

November 14, 2023



Dear Friends of Santa Barbara Strings,

Artistic Director

Mary Beth Woodruff

Board of Directors

Christopher Elstner

Alita Rhodes

Sherylle Mills Englander

Chris Pouquette

Sellers Whitehead

Gamble Parks

Kyle Abello

Amy Trujillo

Christopher Yick

Mary Beth Woodruff

At Santa Barbara Strings, we remain committed to providing the highest quality music education to young string players throughout Santa Barbara County and we are asking for your help as the year draws to a close. Thanks to the ongoing strength of our programs and the dedication of our community, we are thrilled to share that enrollment has been exceptionally strong, and the level of playing among our students continues to soar. Our weekly Sunday rehearsals at El Montecito Presbyterian Church are filled with joy, inspiring music, and a true sense of community. We are especially excited to be performing the newly discovered string trio of W.A. Mozart (K. 648) on our upcoming winter concert. “The kids and I feel like musical archeologists/excavators in working through this new music recently discovered in a library in Leipzig and composed when Mozart was 10 years old. One of our own 10-year-old violinists went home after one of rehearsals and began writing his own violin concerto!” – Artistic Director, Mary Beth Woodruff. We may be the first anywhere to present this work in string orchestra form.

Our three levels of string orchestras - Toccata, Sinfonietta and Vivace rehearse weekly as do our chamber ensembles of trios and quartets. These groups are complemented by our Early Strings Training Program, now in its third year. ESTP is designed as a launchpad for families of beginners in need of instruments, private lessons, and monthly group instruction. We are proud that this program is inclusive of all families, regardless of their background, and provides personalized, one-on-one lessons with our talented faculty. Watching these young musicians graduate from ESTP and progress into our string orchestras has been an incredibly rewarding experience! We are especially grateful that the ESTP program continues to provide families with access to private lessons, making high-quality music education more accessible to all.

Our impact is expanding especially so in the north areas of Santa Barbara County where there is a great need for instrumental/orchestral training. Most recently, we were honored to receive a generous grant from the City of Buellton, which will allow us to offer 16-weeks of after-school group lessons (cello and violin) free of charge to youth ages 5 to 14. This grant, valued at over \$800 per student, not only helps us expand our reach but also presents exciting opportunities to enrich our curriculum and support our broader mission.

As we reflect on the year, we humbly invite you to consider making an end-of-year gift to help us further our impact in the community. We are deeply grateful for the generosity of supporters like you, whose contributions allow us to continue offering transformative opportunities to young people. With tuition covering only 30-40% of our operating budget, we rely on the support of our donors to sustain and expand our programs. We believe in the transformative power of music to teach empathy, teamwork, resilience, and intellectual curiosity – and to touch the human heart in ways that last a lifetime. Your gift today will help us to continue to enrich the lives of young people and provide them with the tools they need to succeed, both in music and life. Thank you for your ongoing support! We would be honored to have you join us for our Winter Concert on December 14th at the Music Academy of the West at 6:00pm, where you can see firsthand the incredible progress of our students.

Sincerely,

The Santa Barbara Strings Board of Directors