



## Parent/Student Handbook

[smyoc.org](http://smyoc.org)

**Andrew Smouse, Interim Orchestra Conductor**

**Jaclyn Chapman, Interim Choir Conductor**

### Contact us:

[info@smyoc.org](mailto:info@smyoc.org)

301-997-0079 (Julia Nichols)

20469 Deer Wood Park Drive  
Leonardtown, MD 20650

### Board Members 2015-2016

Julia Nichols, President  
Susan Bisson Lambert, Secretary  
Elizabeth Price, Treasurer  
Michael Cahall  
Jennifer Cooper  
Caroline Miller King  
Dave Kung  
Peter Wilson

**Mission:**

The Southern Maryland Youth Orchestra and Choir (SMYOC) will nurture, develop and advance young talented musicians in quality orchestral and choral programs.

**Vision:**

The Southern Maryland Youth Orchestra and Choir (SMYOC) is a community of students, volunteers, parents, artists, educators, administrators, and board members, dedicated to this vision:

1. The SMYOC will offer its students an integrated program of musical education that will
  - enhance the personal growth and sense of musical community of each student and
  - enhance every student's access to and preparation for musical and educational opportunities beyond the SMYOC.
2. The SMYOC will work together with Maryland musicians, educators and organizations to expand the musical opportunities available in our community.

**Our Orchestra Conductor, Andrew Smouse**

Mr Smouse is the Fine Arts Department Chair and Director of Bands and Orchestra at St. Mary's Ryken High School in Leonardtown, Maryland. While at St. Mary's Ryken High School, he earned the High School Principals' Associations Novice Teacher of the Year for the Archdiocese of Washington, DC (2014) and the Theodore James Ryken Award (2015). He also serves as the percussion instructor and senior staff for the Pennsylvania Lions All-State Band, marching percussion instructor for Gettysburg College, and the conducting associate of the Reading Pops Orchestra, a professional orchestra located in Reading, Pennsylvania. As a performer, he served as a timpanist and percussionist with the Kutztown University Orchestra, Wind Ensemble, Percussion Ensemble, UNLV Wind Orchestra, and the Celebrate Marimba Orchestra.

Mr Smouse has appeared as a guest conductor and clinician with various bands and percussion sections throughout Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Nevada. He served as a guest conductor of the Kutztown University Symphonic Band, Concert Band, Percussion Ensemble, and 35th Anniversary Kappa Kappa Psi Chapter Band. Smouse served as a conductor of the UNLV New Horizons Band, Symphonic Winds, Las Vegas Summer Community Band, rehearsal assistant for the UNLV Wind Orchestra, and the conductor of the Bedford Symphonic Winds, a semi-professional wind ensemble based in Pennsylvania. An active clinician, he has presented at the Maryland Music Educators Association, the Southern Maryland Catholic Teachers Conferences, and several colleges and universities.

Mr Smouse received his Master of Music Degree in Wind Band Conducting from the University of Nevada, Las Vegas and his Bachelor's degree in Music Education (summa cum laude) from Kutztown University of Pennsylvania. He is a member of the College Band Directors National Association, Maryland Music Educators Association, National Association for Music Education, Washington Archdiocese Music Teachers Council, Percussive Arts Society, and the College Music Society. His primary instructors include Frank Kumor, Willis M. Rapp, Takayoshi "Tad" Suzuki, and Thomas G. Leslie. He can be heard as a percussionist with the UNLV Wind Orchestra on Marquee Mojo from Klavier Records. His marching percussion writing can be heard on Loud, Proud and In Step with the Gettysburg College "Bullets" Marching Band from Mark Custom Recording.

## **Our Choir Conductor, Jaclyn Chapman**

Coming shortly....

### **General Information**

**Communication** – The SMYOC staff communicate with students and parents primarily via email. Students and parents receive emails from the Manager and/or Conductor on a regular basis regarding rehearsal schedules, performances and other important events. Please be sure to keep the Manager updated with any email address changes. If you feel you are not receiving all SMYOC emails, check your junk/spam folder. Please note: if you do not use email, please advise us on the best way to contact you.

