



MEMO

To: Board of Trustees
From: Emily Allen, Community Impact Committee Chair
Date: December 2, 2024
Re: Orchestral Music Grant Program update

The Community Impact Committee met on October 23, 2024, for the regularly scheduled meeting. The Committee discussed the Foundation's Orchestral Music Grant Program, which was created through Board variance power following the bankruptcy of the New Mexico Symphony Orchestra (NMSO). A formal application process was created to support organizations promoting orchestral music in the area. The process was by invitation only and four organizations were invited to apply: New Mexico Philharmonic, Opera Southwest, Albuquerque Youth Symphony (AYS) and New Mexico Symphonic Chorus. After completing the application, the organizations were invited (and required as a condition of the application process) to the Foundation to present on their upcoming season, before being awarded roughly the same amount year after year.

In 2022, in the spirit of Trust-Based Philanthropy, the Community Impact Committee recommended to the ACF Board of Trustees that the four organizations receive a multi-year commitment. This reduces the burden for both the organizations receiving said funding, and ACF. That included each organization receiving a percentage of the available funds based on a 5-year average of what they had been receiving, after submitting a brief summary of activities annually including plans for the upcoming year. This was adopted for a period of 3-years with 2024 funding as the last year of that commitment. The commitment for funding was the following percentage of the available distribution: NM Philharmonic 65%; AYS 20%; Opera Southwest 11%; and NM Symphonic Chorus 4%.

In the summer of 2024, Opera Southwest notified the Albuquerque Community Foundation that they would be taking on the management and the operations of the NM Symphonic Chorus (NMSC). With the understanding that this will not affect the productions of the NMSC, nor the costs associated with those productions, the Committee agreed to allow Opera Southwest to continue to receive the funding that was previously allocated to NMSC.

The above-mentioned three-year commitment concludes at the end of 2024 and as such, the Community Impact Committee is recommending that the multi-year commitments continue for the next three years (2025-2027). This will allow time for Opera Southwest and the NM Symphonic Chorus to adjust to the merger and report on the needs of the newly expanded organization, while maintaining stability for the other organizations in consideration. The Community Impact Committee recommends the following percentage of the available distribution: NM Philharmonic 65%; AYS 20%; Opera Southwest 15%.