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Chairperson's Column: Moving Ahead Together

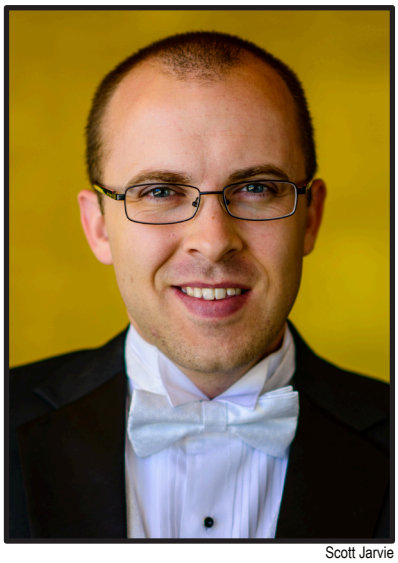
by Keith Carrick, ICSOM Chairperson

Growing up in a family where community service was a way of life, I witnessed firsthand the importance of giving back. Although not a teacher by trade, my father volunteered to teach classes during evenings and weekends, often assisting students with learning difficulties by helping them read through their tests and assignments. My mother volunteered her time to schools, focusing on teaching kids to read and work with computers. This upbringing instilled in me a belief that life is not just about what we receive but also about what we can give. Playing my instrument at work alone would never suffice. Consequently, serving on committees and eventually working with ICSOM was a natural fit. I am deeply honored to take on the role of chairperson of ICSOM, fully aware of the significant responsibilities that come with it, and I am committed to serving our members to the best of my abilities.

Taking over this position after Meredith Snow is a humbling experience. Watching her lead our members through work actions, advocate passionately for DEI initiatives, provide remarkable leadership during the challenges of the pandemic, and contribute thoughtfully to our discussions has given me insights into the complexities and importance of the chairperson's role within our Union. I will genuinely miss collaborating with her on the Governing Board.

These are transformative times for labor, marked by a wave of organizing efforts and work actions sweeping the nation. Employers understand that the old playbook of meager wages and limited solutions is no longer acceptable. Orchestras like the Boston Symphony, the Cleveland Orchestra, The Philadelphia Orchestra, and the New York City Ballet Orchestra have successfully pushed back against that playbook in recent months. When you encounter an orchestra struggling with entrenched management, I urge you to show your support publicly. We must stand together and support one another.

Our orchestras are microcosms of the world around us, so it's inevitable that the stress and chaos our members experience outside of work find their way into our workplaces. When I speak to musicians, they often mention difficulties with their colleagues, low morale, and a general sense of burnout. While our labor-oriented structure is well-equipped to handle employer-related disputes, it doesn't always serve us well when addressing conflicts between musicians. ICSOM must urgently address these concerns, which require more engagement and resolution than the issues we typically face.



Scott Jarvie

Our best chance of addressing the significant issues facing our industry—among them diversity, equity, inclusion, demographic change, climate change, and political turmoil—lies in finding unity and decency in our relationships at work. When divided, our leverage is fractured and diluted. Only when united can we hope to bring about the changes we seek. Delegates are at the core of ICSOM, and they will play a pivotal role in effecting these changes in our orchestra culture.

Achieving this will require support from the Governing Board to help develop and refine the skills of our delegates and, in turn, empower each orchestra to foster enduring, positive changes in relationships among their musicians. We can do this by training our delegates to be organizers and by sending them back to their respective orchestras with the goal of not only organizing their members around work issues but also inspiring other members to organize as well. Through this process, we can learn better ways to communicate, build bridges, and bring people together around common goals, such as healthier work environments.

These changes will take time, training, and hard work, and they must not only prepare our contracts for the future but also our hearts and minds. Self-inflicted wounds only harm our solidarity, and our solidarity will not be healed in isolation. Healing is a process that will require time and teamwork from every one of our members. But, with the collaboration of the Governing Board and delegates, I am confident that the future remains bright for musicians of our ICSOM orchestras.

More In This Issue

President's Column

Building Cohesive Colleagues

by Paul Austin

During the 2022–23 season, I visited ten ICSOM orchestras where I met with musician committees. The common theme for all of the groups was a need for cohesion with their colleagues on the heels of the pandemic. As a result, ICSOM Chairperson Keith Carrick and I presented a breakout session "Building Cohesive Colleagues" at the 2023 ICSOM conference in Milwaukee.

