

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES AT THE HOUSTON SYMPHONY

Volunteers play an important role in the education and fundraising activities of the Houston Symphony and a growing number of them assist with activities in Jones Hall such as Theatre District Open House, family concerts, student concerts and the Symphony Store. By giving hands-on demonstrations of orchestral instruments in the Instrument Petting Zoo, working with children in creating arts and crafts projects, assisting in the Symphony Store and greeting schoolchildren for the student concerts, our volunteers ensure that visitors and concert attendees have a positive experience when they are in Jones Hall. In addition, there are numerous ways that volunteers are involved behind-the-scenes: preparing materials for the family concert craft projects, helping with store merchandise and inventory, calling schools to confirm attendance at student concerts and collecting auction items for the fundraising events are just a few. Volunteers may assist at our fundraising events with preparations and auction docent activities.



The majority of our volunteer opportunities are between September and May of each year when the Symphony season is in full swing. Whether you prefer working with children or adults, on weekdays or weekends, we can help you find a place to share your time and talents in support of the Houston Symphony!

EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Family Concerts

Family concerts are great -- the hall is full of special performers, music, activities and children! We want our youngest patrons to have wonderful memories of coming to hear the symphony, so our activities are designed to be hands-on opportunities for them. Volunteers help visitors with activities that reinforce and support the concert experience.



We have four family concerts each season with two performances each Saturday. Activities are scheduled prior to the first concert and following the second concert. Volunteers may choose to work in the Instrument Petting Zoo or with the craft activities at one or both of the activity periods, depending on their availability.

The Instrument Petting Zoo allows visitors to try various orchestral instruments themselves. They can blow a trumpet, learn how to hold a violin and use the bow, tap a tune on the marimba, bang a cymbal and hear a flute. Volunteers do not need to have any prior musical experience to participate in this area; if a volunteer *has* played an instrument, however, there is an opportunity to have some additional interaction with the young patrons.

At each family concert, we have craft activities geared to ages 5-10. The projects involve assembling and/or decorating something that relates to the theme of the concert. All of the materials are pre-sorted so volunteers can easily re-stock the tables as needed and interact with the children as they work. We also have simple coloring pages for the very youngest patrons and any of the visitors can take the pages home for later.



Student Concert Ushers

Each year Houston Symphony hosts thousands of school children from the Houston area in Jones Hall for the David Dewhurst Student Concert Series. Volunteer ushers help these children and the accompanying adults to their seats and, following the concert, to their buses. The concerts are held on weekday mornings during the school year. Prior to the concerts, volunteers can also assist the Symphony's Education Department staff by making phone calls to schools to confirm their attendance.



Sounds Like Fun! Concerts



During late May and June, the orchestra goes on the road, traveling to venues throughout the Houston community to perform free concerts. The Instrument Petting Zoo is the only activity that goes on location with the orchestra and it is important to have volunteers to help with the instruments. Dates, times and locations vary. If you are interested in helping with this important community outreach, we can provide that information in May so you can determine your availability.

FUNDRAISING ACTIVITIES

Symphony Store

The Symphony Store is a project of the Houston Symphony League. There are many tasks involved in the operation of this successful enterprise from working with merchandise inventory and display to working with customers and everything in between. The Store is open for every concert during the season as well as for several special programs. Volunteers are needed to help in all areas and you do not need to have prior retail experience to be part of the team. If you enjoy interacting with people and have a desire to be of service to the Symphony, the Store might be the place for you!



Special Events



A lot of work goes into a successful event like the Symphony's Opening Night Gala, Symphony Ball and Maestro's Wine Dinner, and volunteers are very helpful at guest check-in, organizing auction packages, setting out programs and checking the room set-up prior to the guests' arrival. In addition, we often have volunteer auction docents at the Ball and Wine Dinner. Magical Musical Morning, our annual children's holiday event, is a favorite with volunteers who enjoy working with children, and the activities are similar to those at the family concerts.

**For more information on volunteering with Houston Symphony, please contact
Vickie Hamley, Director, Volunteer Services
vickie.hamley@houstonsymphony.org or 832-531-6701**