**Concert Admission** – Admission is charged for all concerts unless otherwise noted. Admission costs will always be posted with the concert date and on the website. Complimentary tickets are available to those who are unable to afford tickets to attend concerts.

**Tuition** – Tuition fees for the 2015-16 season are:

Youth Orchestra: \$215 per student (\$140 for January joiners)

Youth Choir “CAPELLA”: \$235 per student (\$155 for January joiners)

Youth Choir “Treblemakers”: \$175 per student (\$115 for January joiners)

Please understand that tuition currently covers only about 35% of the SMYOC’s annual operating expenses. We rely on grants, corporate sponsorships, ticket sales and individual contributions to cover our remaining expenses. Tuition fees are non-refundable.

**Financial Aid** – It is our policy that no musician be discouraged from participating in SMYOC programs due to financial need. Application forms for need-based financial assistance are available upon request or on our website. Each application is reviewed in confidence.

**Auditions** – Information about times and locations for auditions will be posted on our website.

Cost: There is no cost for any SMYOC audition.

Orchestra Auditions:

Time: All auditions last approximately 15 minutes. Please arrive 15 minutes ahead to warm up.

Eligibility: Any young musician in grades 6 to 12 with at least one year of study on an orchestral instrument may audition. Younger students who can play at Level 4 may also audition and, at the discretion of the Conductor, may be accepted. The SMYOC is a symphony orchestra, and the size of the string section will determine how many seats will be available for winds and brass.

Audition includes: A prepared solo without accompaniment. Playing portions of two contrasting pieces is encouraged. Students will be asked to play scales and play a sight-reading piece. Additional details are available on the website.

Choir Auditions:

CAPELLA:

Time: All auditions last approximately 15 minutes.

Eligibility: Males and females, middle school and high school aged singers.

Audition: Prepare to sing either *The Star-Spangled Banner* or *My Country 'Tis of Thee* as a solo. Prepare to sing a second song of your choosing which best fits your voice. Come prepared to demonstrate your level of musical literacy through a series of musical exercises. These will include rhythmic and melodic exercises, musical memory sequences, and some sight-reading.

TREBLE MAKERS:

Time: All auditions last approximately 10 minutes.

Eligibility: Girls and boys with unchanged voices, aged 8 - through middle school

Audition: Prepare to sing *Happy Birthday* as a solo. Prepare to sing *Row-Row-Row Your Boat* as a round. Singers should be able to hold their own part successfully while others are singing another part. Come prepared to do a few musical exercises, including some rhythmic exercises, melodic imitations and pitch-matching.

**Ambassador Program** – The SMYOC is pleased to announce the Ambassador Program (AP), an opportunity offered to our most advanced and dedicated orchestral musicians.

Members of the AP program are regular participants and members of the Southern Maryland Youth Orchestra but are also actively playing and performing throughout the tri-county area and beyond within small chamber ensembles. Directed by some of our most well-regarded professional musicians in the community, the AP ensembles play advanced repertoire at the highest level in festival venues, seasonal community performances, SMYOC concerts, and other public and private ceremonies.

The AP instrumentalists also serve as ambassadors for the youth orchestra. Selected to represent the best of SMYOC, their demonstrated abilities, professional demeanor and commitment to excellence are indicative of the high standards of the organization. In addition, they act as role models for their orchestra peers and actively represent SMYOC to prospective members.

The musical experiences and pre-professional opportunities offered to our AP ensembles prepare these young musicians for a future in music, either within performance and musical education studies programs at colleges and/or conservatories, or as extracurricular activities pursued at the highest community levels.

The SMYOC is extremely proud of its Ambassadors.

Please contact us if you wish to book our Ambassadors for your event.

## **SMYOC Member Policies and Rules**

**Weather Conditions** – In the event that a rehearsal or concert has to be cancelled for inclement weather, the information will be posted on our website and emailed to SMYOC families.

**Attendance** – The success of our program depends upon the FULL participation of each musician. All members are expected to commit to a full year of participation.

The SMYOC attendance policy recognizes that events such as school, sports, and family activities may conflict with SMYOC rehearsals and that illnesses occur. Each student is allowed no more than **three excused absences in each set of rehearsals** leading up to a major concert. After two missed rehearsals, the Conductor will convene a mandatory conference with the student and parent.