Paul Austin

Many of the ideas that Keith and I described during our session came from working with Randy Whatley, President of Cypress Media, and the training that he had given the Musicians of the Utah Symphony and the Grand Rapids Symphony Musicians Association a few years ago. We explored tangible items such as a new musician handbook and a musician newsletter, with examples given from the players associations in Utah and Grand Rapids.

A first step in building the relationship with colleagues is to welcome them when they join the orchestra. A new musician handbook (as a PDF) is an excellent resource and introduction to the bargaining unit. Ideally, the handbook should be sent to all of your colleagues on a regular basis, as it contains information that would be helpful for them to have at their fingertips. Its contents should provide a welcoming statement, a brief history of the orchestra and the players' association, an explanation of AFM membership at both the national and local levels as well as the various dues, details about ICSOM membership, an explanation of the Weingarten rights (see references, page 7), a current list of committee and staff members, and points of interest for those who are relocating to your city. The bylaws of the musicians association could be provided in the appendix section. It would be wise to share a draft of the handbook with your local and attorney in advance of giving it to your colleagues, in order to ensure accuracy and check legalities—especially for those who are in right-to-work-for-less states. The musicians of the Utah Symphony have an excellent handbook that has been used as a template for many other players' associations when crafting their own version, and it is available at ICSOM's website.

A musician newsletter can build a sense of camaraderie and pride within the players. The team that works on the newsletter may include an editor, writers, proofreaders, a keeper of the email addresses, and tech support for loading the contents. Colleagues are asked to submit ideas for future articles, and in turn they should share the newsletter via email and social media. Today's option of an electronic version of a newsletter eliminates printing and mailing costs, and also provides a way to make corrections quickly and

Cohesive Colleagues *continues on page 6*

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From the Members-at-Large

The 2023 Conference was somewhat unusual, as delegates elected members-at-large to fill four positions, meaning an entirely new slate of MALs. We asked each new member-at-large to provide remarks following their election.

Nicole Jordan, The Philadelphia Orchestra


Jeff Rothman

For those that I was not able to address at our convening at the Milwaukee conference, please allow me to introduce myself. My name is Nicole Jordan and in my day-to-day job, you'll find me navigating paper cuts and bowings, amongst other things, in my role as principal librarian of The Philadelphia Orchestra. Outside of that, I have the honor and the pleasure to have been elected by you to serve on the ICSOM Governing Board as one of your members-at-large.

Most days, you interact with us librarians in our natural habitats: surrounded by deadlines and stacks of music as we attempt to prepare materials for upcoming services and performances. From page turn fixes to transpositions; from music enlargements to helping you source that one arrangement you heard that one time at that one place, we, your librarian colleagues, are here. Serving as a member-at-large, I hope, allows for you to interact with me (and your fellow librarian colleagues) outside of that specific ecosystem and inside the one we collectively share in the workplace and within the musical community at large.

The same level of advocacy and championing that I do in my everyday job, at my home orchestra, is the same advocacy and championing I want to bring to the ICSOM community, and our industry at large. I look forward to getting to know as many of you as I can, and conversely, I look forward to you getting to know me as well. As we each navigate our unique environments within our individual workplaces, challenges can seem daunting, and even insurmountable. Negotiations can be personal. Change is not fast enough. And it can feel that no one else can—or wants to—understand our individual experiences. I assure you that is not the case. A challenge for one of us is a challenge for all of us and I look forward to the opportunity to work closely with as many of you as possible to overcome them!

