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### **Hamilton Philharmonic Youth Orchestra merges with HPO**

**HAMILTON, ON** – The Hamilton Philharmonic Youth Orchestra (HPYO) and Hamilton Philharmonic Orchestra (HPO) are excited to announce that they will merge, effective July 1, 2021. This merger was approved by unanimous vote from HPYO members and HPO’s Board of Directors in May.

“The decision to merge the HPYO with the HPO was taken with great care and consultation with members,” said Co-Chair of the HPYO Board Susan Birnie, “We have a strong history as partners and we both see the benefits of combining resources for the long-term success and sustainability of music education programming for youth in Hamilton.”

The HPO has had a long-standing relationship with the HPYO. In recent years, the HPYO developed a closer tie to the HPO, with professional coaching provided by HPO musicians, an annual side-by-side performance and involvement in shared community outreach and education events. The HPO has performed administrative duties for the HPYO for the past two years, drawing on their established staff expertise to benefit the operations of the HPYO.

“The HPO and HPYO share mutual values and objectives - to nurture a thriving youth orchestra and music education program in Hamilton,” said HPO Board Chair Steve Lloyd, “This merger is a natural fit for both organizations.”

Founded by Glenn Mallory in 1965, the Hamilton Philharmonic Youth Orchestra is the foremost student-based symphony orchestra in the Greater Hamilton Region, offering a place for young musicians to develop their orchestral skills. Youth orchestra musicians regularly represent more than 20 schools throughout the Greater Hamilton region, and there are more than 2,000 alumni in a wide range of professions. Graduates of the orchestra are involved in professional and community orchestras across Canada, in the United States and in Europe, including two current members of the HPO.

An advisory committee will be formed for the first year of the merger to ensure a smooth transition. Members of the current HPYO board will be a part of this committee. The administration of the youth orchestra will continue as it has, and members will see no change in the process or people involved in the operations.

“The HPO is thrilled to welcome the HPYO into the organization as its flagship music education program,” said HPO Executive Director Kim Varian, “This merger is an excellent opportunity to strengthen capacity, serve talented young musicians and raise public awareness of music education in the region. We are grateful for the leadership and support shown by previous HPO management and HPYO and HPO boards. This merger is a joint endeavor and represents years of dedicated effort to strengthen the legacy of the HPYO as a foremost youth orchestra in the region. ”



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The program will continue to be known as the Hamilton Philharmonic Youth Orchestra and plans for the program's 21-22 Season will be announced in August.

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[About the HPO:](#) The Hamilton Philharmonic Orchestra was founded in 1884 as The Hamilton Orchestral Society and grew to become one of Canada's major professional orchestras. Today, the HPO is a leader in Hamilton's robust arts community where it provides professional orchestral services and music education programs to address the needs of the community. The HPO continues to commission and premiere works and is one of the artistic jewels of the Hamilton area. The combined musical talents of its artists continue to enrich the community and enhance the quality of life for its residents.

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