



## Get to Know New Music Director, Dr. James O. Welsch!

New Music Director Dr. James Welsch arrived in Tacoma in July and was immediately immersed in one of TYSA's busiest seasons. He began his position with TYSA at Session 2 of the Evergreen Music Festival in Ellensburg and then conducted the combined ensemble at Session 1 back in Tacoma. From summer music camps, TYSA went straight into auditions and then the new season. Jumping in with both feet, Dr. Welsch has proved himself to be a huge asset to the TYSA team.

Dr. Welsch comes to us from Orlando, Florida, where he was Music Director of the Florida Symphony Youth Orchestra. He grew up in Orlando. His grandmother was a huge influence in his life and as a young child, he would go to stay with her on "granymoons." She was a singer and Dr. Welsch remembers hearing her sing in church on Sunday mornings. On a trip with his grandmother to Pick and Save, he asked for a set of cassette tapes he saw in a sales bin; it was the complete organ works of Bach and the symphonies of Tchaikovsky. Those tapes had a profound impact on him and he wore them out from listening to them so much.

In addition to his grandmother's influence, Dr. Welsch had a formidable music teacher at Longwood Elementary. Mrs. Kee was a young teacher who wanted to give her elementary students a full music program experience. Typically, when we think of elementary music, we think of general music classes and band and orchestra classes that start in the 5th grade. Mrs. Kee offered choir, where Dr. Welsch started, band, and marching band. The marching band, known as the Minutemen, marched in local parades and Dr. Welsch started marching with them in the 3rd grade.

As a middle school student, Dr. Welsch would listen to Classical music on NPR and would record pieces from the radio. He would also ride his bike 5-6 miles to the local Borders where he would listen to music. He started collecting books and scores so he could see how the music was put together as he listened to music at Borders. This started his interest in composition.

Dr. Welsch became a member of the Florida Symphony Youth Orchestra in the 10th grade. He started out as a member of their wind ensemble program and then worked his way up to the full orchestra. After high school he went to Stetson University in Deland, Florida. One of the professors, Bobby Adams, recruited him after hearing one of his pieces. Kari Juusula was his first composition teacher and he quickly fell in love with composing opera, songs, and smaller works. Stetson University was small and did not have a conducting program so the composition students had to conduct their own works. As Dr. Welsch started to conduct, he also started developing ideas about other people's works and his composition buddies started asking him to conduct for them. From Stetson University, Dr. Welsch went to Syracuse University where he had his first course in orchestral conducting.

After completing his Masters degree at Syracuse University, Dr. Welsch taught at the University for several years before returning to Florida to teach at Stetson University and Central Florida University. While he has spent a lot of his career working with kids in youth orchestras, Dr. Welsch enjoys working with all ages. The biggest productions that he has felt the most passionate about have spanned multiple age groups and have helped people connect and feel good about those connections.

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While he was working on his doctorate at the University of Texas at Austin, a position for Associate Conductor of the El Paso Symphony came up. Dr. Welsch spent about five years in El Paso, working for the El Paso Symphony and Music Director and General Manager of the El Paso Youth Symphony. Being in El Paso gave him the opportunity to show his love for humanity and take advantage of being in a border town. He helped to develop the Bridge Orchestra which brings together young people from Ciudad Juárez and El Paso. The Bridge Orchestra brought together students from different cultures and different socio-economic backgrounds. None of the differences mattered as the students played music together and experienced the healing power of music. Dr. Welsch's time in El Paso gave him the opportunity to be uncomfortable, and through the discomfort, to learn a lot about people and music.

After his time in El Paso, Dr. Welsch returned to Florida to spend time with family and while he was there, the opportunity to serve as the Music Director for the Florida Symphony Youth Orchestra came up and from Florida, he has come to Tacoma. Dr. Welsch feels that often we kid ourselves making plans. Life has a way of just happening. He had always felt like the Northwest would be a nice place to live, so, while Tacoma is new to him, he feels like he has always been called to this area. As he moves forward with TYSA, Dr. Welsch is continuing to seek to do things in a meaningful way. He loves what he does and he loves doing it with people who love what they do.

## TYSA Voted “Best of Pierce County!”

**THANK YOU  
for your support!**

**TYSA was voted “Best  
of Pierce County” in  
the following categories:**

**GOLD**

**Best Live Music  
Best Summer Camp**

**SILVER**

**Best Nonprofit  
Best Tutoring/Educational Services**

The votes are in, and TYSA has been awarded “Best of Pierce County,” winning top-three places in FOUR categories thanks to the incredible support of our community! We are so grateful to everyone who nominated us, voted for us, and helped spread the word—you made this possible!

Gold for “Best Live Music”

Gold for “Best Summer Camp”

Silver for “Best Nonprofit”

Silver for “Best Tutoring/  
Educational Services”



# MUSIC FOR ALL!

We at TYSA believe that music is for EVERYONE! Since coming back from COVID, TYSA has evolved to become way more than excellent orchestra instruction, working to reach the most vulnerable in our community. Did you know that TYSA regularly provides FREE music opportunities at 50+ schools and other sites across your community - totaling more than **250 sessions** all year long? Approximately 9,000 people of all ages and backgrounds will have access to fun, educational music experiences with TYSA this year! Below, check out some of the amazing things that TYSA is doing around the community.

The most visible part of TYSA's community programs is the free Discover Drums classes in parks throughout the city of Tacoma during the summer months and free Tacoma Community Ukulele Program classes in Tacoma community centers. This summer TYSA, in collaboration with Miss Shay from Kiddos and Kin, also offered 3 free TYSA Tots classes for little ones aged 0-3 and their families.



