evanston Symphony Orchestra

Guild of the Year MYAC Building Committee,
Midwest Young Artists Conservatory

The Illinois Council of Orchestras was founded in 1974 with a mission:

- to encourage, promote, and assist orchestras throughout the State of Illinois
- to promote an exchange of information among members, including providing consultants and speakers
- to hold educational conferences for member organizations, including musicians, staff, boards, volunteers, and audiences.

Presentation of the ICO Awards will take place May 2026 through June 2027 to the winning orchestras.

Information about the Illinois Council of Orchestras is available at: www.ilcouncilorchestras.org

The ICO is supported by grants from the Illinois Arts Council and the Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events.