For an absence to be excused, the Conductor and/or Manager of the orchestra or choir must receive written notification (an email is acceptable, please no text messages) from the parent of the student prior to the date the student will miss. In the event of a sudden absence (such as family emergency or illness), please notify the Conductor and/or Manager as soon as possible.

Please make use of your allowed absences sparingly and strategically. Making competing commitments means making tough choices, a process that is itself an important learning process! **Students who have absences in excess of the allowance may be required to sit out for the upcoming concert at the discretion of the Conductor.** The last three rehearsals leading up to the concert are extremely important for the group. **Students who miss any of the last three rehearsals before a concert may be required to listen to the concert from the audience, at the discretion of the Conductor.**

After a missed rehearsal, it is the student's responsibility to contact colleagues or the Conductor to find out what was covered at that rehearsal (e.g. changes to bowing/fingerings, tempos set, passages rehearsed, etc.)

Please notify the Conductor or Manager of an absence as far ahead as possible.

**School Music Programs** – SMYOC recognizes, personally and publicly, the importance of music education within our schools. SMYOC wishes to work in partnership with schools and private music instructors to the greatest extent possible to facilitate the musical development of our young people. In expanding and strengthening both school and community musical resources, our youth are offered the opportunity for optimum growth.

In recognition of the importance of these partnerships, we strongly recommend that all members of SMYOC participate in their school's instrumental and choral programs, as available.

**Private Lessons** – Private lessons for instrumentalists are strongly recommended, both to learn the music and to advance in your instrumental program in a timely fashion. If assistance is needed in finding a private teacher, please feel free to contact SMYOC.

**Folders and Music** – All students will be issued a folder for their music. It is expected that students will keep their music in their folders unless it is being played. Students are encouraged to write suitable markings on the music to remind them of hints and tips that were provided during rehearsal; such markings must be made in pencil so that they can easily be removed at the end of the season. The folders need to be returned at the end of the season. If the folder is destroyed or lost, students will be charged \$20 to replace it. Music that is issued is the property of SMYOC. Students will be charged \$3.00 for each piece of music that has a rehearsal mark that cannot be removed, is destroyed or lost.

### **Behavior Expectations for ALL SMYOC Members:**

Reasonable standards of behavior and dress are expected while rehearsing, performing, or participating in any event or activity associated with the Southern Maryland Youth Orchestra and Choir.

1. Demonstrate appropriate, respectful behavior toward SMYOC staff, fellow students and at all performance and rehearsal venues.
2. Listen to instruction from your Conductor or Manager. Do not talk while your Conductor or Manager is speaking.
3. Put trash/recycling in the appropriate containers. Pick up your messes.

**Arrival at Rehearsal Hall** – Musicians and singers should arrive **10 minutes before** the start time of the rehearsals to warm up, talk with friends, etc. At exactly the time the rehearsal is to begin, there must be a quiet room, ready to tune or warm up. This means that everyone should be **in their places several minutes in advance**.

**Restroom Usage** – Please use the restrooms **before the rehearsal or at the break**. There will be no leaving the rehearsal room for any reason (other than for absolute emergencies) while the rehearsal is in progress.

**Orchestral String Seating** – The Conductor has the right to change the string seating at his/her discretion.

**Snacks & Electronics** – Please do not bring the following items into rehearsals: Food, drink, cell phones or any other electronic devices. Turn cell phones and other devices off and store them with your belongings.

**Discipline** – The Conductor sets expectations for rehearsal and concert behavior. Failure to abide by a Conductor’s requirements will result in the following steps:

1. The Conductor speaks to the student and parents concerning the problem.
2. If the problem persists, the Conductor may remove the student from rehearsal or have him/her sit out of one or more rehearsals.
3. Failing all else, the Conductor may expel the student from the SMYOC. (Note: Tuition is non-refundable.)

## **Orchestra Concert Attire**

Girls: Clean, solid white shirt or blouse (short or long sleeved) paired with solid black dress slacks or long black skirt. Black socks or hosiery and black dress shoes required. Shoulders and knees should be covered!

Boys: Clean, solid white shirt (short or long sleeved) and black dress pants. Black socks and black dress shoes required. A black tie is acceptable.