TYSA is also at Mary Bridge Children's Hospital each week, providing both drum and ukulele activities for inpatients and outpatients.

# MUSIC FOR ALL, continued!



When everything was locked down during the pandemic, we all saw how vulnerable seniors were who were living in retirement communities. Returning to in-person in 2021, the communities at eliseo and Franke Tobey Jones were among the first that we reached out to. Today, we offer ukulele classes at Franke Tobey Jones as part of their Senior University and we do regular drum circle activities in the memory care center at eliseo. We are also exploring other communities that we can partner with.

In partnership with the Tacoma Public Library, TYSA offers imaginative, interactive musical storytimes for young children at libraries throughout Tacoma. Our TYSA students perform as part of these storytime experiences and, after the story, children have the opportunity to try out instruments.



These are just a few of TYSA's programs that are going on in the community. TYSA also:

- Provides songwriting opportunities for youth incarcerated at the Remann Hall Juvenile Detention Center to help these young people articulate their feelings.
- The new TYSamba program at Stanley Elementary was developed as a Recess Alternative music program in response to increasing instances of playground violence.
- Monthly visits at the Oasis LGBTQ+ Youth Center geared towards helping the young people connect and feel accepted.

TYSA does this and much more! All of this is only possible with the support of our community! YOU can help support our greater Tacoma community by checking out our Giving Tuesday campaign on the next page!



# Giving Tuesday is December 3, 2024 - Will You Join Us?



We're ready. Are You?  
Giving Tuesday, 2024



Giving Tuesday was created in 2012 as a simple idea: a day that encourages people to do good. Since its start, the idea has grown to a worldwide generosity movement. Not many of us are able to give thousands of dollars to support our favorite causes but, when we work together, we can make a big difference in our community and our world. TYSA has participated in Giving Tuesday since 2020 and with YOUR help, we have provided scholarships for students, created inclusive spaces for all, expanded our summer music offerings, and worked to ensure the future of TYSA for generations to come. This year our goal is to raise \$10,000 to support our programs throughout the community, making music available for ALL! You can help by giving anytime between now and December 3. You can also help by spreading the word about the important work TYSA is doing throughout the community. Together, we can make a difference! Give today by going to <https://event.auctria.com/9126c358-b2fb-4bbe-946f-6f0257eb39e4/> or by scanning the QR code at the right.



TYSA | TACOMA YOUTH SYMPHONY ASSOCIATION

03.29.25

**TRIVIA NIGHT**

TACOMA YACHT CLUB  
WWW.TYSAMUSIC.ORG

## SAVE THE DATE!

Our third annual Trivia Night Fundraiser & Auction is March 29, 2025! This event will feature three rounds of trivia, a variety of fun games, silent and live auctions, a chance to raise your paddle to support TYSA, student performances, delectable Italian cuisine, drinks, and more! All proceeds from the event will go towards supporting the TYSA scholarship fund, increasing access to music education, expanding programs, and ensuring the future of TYSA. Tickets are on sale now at [www.tysamusic.org/trivianight/](http://www.tysamusic.org/trivianight/)

Unable to attend but still want to support TYSA? Please consider donating an item for our auction - more info at [www.tysamusic.org/trivianight](http://www.tysamusic.org/trivianight).



## CONGRATULATIONS TO THE 2024-2025 CONCERTO SOLOISTS!



Midori Sokolik, Violin  
Concerto Spotlight  
October 17, 2024



Nicole Richards, Violin  
Concerto Spotlight  
October 17, 2024



Tiger Yan, Violin  
Concerto Spotlight  
October 17, 2024



Olivia Jensen-Koontz, Bass  
Concerto Spotlight  
October 17, 2024



Caleb Richards, Violin  
Concerto Spotlight  
October 17, 2024



Jack Newhouse, Violin  
Concerto Spotlight  
October 17, 2024



Matilda Martin, Violin  
Concerto Spotlight  
October 17, 2024



Logan Keeley, Cello  
Concerto Spotlight  
October 17, 2024



Muir Powell, Violin  
TSP  
December 14, 2024



Anna Choi, Violin  
TJYS  
December 14, 2024



Leah Everling, Cello  
TYS  
March 1, 2025



Gloria Choi, Violin  
TSP  
May 3, 2025



Evelyn Yi, Violin  
TASO  
May 10, 2025



Samuel Richards, Cello  
TJYS  
May 10, 2025



Yukino Sokolik, Violin  
TYS  
May 18, 2025



# Costume Concert 2024!



We had an amazing Costume Concert on October 26! The costumes were fun and the orchestras played new music this year. We also sold out all 1,200 seats in the Pantages Theater! Thank you to everyone for supporting this concert and our TYSA Scholarship Fund! Stay tuned for next year's date!

# Join Us for These Upcoming Concerts

**December 14, 2024, 1:00 PM**

Prelude Strings  
Tacoma String Symphony  
Tacoma String Philharmonic  
Tacoma Wind Philharmonic  
*Schneebeck Concert Hall, UPS*

**December 14, 2024, 6:30 PM**

Tacoma Academy String Orchestra  
Tacoma Junior Youth Symphony  
Tacoma Youth Brass Ensemble  
*Schneebeck Concert Hall, UPS*

**January 18, 2025, 7:00 PM**

Chamber Ensemble Concert  
*Raynor Chapel, Annie Wright School*

**March 1, 2025, 7:00 PM**

Tacoma Youth Symphony  
*The Ladies Who Pack a Punch!*  
Rialto Theater

For more information or to purchase tickets go to

[www.tysamusic.org](http://www.tysamusic.org)

## Season Sponsors:



## Program Supporters:



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