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NAACP
Eugene ~ Springfield Branch
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Eugene Symphony & Eugene/Springfield NAACP announce new NAACP Private Lesson Scholarship for BIPOC students

EUGENE, OR (Dec. 10, 2020)— Eugene Symphony and Eugene/Springfield NAACP are excited to announce the establishment of the **NAACP Scholarship Opportunity**, available to regional BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Color) students, as part of Eugene Symphony’s new Private Lesson Program.

Eugene Symphony’s new Private Lesson Program is available to regional students who do not otherwise have the opportunity to take private lessons. The program will serve 34 talented young music students in the Eugene 4J, Springfield, and Bethel School Districts. Students are nominated by their school music teacher to receive the scholarship, which consists of eight (8) free private lessons with a professional Eugene Symphony musician, as well as a modest stipend for lesson materials. The new NAACP Scholarship Opportunity will provide this private lesson opportunity to ten (10) additional students, specifically BIPOC students, in our region.

Studies show individualized music education opportunities, like private lessons, can positively impact student confidence, self-esteem, and overall school performance.

“We are thrilled to launch this new program, and especially to partner with the NAACP, to provide increased access for more young people to experience the transformational power of music in their lives,” says Eugene Symphony Executive Director Scott Freck.

Eugene/Springfield NAACP Executive Director Eric Richardson adds, “We need to take every chance to give our youth encouragement and additional opportunities for growth during these difficult times.”

The Eugene Symphony Private Lesson Program was established this year during the COVID-19 pandemic as a way of continuing to serve young musicians in our region safely. All private lessons will take place virtually – a music lesson trend that has become common during times of social distancing.

After students have been nominated for this opportunity by their school music teachers, they will be selected through a process which involves input from both Eugene Symphony and Eugene/Springfield NAACP. **The deadline to nominate students for this opportunity is Friday, December 18.** Participating students will be notified at the beginning of 2021, and lessons will take place from January to April 2021.

The NAACP Scholarship Opportunity is generously funded by the Eugene/Springfield NAACP Branch #1119. The Eugene Symphony Private Lesson Program is made possible thanks to sponsorship support from PacificSource Health Plans, and grants from the Chambers Family Foundation and Woodard Family Foundation.

Interview & Media Opportunities: For interviews, contact Associate Executive Director Lindsey McCarthy at 928-231-4706 or lindsey.mccarthy@eugenesymphony.org.

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About Eugene Symphony: Now in its 55th season, the Eugene Symphony is a nonprofit and 83-member part-time orchestra based in Eugene, Oregon led by Music Director & Conductor Francesco Lecce-Chong with a mission of *enriching lives through the power of music*. While away from the concert hall since March 1, 2020, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Eugene Symphony has been offering digital content through its virtual hub at eugenesymphony.org, including radio broadcasts, music education content, live chats with Maestro Lecce-Chong, and musician performances. In all, these virtual engagement activities have reached more than 60,000 people in Oregon, across the country, and around the world. More at **eugenesymphony.org**

About Eugene/Springfield NAACP Branch #1119: As a 501(c)4 charitable organization, the mission of the NAACP is to ensure the political, educational, social, and economic equality of rights of all persons and to eliminate race-based discrimination. In Lane County, primary activities include implementation of education programs and events for public awareness and community building. The Eugene Springfield NAACP also coordinates institutional collaborations to increase cultural inclusion. Established in 1909 to protect the safety and human rights of America's population of People of Color, the NAACP founded its first branch in Southern Oregon (Eugene) in 1976. While it services Lane County, it also maintains a leadership role in the State of Oregon and provides support to other regional offices. This is in part due to the leadership of its management and priorities set by its Education Committee. More at **naacplanecounty.org**

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