

**Atlanta
Symphony
Orchestra**
Talent Development
Program



PREPARING GIFTED BLACK AND LATINX MUSICIANS FOR CAREERS IN CLASSICAL MUSIC

aso.org/TDP

MAKING A DIFFERENCE

The Atlanta Symphony Orchestra cares deeply about advancing the vitality and relevance of symphonic music. An important step on this journey is creating a stronger association between the musicians and the communities we serve. More than 20 years ago, a group of Atlanta community leaders recognized this challenge and set out to find a way to attract more talented young musicians of color into classical music careers. Led by Azira Hill, one of the longest-running, year-round musical education diversity programs was born, the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra Talent Development Program (TDP).

Since its inception, the TDP has served talented young musicians, and the entire field of classical music, by providing the highest level of musical training to hundreds of Black and Latinx students. Nearly 100 students have graduated from the program and gone on to attend top music schools, including The Juilliard School, Curtis Institute of Music, Manhattan School of Music and the Peabody Institute, to name but a few. This strong educational foundation has led many to careers in orchestras, teaching and performance.



As of 2014, only 1.8 percent of the orchestral musician community was Black, and only 2.5 percent was Latinx.

(2014, *Forty Years of Fellowship*, League of American Orchestras)

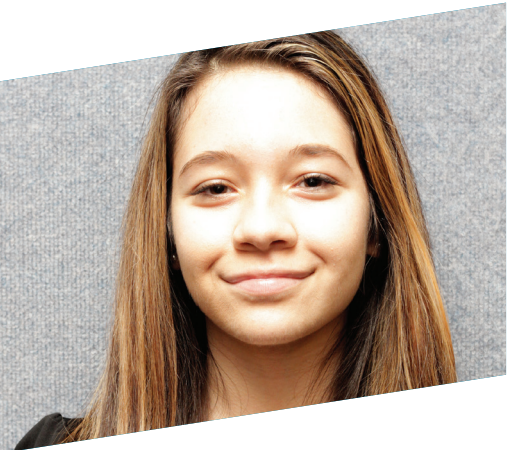
"The lack of diversity in the orchestra industry is systemic and requires a major shift in the system," said ASO Music Director Robert Spano. "With Atlanta being such a diverse city, we find it essential to participate in preparing Black and Latinx musicians for careers in classical music."

The Atlanta Symphony Orchestra's commitment is partly demonstrated through an annual investment of more than \$250,000 in the Talent Development Program.

2.5%
LATINX
1.8%
BLACK



EXPRESS YOURSELF



"The Talent Development Program taught me how to play with emotion. I had this breakthrough when I was practicing a beautiful piece by Bottesini for spring recitals. With that piece, I finally learned how to connect with the music on an emotional level instead of just playing notes."

– ANGELA LEEPER,
TDP student, bass



"I learned how to play assertively, demonstrate confidence through my posture and make efficient use of my breathing technique. My peers started noticing how well I was playing during rehearsals and I knew it was due to my instructor's teaching and my increasing desire to keep practicing whenever I have the chance."

– VINCENT TAPIA,
TDP student, trombone



"My breakthrough moment came when my teacher taught me to play more expressively. He helped me realize that I am playing for myself and no one else. That realization allowed me to put all my emotion into my playing and it is a more honest form of expression."

– ROLAND MASON,
TDP student, violin

TALENT DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

Atlanta
Symphony
Orchestra





TALENT DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM ALUMNI

The Talent Development Program creates a space for serious orchestral students to delve into their training with the support of a major orchestral institution. Students that spend these formative years in the TDP go on to achieve great success in the orchestral world in a myriad of ways.

MEKHI GLADDEN joined the Talent Development Program as a sophomore at North Springs High School. An oboe player with a love of music, but no formal training beyond his school band instruction, Mekhi was accepted into the program and began his remarkable journey. Mekhi began rigorous training led by his mentor, ASO oboist Emily Brebach, and he became a member of the Atlanta Symphony Youth Orchestra. Mekhi was selected for Carnegie Hall's 2017 National Youth Orchestra, where he performed at concerts in New York, as well as Mexico, Ecuador and Colombia, all led by the legendary Marin Alsop. Mekhi's journey will continue at The Curtis Institute of Music.



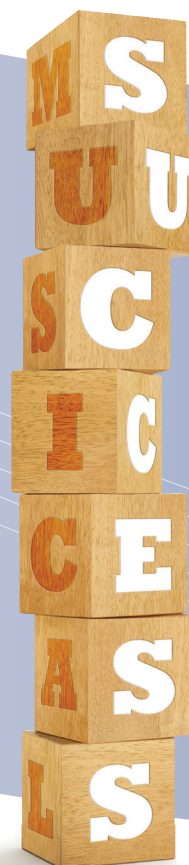
JOSHUA WILLIAMS, Class of 2018, received a full ride scholarship to The Juilliard School.

[Click here to watch his story.](#)



From prestigious awards to participation in distinguished orchestral groups, the accomplishments and affiliations of the TDP alumni are far-reaching.

NEW WORLD SYMPHONY
ASYO CONCERTMASTER
ASYO CONCERTO COMPETITION WINNER
TURTLE ISLAND STRING QUARTET
SONS OF SERENDIP
CARNEGIE HALL'S NATIONAL YOUTH ORCHESTRA
GRANT PARK MUSIC FESTIVAL'S PROJECT INCLUSION
PRESIDENT'S OWN MARINE BAND CONCERTO
COMPETITION FINALIST
TED FELLOW
EMORY JUNIOR CHAMBER ORCHESTRA
SOUTHERN CRESCENT
ATLANTA WIND YOUTH SYMPHONY
URBAN YOUTH HARP ENSEMBLE
AMERICAN TROMBONE WORKSHOP NATIONAL SOLO
COMPETITION FINALIST





MASTER TEACHERS

"I have seen firsthand what the program offers these students. It is rigorous and serious. What an excellent opportunity to have such support."

– GLORIA JONES,
Atlanta Symphony Orchestra
Principal Bass

"When a student walks into the Talent Development Program, they're walking into a lifelong commitment to working to become a professional musician."

– NATHAN ZGONC,
Atlanta Symphony Orchestra
Second Trombone



"Students all have talent; that's a given. But for many of them, the Talent Development Program journey is a real challenge... it's not only about developing talent, but nurturing talent."

– ELISABETH REMY JOHNSON,
Atlanta Symphony Orchestra
Principal Harp



PROGRAM OF EXCELLENCE

Each year, 25 students receive intensive instruction, mentoring and performance opportunities as well as access to the resources of a major American orchestra. Benefits for TDP students include:

- Weekly private lessons with an ASO musician
- Financial assistance with summer music program tuition
- Solo recital and chamber music performances
- Technical and performance juries
- Assistance with preparation for auditions
- Mentoring and one-on-one coaching
- Complimentary tickets to ASO classical concerts for students and their families

WHO IS ELIGIBLE?

- Students in rising fifth grade to rising tenth grade who have at least one parent who is either Black or Latinx
- Serious music students who have already reached a high level of proficiency on a standard orchestral instrument

Support for Talent Development Program
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accenture

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& BIRD**

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HOME
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FOUNDATION**

For more information:

- Visit aso.org/TDP
- Call the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra Education and Community Engagement department, **404.733.4830**
- Email ASOEducation@atlantasymphony.org

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