Jessica Phillips, Metropolitan Opera Orchestra

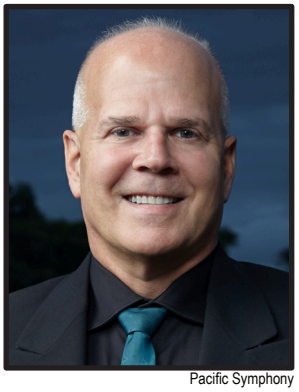
I am excited to serve as a member-at-large on this year's ICSOM Governing Board. It has been almost ten years since I first addressed the ICSOM conference in Los Angeles as the chair of the Orchestra Committee during the difficult negotiation for the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra in 2014. Since that time, the support, resources, and educational content that ICSOM has provided for me, and other orchestras across the country, has been invaluable. This past year I finally jumped at the opportunity to be the ICSOM delegate for my orchestra, particularly now, as we navigate the road to recovery in the wake of two immense challenges—COVID and the social justice reckoning in the aftermath of George Floyd's murder. We are facing myriad challenges, and it will take the dedicated work of a fully-aligned community to tackle these issues over the next decade and beyond.


Miran Kim

I bring a broad swath of experience to the Governing Board. My 20 years as a performer, my career skills classes for the next generation of musicians at Juilliard and Manhattan School of Music, as well as my participation on two other boards—the Executive Board at Local 802, and The Field, a membership organization that provides career development and fiscal sponsorship to aspiring artists all over the country. Additionally, last year I completed my MBA in Arts Innovation at the Global Leaders Institute. This degree has been vital for me, not just in re-thinking ways to advocate for the future of musicians' livelihoods, but also in understanding how to champion the power of art in our society.

As a member-at-large, I aim to listen, empower, be a resource, and dig into the thorny problems we face—I know from long experience they are unique, tangled, and complicated. I look forward to learning from this Governing Board, and to bringing people from across the industry together in service of our great art form. I believe in the power of the profound conversations and relationships that are formed through ICSOM and at the yearly conference, and I applaud the past leadership of Meredith Snow and look forward to working with Keith Carrick and the rest of the Governing Board.

Rob Schumitzky, Pacific Symphony


Pacific Symphony

I am honored to have been elected to serve on ICSOM's Governing Board as a member-at-large. Having attended the most recent conference in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, it has given me tremendous optimism for the future of our orchestras. Being in the presence of delegates from so many of our esteemed orchestras was infectious. I'm convinced that, together, we can address and tackle all our complex issues. These past few years have seen us navigate our orchestras through the pandemic and now we find ourselves negotiating progressive contracts to get back to growth. This is a time of unusual challenges, especially with the slow return of our audiences. Even so, it's an exciting time to reconnect with our communities by providing much needed live orchestral performances. Music is what we need when times are difficult and it's exactly what we need for the positive moments in our lives.

Members-at-Large *continues on page 7*

Legal Viability of Fellowships

SCOTUS Heads in a Troubling Direction

by Kevin Case, ICSOM Counsel

Since the Supreme Court's June 29, 2023 decision in Students for Fair Admissions (SFA) v. Harvard, 600 U.S. 181 (2023), hiring practices that use race as a factor have come under increasing scrutiny. Orchestra fellowship programs, which many ICSOM orchestras have implemented, are no exception. Even before SFA, musicians have asked whether fellowship programs—which often prefer or are even limited to applicants of certain races—are legal. Before SFA, the answer would have been, "probably, depending on the structure of the program." After SFA, the answer is, "maybe not for much longer."

Myra Klarman

This article has three parts: an overview of the law regarding so-called affirmative action programs; how that law applies to orchestra fellowships; and the SFA decision itself, along with its fallout, and what it means for the future.

Affirmative Action Hiring Plans

The analysis for determining whether a hiring program that uses race as a factor is legal begins with Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Title VII prohibits discrimination on the basis of race regarding hiring, firing, compensation, terms and conditions of employment, or depriving workers and job applicants of employment opportunities. It applies to unions as well as employers, including the agreements unions make with employers. Title VII also applies to "apprenticeship or other training or retraining, including on-the-job training programs." Orchestra fellowships fit that definition.

On its face, Title VII would seem to prohibit any hiring program that takes race into account at all. But Title VII did not arise in a vacuum. It was enacted at the height of the civil rights movement, in response to decades of Jim Crow—which followed centuries of slavery—and in the face of long-standing discrimination against women and other groups. One cannot ignore that the very purpose of Title VII was to address the legacy of discrimination suffered by marginalized groups.