## **Choir Concert Attire**

- Performance attire for the Choir requires an additional one-time-only fee which varies by group.
- To eliminate error and confusion, all performance attire for all singers will be handled by SMYOC Choir Manager; one order will be placed for all through Southeastern Performance Apparel Co.
- Shoes/socks/tights – individual purchases. See details below.

### **TrebleMakers:**

#### Girls:

- Black dressy shoes
- Flesh-colored tights
- “Jubilus” top \$35
- “Crepe concert skirt” \$25 or palazzo pants \$31

#### Boys:

- Black dress shoes
- Black socks
- Formal vest ensemble \$54: Tuxedo shirt, bow tie, black pants, poplin vest



### **CAPELLA:**

#### **Female:**

- Black dress shoes
- Flesh-colored tights/nylons
- Black ostinato dress \$65; *Eco-friendly fabric; hand-wash cold, drip dry.*

#### **Male:**

- Black dress shoes
- Black socks
- Formal ensemble (\$90-96): tuxedo pants, wing collar tux shirt, tie, notch lapel tuxedo coat



**Parent Support** – SMYOC relies on its volunteers. Assistance at rehearsals and concerts, posting flyers, or helping with a large office mailing are things for which we might ask your help.

In order to work with students, volunteers must register by submitting a volunteer form and having a background check performed. Additional information and volunteer sign-ups are available on our website or at the parent orientation meeting.



### **SMYOC Resolution on Cooperation with School Music Programs and Instructors**

SMYOC recognizes, personally and publicly, the importance of music education within our schools. SMYOC wishes to work in partnership with schools and private music instructors to the greatest extent possible to facilitate the musical development of our young people. In expanding and strengthening both school and community musical resources, our youth are offered the opportunity for optimum growth. In recognition of the importance of these partnerships, we strongly recommend that all members of SMYOC participate in their school's instrumental programs.

### **SMYOC Statement of Non-discrimination**

SMYOC admits students of any race, color, sex, sexual orientation, religion, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, and activities generally available to students in the orchestra. SMYOC does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, sexual orientation, religion, disability, national and ethnic origin or any basis prohibited by law in administration of its admissions, access, or treatment in its programs and activities.

### **SMYOC Statement of Equal Opportunity Employment**

Southern Maryland Youth Orchestra, Inc. (d/b/a Southern Maryland Youth Orchestra and Choir) is an Equal Opportunity Employer. This organization does not and will not discriminate in employment and personnel practices on the basis of race, sex, sexual orientation, age, disability, religion, national origin or any other basis prohibited by applicable law. Hiring, transferring and promotion practices are performed without regard to the above listed items.

### **SMYOC Statement of Anti-harassment**

It is the policy of the SMYOC to maintain a work environment that is free from harassment based on race, color, religion, sex (whether or not of a sexual nature and including same-gender harassment and gender identity harassment), national origin, age, disability (mental or physical), and sexual orientation and from retaliatory harassment based on opposition to discrimination or participation in the discrimination complaint process. No orchestra worker, volunteer, board member, or member may intentionally harass or abuse a person (physically, verbally or electronically) when the conduct is severe or pervasive and objectively and subjectively has the effect of: (1) unreasonably interfering with such person's work or equal access to the orchestra, or (2) creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment.

### **SMYOC Statement of Compliance with Section 504 for the Rehabilitation Act**

It is the policy of the SMYOC to be in compliance with Section 504 for the Rehabilitation Act regarding access for persons with handicaps.



## **Guidelines for Public Comment at Board Meetings**

### Comments on a specific agenda item:

Agendas for Board meetings will be published on the website at least 5 days prior to the meeting. Persons wishing to speak on a specific agenda item at an SMYOC Board Meeting should notify the Board President 2 days in advance of the Board Meeting. The President will then allow adequate time in the discussion process for open public comment. Time will be allotted for comment following Board comments on the agenda topic.

### General comments to the Board:

Note: If your public comment has to do with a complaint, the Board will first ensure that the dispute resolution process has been followed.

Once it has been established that the process has been followed, you will be permitted to bring your concern to the Board. General comments such as this will be brought forward at general public comment time at the beginning of the meeting. You will have 3 minutes to speak and should sign in at the beginning of the meeting. The Board may ask clarifying questions but will not use this time to offer solutions. The Board will let the person providing comment know how and when they should expect a response.



