



August 29, 2021

Dear Friend of Music:

I am continually amazed at the students of the Grand Rapids Youth Symphony & Classical Orchestra. As John Varineau said, "It's encouraging to see generations of students from the group go on to do fantastic things and be fantastic people. The love of music prospers and is richly rewarding."

I have shadowed and supported John V for more than 30 years, and witnessed how our community has been inspired by each of these fall fund drive letters. Having seen your names and gifts over the years the response has sustained and reinforced my belief that there is a faithful patronage for this organization of youth.

This season started to worry me. It certainly brings unique challenges, given the pandemic and retirement of John. How will the Youth Symphony & Classical Orchestra get through this loss and change? When chosen to serve on the GRS search committee for an interim conductor, I wondered who could possibly fill John's shoes? Then, as the weeks went on, a conductor came into full view. When I heard a GRS musician say, "I would love to play under him", I knew we had found someone to fit the role. Mary Ellen Logan, President of the Youth Symphony's Parent Association, said it best: "The search committee was attracted to Yaniv's strong artistic capability, commitment to youth music education, and his inspiring and energizing approach when working with youth". It will be exciting to have Yaniv Segal placed in front of our musicians. It is just what WE needed!

Mr. Segal is the son of a Polish violinist—one of the first women in the New York Philharmonic, and an Israeli violin-maker, Yaniv grew up speaking three languages in a multi-cultural household. In addition to being a talented conductor, Yaniv is a composer, violinist, and former child actor. He has held positions with the Detroit Symphony Orchestra, Chelsea Symphony, and Naples Philharmonic where he also was the music director of the Naples Philharmonic Youth Orchestra. Yaniv is a Music Director Finalist of the Rockford, Salina, and Ashland Symphony Orchestras. He regularly works with the Detroit Symphony, and has led orchestras around the globe, including the Minnesota Orchestra, Kansai Philharmonic, Ann Arbor Symphony, Sinfonietta Cracovia and the Beethoven Academy Orchestra. While Assistant Conductor of the Naples Philharmonic from 2014-17, Yaniv conducted nearly twenty different programs annually, including special performances with artists ranging from Itzhak Perlman to the Beach Boys.

Please help this area's most talented young musicians grow their musical abilities and a lifelong commitment to great art. We ask for donations twice a year, and if you haven't yet helped us out this year, we would very much appreciate your generous donation.

We invite you to our performances: October 31 at the Richard and Helen DeVos Center for Arts and Worship at Grand Rapids Christian High School, March 6 and May 15 at DeVos Performance Hall. All of our performances start at 3:00 P.M.

Thank you for your support.

Sincerely,

Barb Hammond

General Manager, Grand Rapids Youth Symphony and Classical Orchestra

*GRYS Manager: 57 Courtland St. Box # 481, Rockford MI 49341 616 842-6566  
300 Ottawa Ave. N.W. Suite 100, Grand Rapids, Michigan 49503 616 454-9451*