Accordingly, the Supreme Court long ago determined that a private employer does not violate Title VII by voluntarily using an affirmative action hiring plan (with some caveats discussed below). Note that there is no precise definition of an "affirmative action" plan, but they are based on an underlying assumption that in the absence of discrimination—including structural or individual biases—the workforce would naturally reflect the gender, racial, and ethnic profile of the labor pool from which the employer selects its workers. If that is not happening, then the employer may take affirmative steps to ensure equality of opportunity.

The Supreme Court first addressed the issue in 1979 in United Steelworkers of America v. Weber, 443 U.S. 193 (1979). In Weber, a collectively bargained affirmative action plan reserved 50% of the openings in an in-plant craft training program for Black workers. A White worker sued. The district court and court of appeals found in favor of the White worker because Title VII on its face prohibited any discrimination on the basis of race, period. But the Supreme Court reversed this decision, holding that in light of the "conspicuous racial imbalance" between the percentage of the employer's Black employees (1.83%) and that of Black workers in the local labor force (39%), and given "traditional patterns of racial segregation and hierarchy," Title VII did not prohibit the training program's reservation of spots for Black workers. Justice Brennan, writing for the majority in the 5–4 decision, noted that it would be "ironic indeed" if a law intended to address "centuries of racial injustice" were instead used to preclude efforts to remedy that legacy of discrimination in employment. (Translation: Title VII was not intended for White people to complain they are victims of discrimination.)

The Court further explained why the craft training program passed legal muster: it did not "unnecessarily trammel the interests of" White workers because the program was temporary (it would end when the percentage of Black workers more closely reflected the labor pool); it did not require that any White worker would be fired and replaced with a Black worker; and it did not "create an absolute bar to the advancement of white employees" because only half the openings were reserved.

In 1982 in Johnson v. Transportation Agency, 480 U.S. 616 (1987), the Court further addressed affirmative action in the context of an employer that took gender into account for promotions to a job category in which none of the 238 positions was held by a woman. The Court followed Weber in holding that the plan did not violate Title VII, explicitly relying on what it found to be the law's remedial purpose, "eliminating the effects of discrimination in the workplace." In a twist, though, the Court held that for a job requiring "special training" or skills, the relevant comparison is not with the local labor pool, but with "those in the labor force who possess the relevant qualifications."

Out of Johnson and Weber and a host of lower court decisions that followed, a three-part test emerged: an affirmative action plan (1) must factually show a "manifest imbalance" between the portion of minorities or women in the workplace and the applicable labor force (noting that "applicable" does not mean "local" for jobs requiring special skills or training); (2) must be temporary, and should end when the imbalance is corrected; and (3) must not "unnecessarily trammel" the rights of non-beneficiaries of the plan (e.g., White people or men) by requiring their discharge or creating an "absolute bar" to their advancement. The third element is often the most contested; in particular, hiring programs that are completely closed to non-beneficiaries are often found to "unnecessarily trammel" their rights.

Orchestra Fellowships

No two orchestra fellowship programs are identical. Typically, though, there are common elements. Fellows are intended to be drawn from populations that have been historically underrepresented in symphony orchestras. Their activities include performing with the orchestra for a certain number of programs or weeks, receiving coaching from orchestra members, taking mock auditions, and sometimes engaging in community outreach activities. They are paid the same per-service rate as regular members when performing with the orchestra. Most receive at least some benefits. In addition, it is usually clear (whether in a bargained agreement or mutual understanding) that when performing with the orchestra, fellows are additive to the complement—they don't replace bargaining unit musicians. (Whether subs or extras can be replaced by a fellow is a thornier question.)

One major point of variation between fellowship programs, and probably the most critical from a legal standpoint, is who is eligible to apply. Some fellowship programs in prominent orchestras state on their websites and downloadable applications that only applicants who actually belong to populations historically underrepresented in symphony orchestras are eligible. Those populations are typically defined as "including, but not limited to," musicians who identify as Black, Latino, or Indigenous. Other orchestras, however, state that the program also is open to applicants with "demonstrated commitment to diversity and inclusion in the arts, learning, and civic leadership." One orchestra mentions only the historically-underrepresented populations in its description of the program, but then states on the actual application that all candidates are considered regardless of race. (I am deliberately not identifying any specific orchestra in this article.)