## Dispute Resolution Process

It is the policy of the Southern Maryland Youth Orchestra and Choir (SMYOC) that parents, students, workers and volunteers have direct means by which disputes (i.e., concerns, issues, and complaints) can be discussed and resolved quickly, fairly, and equitably. This Dispute Resolution Process shall be used to address disputes from within SMYOC – disputes among or between parents of students enrolled in SMYOC, Conductor, students, and volunteers. It is SMYOC policy that disputes are resolved informally to the maximum extent practical, and that only after informal efforts have been fully utilized shall a complaint be brought forward to the Board. Disputes which arise from third parties outside SMYOC shall be resolved through Formal Resolution (Step 3); if a dispute is brought directly to the Conductor by a third party, the Conductor shall direct the party to the Board President.

### **1. Informal Resolution Process – Person the Complaint is About**

The complainant should first contact the individual who is the object of the complaint and make best efforts to resolve the dispute with that individual directly. The complainant should feel free to utilize the assistance of another trusted person in attempting to resolve the dispute.

### **2. Informal Resolution – Conductor**

If no resolution is reached in Step One process, a complainant may bring the complaint to the attention of the SMYOC Conductor orally or in writing. To discuss the issue, the complainant may make an appointment with the Conductor for a mutually convenient time. At the time that the complaint is made, the Conductor will document the complaint and inform the Board President. Documentation of a complaint will include the name(s) of the parties involved, the date, a brief description of the complaint, and a description of the action(s) taken.

During or following that meeting, the Conductor will inquire into the disputed issue and will make best efforts to resolve the complaint through discussion(s) and meeting(s) with all involved parties. If resolved to the satisfaction of all parties involved, the Conductor shall follow-up with the complainant within 10 working days to ensure the resolution remains effective and satisfactory. If, however, the dispute cannot be resolved, the Conductor shall provide the complainant with a copy of this Dispute Resolution Process.

### **3. Formal Resolution – Board**

If a complaint is not resolved via informal means, a complainant may choose to advance his or her complaint to formal resolution by requesting a Dispute Hearing. In this step, a complainant must file his or her complaint with the Board as soon as possible following the most recent attempt at informal

resolution. The Complainant shall outline the following information in writing: a request for a Dispute Hearing, a detailed account of the disputed issue, a description of the unsuccessful steps taken to resolve the dispute, and a proposed resolution. This written complaint may be mailed to SMYOC, or presented to the Conductor for delivery to the Board.

The Dispute Hearing will be scheduled within thirty (30) days of the receipt of the written complaint. The hearing shall be held in an open session unless prohibited by law.

At least five working days before the Dispute Hearing, each member of the Board will receive all available documentation regarding the dispute. The Board members will review all documentation and hear from all parties concerned as part of the formal Dispute Hearing. The Hearing shall be scheduled for no longer than 1 hour, unless the complainant shows cause as to why more time is needed. A mediator from the Community Mediation Center may be present at the Hearing to help facilitate strong communication and uphold the conversation between the bodies at hand.

At the close of the Dispute Hearing, or at a subsequent special meeting, the Board will discuss the dispute. The discussion shall be in open session unless prohibited by law.

The Board will make a decision concerning the dispute within ten (10) working days of the Dispute Hearing. Written notification of the decision of the Board will immediately be sent to all parties concerned within five (5) working days of the decision.

The decision of the Board shall be the final decision in the dispute and, unless otherwise provided by law, shall be binding upon all parties.

As an alternative to a Dispute Hearing, the complainant may choose to resolve the complaint through use of the services provided by the Community Mediation Center. If the complainant decides to use these services, he or she must notify all involved parties of his or her decision. Mediation is completely voluntary. No one will be forced to participate. If the other involved persons are unwilling to mediate, the Community Mediation Center personnel will be available to talk with the other involved parties and explain mediation in more detail, to make sure they understand what mediation offers. If the other involved parties are still unwilling to participate, the complainant will not be able to use the services provided by the Community Mediation Center, but may still proceed with a Dispute Hearing.