



September 10, 2022

Dear Friends and Family of Music,

My name is Duo Shen. This summer, I humbly accepted the position to be the conductor of your Grand Rapids Youth Symphony (GRYS) and Classical Orchestra (CO). I am grateful for the opportunity to work with the brightest and most passionate young musicians in west Michigan. As the Symphony's lifelong friend and leader John Varineau proudly explained to me, the youth symphony program has been a pillar to our community's young musicians for a long time. Through this program, we nurture numerous young musicians to change the world for the better in their own unique ways.

I played in youth symphonies growing up. The fondest memory for me was during my teenage years when I was playing different concert programs with my friends in my orchestra. Upon further reflection, I am confident every rehearsal, sectional, and concert we completed helped me become a stronger person, a better colleague, and a more understanding and sympathetic friend. That is what I want to achieve with our youth symphony: create a unique experience and friendly environment, in which the budding musicians can learn and cherish these vital moments, while also finding their own voices.

I write to you today with two requests:

- The first is to join me in helping our community's most talented young musicians grow their musical abilities and strengthen their connection to great art. We ask for your financial support twice a year, and if you haven't helped us out this year, we would very much appreciate your generous contribution. You may refer to the brochure for more information. You may also use online giving at [GRYS.ORG](http://GRYS.ORG).
- The second is your attendance at our performances this season:
  - Sunday, November 13<sup>th</sup>, 2022, at 3 PM Northview High School Devos Center for Arts & Worship and,
  - Sunday, February 26<sup>th</sup>, 2023, at 3 PM Northview High School Devos Center for Arts & Worship and,
  - Sunday, May 21<sup>st</sup>, 2023, at 3 PM at DeVos Performance Hall.

I invite you to join us in the concert hall to listen to the young artists share their talent. And when you come, please bring a friend, family member, or a young person, as I firmly believe in sharing the transformative power of music and that all humans can create a unique connection with music.

It takes a village to raise a child, so I am humbly asking you to invest in our future, in our community and support these young talented musicians through your GRYS & CO, as well as your local schools. I have no doubt that in just a few years, these rising stars will help us make the world a better place!

Thank you for your support.

Sincerely,

Duo Shen  
Conductor, Grand Rapids Youth Symphony and Classical Orchestra  
Assistant Conductor, Grand Rapids Symphony