I am not aware of any orchestra fellowship program that has been tested in the courts. But as the law stands today, the three-part test from Weber, Johnson, and their progeny would apply. There is no question that orchestra musicians have special training and skills, so the "manifest imbalance" comparison would be between the percentage of underrepresented musicians in the orchestra (usually the low single digits, sadly) and a labor pool consisting of musicians with the requisite skills. That is a factual comparison that can be made with data analysis, but ascertaining the scope of the applicable labor pool—and the percentage of underrepresented musicians within it—might be tricky. Given the incredibly small numbers of musicians from underrepresented groups in most orchestras, it is hard to imagine that the data wouldn't show an imbalance; but it may not be as extreme as in Weber (39% vs. 1.83%) or Johnson (all qualified women vs. 0%).

As for whether a fellowship satisfies the "temporary" requirement, I'm not sure how many programs specify that they will terminate once the orchestra starts to reflect the racial balance of the applicable workforce. Again, none of this has been tested in court, so it is difficult to predict how significant such an omission might be.

Programs that are completely closed to musicians who do not belong to historically-underrepresented populations might have a difficult time with the "unnecessarily trammels" factor. That is likely why some programs open it up to musicians of any race who can demonstrate a commitment to diversity and inclusion. Even when the program is closed to certain races, though, an argument can be made that there is no unnecessary trammeling: for example, no White musician is losing their job, particularly if the program does not permit fellows to replace other musicians; no White musician faces a "bar to advancement" because they can always win a job the old-fashioned way, by auditioning for a vacancy; and, perhaps most importantly, no fellow is guaranteed a job upon completing their fellowship, so no White musician is at a disadvantage when a vacancy arises in the complement. (Some may argue that auto-advancing a fellow past the preliminary round in an audition is an advantage they possess that White musicians do not, but I don't find that argument at all compelling; in reality, all sorts of musicians are frequently auto-advanced, and often for less-worthy reasons such as whom they studied or went to school with.)

In sum, there are strong arguments that most orchestra fellowship programs, if tested in court under the law as it stands today, would survive. There are possible hurdles, too: making the data-driven showing of "manifest imbalance," ensuring that a plan satisfies the "temporary" standard, and—particularly for programs that are closed to certain races—passing the "does not unnecessarily trammel" test. But in my view, orchestra fellowship programs largely harken back to what was approved in Weber: a training and professional development program for historically-underrepresented workers, designed to put them in a better position to get a full-time job and thus address the racial imbalance in the workplace.

SFA and Its Fallout

The SFA decision is the most recent in a line of cases at the Supreme Court that address racial preferences in college admissions, many of which resulted in plurality decisions with no majority of justices in agreement and a host of concurring and dissenting opinions. Now, however, there is a solid majority of six conservative justices who are ideologically aligned, and when it comes to matters of race, that alignment is the polar opposite of the rationale underpinning cases like Weber. As Justice Clarence Thomas writes in his concurrence in SFA: "all forms of discrimination based on race—including so-called affirmative action—are prohibited under the Constitution."

It must be stressed that the college-admissions cases utilize a different legal framework than the private-employment, affirmative-action cases. Admissions cases do not arise under Title VII or other anti-discrimination statutes; rather, because these schools often are public universities or receive substantial federal funding, they are decided under the Equal Protection Clause of the 14th Amendment: "nor shall any state…deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws." The Supreme Court's longstanding legal test under the Equal Protection Clause is that any racial classification must be narrowly tailored to further a compelling governmental interest.

Fellowships *continues on page 6*

Fellowships *continued from page 5*

Just 20 years ago, the Supreme Court held in Grutter v. Bollinger, 539 U.S. 306 (2003), that a University of Michigan policy that considered race as a "plus" factor in admissions did not violate the Equal Protection Clause. The majority opinion, written by Justice O'Conner, reasoned that the "educational benefits of a diverse student body" represent a compelling state interest.

But in SFA, the Court effectively overruled Grutter. Diversity of the student body is no longer a viable state interest. Writing for the 6–3 majority, Justice Roberts—famous for his simplistic and circular argument that "the way to stop discrimination on the basis of race is to stop discriminating on the basis of race"—explained that race had been used by colleges as a "negative" rather than a "plus" factor, particularly with respect to students of Asian descent who were not preferred in admissions. In his view, all racial classifications incorporate stereotyping—an assumption that people of a certain race think alike and have similar experiences—and are thus impermissible. The only way for colleges to consider race, he wrote, is to consider on an individualized basis "how race affected [the applicant's] life, be it through discrimination, inspiration, or otherwise…a benefit to a student who overcame racial discrimination, for example, must be tied to that student's courage and determination." (I find this quote particularly offensive, as it seems to be asserting that the way to deal with discrimination is not to address perpetrators, but for victims to simply have more "courage and determination.")

Affirmative action programs in private employment are not directly affected by SFA, as they exist in a different legal context altogether. However, the opinion demonstrates a marked hostility to any form of racial preference that does not bode well for the continued viability of Title VII affirmative-action cases like Weber. Consider this statement from Roberts: "Eliminating racial discrimination means eliminating all of it." That is code; it is typically said by those arguing that affirmative action is just another form of discrimination. Supreme Court justices choose their words carefully, and this was no accident.

Another comment stands out: Roberts wrote that it is impermissible to compare the racial makeup of college applicants to the general population or to previous college classes until "some rough percentage of various racial groups is admitted." As discussed above, that kind of comparison, and the requirement that an affirmative-action program stop once the imbalance is corrected, is precisely what justifies a permissible affirmative-action plan under Weber and its progeny.

Opponents of affirmative action wasted no time in arguing that SFA dooms any and all hiring programs that take race into account. Two weeks after SFA was decided, the Attorneys General of 13 states sent a letter to the CEOs of all Fortune 100 companies, warning that SFA "should place every employer and contractor on notice of the illegality of racial quotas and race-based preferences in employment and contracting practices…you will be held accountable." (https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/attorneygeneral/documents/pr/2023/pr23-27-letter.pdf).

Next, the same activists behind SFA began suing major law firms over their DEI summer-associate fellowship programs, which typically had been open only to members of historically-disadvantaged populations. The group calling itself the American Alliance for Equal Rights argued that after SFA, the exclusion of White heterosexual male applicants—that is exactly how one such applicant was described in the complaint—violates Title VII and other anti-discrimination statutes. In response, most of these law firms modified their fellowship programs to eliminate the use of race, gender, or identity as a factor in awarding fellowships; one firm simply terminated its fellowship program altogether.

Activists also brought a case against the drugmaker Pfizer for its management fellowship program, which was open only to Black, Latino, and Native American applicants. Although the case was initially dismissed on grounds that the plaintiff lacked standing to sue, the plaintiff appealed—and while that appeal was pending, Pfizer changed course and opened up the program to applicants of all races. That still wasn't enough, evidently: on appeal to the Second Circuit Court of Appeals, the plaintiff is arguing that even the mere goal of increasing diversity in the workplace violates anti-discrimination laws. This could be the first affirmative action case arising from private employment to get to the Supreme Court after SFA.

The fact that some of the largest and most sophisticated law firms and corporations are unwilling to defend their fellowship programs in court after SFA is not a good omen. This Supreme Court's hostility to pretty much any consideration of race, combined with its demonstrated willingness to overrule settled precedent (e.g., the Dobbs decision), would seem to put the writing on the wall when it comes to Weber and the legality of affirmative action plans in private employment.

In the event the Supreme Court threatens the viability of orchestra fellowship programs, we will need to explore other avenues of professional development for musicians of historically underrepresented populations. Fellowships programs have worked—they are probably the most effective tool we have had when it comes to increasing representation. Fellows get jobs. If the Court makes these programs untenable, we will have to find something equally effective.

Cohesive Colleagues *continued from page 2*

easily. The newsletter's standard format could be an interview with a leader, items of interest about the players, tributes to retiring colleagues, and profiles of current musicians. I am very proud of the newsletter that the Grand Rapids Symphony Musicians' Association publishes three times a year (see references, page 7). We are fortunate in that GRSMA's musician newsletter is shared by our management with the symphony's board members, donors, and subscribers, as recently requested by an executive board member and upper management. Many articles include links to the symphony's website to assist in promoting upcoming concerts, which in turn helps the entire organization.

Beyond handbooks and newsletters, the "Building Cohesive Colleagues" breakout session gave suggestions for in-person events. For starters, we encouraged regular in-person meetings of the bargaining unit. During COVID, those meetings necessarily occurred via Zoom and became the norm in


Martha Long

Paul and Keith, bonding and hanging with the Oregon Symphony musicians' committee after one of their October 2023 concerts.

many places. However, while electronic sessions are convenient, they do not replace the benefits of face-to-face communication with colleagues to build productive relationships. Part of our pandemic recovery should be the return of in-person meetings.

We also encouraged get-togethers outside of the workplace, as cultivating bonds with others usually cannot happen during rehearsals or meetings. These activities also fell by the wayside during COVID and can range from outreach activities and orchestra meals to hosting community events and a new musician breakfast. As recently reported in *Senza Sordino*, the musicians of the Kennedy Center Opera House Orchestra have enjoyed a longstanding and fulfilling relationship with their neighbors at Miriam's Kitchen (see "KCOHO at Miriam's Kitchen" in *Senza Sordino*, Volume 60, Issue 4). ICSOM congratulates the KCOHO musicians for this outreach program, which holds great meaning for all who are involved.

Mentoring newly hired-colleagues also goes a long way in building cohesion. This can be achieved simply with a buddy system—someone who regularly checks in on the new player to see how they are adjusting to the new work environment and city, and encourages them to attend musician meetings and activities. It could also be more official, with a mentor assigned as a point person for this task. This designated mentor should be a tenured musician of the orchestra, not a member of management, and not a member of the musician's tenure review committee. It should be someone who is willing to put in the time, knows the contract very well, has been in the orchestra for awhile, and has the respect of their peers. Providing a mentor who shows the ropes to a new musician can go a long way for the success of that player's tenure process.

Paul's References

Weingarten Rights
https://www.nlrb.gov/about-nlrb/rights-we-protect/your-rights/weingarten-rights

GRSMA Newsletter
https://www.grsmusiciansassociation.com/articles

Conference Presentation
https://www.icsom.org/conferences/docs/BUILDING-COHESIVE-COLLEAGUES.pdf

Why is all of this important? Because unity is key to having a successful bargaining unit, which in turn will lead to achieving healthy working relationships and progressive contracts. It can also lead to having more musicians participate on committees instead of a few people doing all of the work, which frequently leads to burnout. Remember the famous saying "a house divided against itself cannot stand?" Combined activities are noticed and heard. Collective actions have strength and power. Cohesive colleagues are necessary and vital.

Keith and I enjoyed giving this presentation, and our slides are available at ICSOM's website (see references, opposite). We would like to continue to hear from you about any activities that have assisted in building cohesive colleagues in your orchestra.

Members-at-Large *continued from page 3*

Over the past fifteen years I've been an unwavering advocate for my fellow colleagues. As a newly elected member-at-large, one of my goals is to continue learning and to find creative ways to bring positive change to our industry. I also look forward to getting to know as many delegates as possible to gain a better understanding of the issues that other orchestras are facing.

Kim Tichenor, Louisville Orchestra

I am grateful and pleased once again to serve on ICSOM's Governing Board, and look forward to devoting time and energy to the cause of musicians' overall well-being.


Kimberly McClellan Woods

The COVID-19 public health emergency caused unprecedented changes in our industry as we were forced to reimagine how we worked as symphony and opera musicians. In the wake of the pandemic, the rate of demographic change among our orchestras has markedly increased. Many of our newer members have scarcely had a chance to consider whether their orchestra's CBA is competitive with other ICSOM orchestras in economics and working conditions—or even if it provides a living wage for the long term in their community. Further, the prevalence of smaller ensembles and non-symphonic projects, while useful during the pandemic, continues to affect the nature of our current work.

ICSOM has always provided an effective collective forum to learn from one another how we can improve our lives as artists in our communities and in the international orchestra world. We gather virtually and in-person throughout the year to inspire one another and learn what has been successful in our orchestras and what has failed. We literally delegate participants—delegates and Governing Board members—to represent their orchestras and build the kind of unity that will ensure the future of symphony orchestras—and the musicians, staff, and board who make it—as pillars of our communities for generations to come.

ICSOM
INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE OF SYMPHONY AND OPERA MUSICIANS

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