

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Philharmonic Society of Orange County:

Marie Songco-Torres (949) 553-2422, ext. 230; marie@philharmonicsociety.org

Rosiana Falzon: (949) 553-2422, ext. 105; rosiana@philharmonicsociety.org

Jewish Federation of Orange County:

Joey Good: (714) 833-0822; JGood@JFedOC.org

PHILHARMONIC SOCIETY OF ORANGE COUNTY AND JEWISH FEDERATION OF ORANGE COUNTY AWARDED SAMUELI FOUNDATION OC+ FUND GRANT

(IRVINE, CA, AUGUST 31, 2026)—The Philharmonic Society of Orange County and Jewish Federation of Orange County have been awarded a grant from the Samuelli Foundation’s inaugural OC+ Fund to support a multi-year, music-centered community engagement initiative that harnesses the power of live classical music, education, and cultural experiences to strengthen and celebrate Jewish identity and culture, build multigenerational community connections, and expand cultural access across Orange County.

The Philharmonic Society and Jewish Federation are among 10 projects selected from 265 applications for the inaugural OC+ Fund, which was launched in response to the 2025 Orange County Nonprofit Needs Assessment. The fund supports collaborations that bring together complementary strengths, expertise, and relationships to serve Orange County communities.

The initiative builds on an existing partnership between the Philharmonic Society and Jewish Federation and their shared commitment to community, remembrance, and cultural vitality, strengthened through their collaboration last year on *Violins of Hope*.

Together, they will develop and present a range of programs, including anchor artistic events, early childhood and family concerts, school and youth engagements, wellness and intergenerational programs, and commemorative events.

The first year of programming is already underway, with the collaboration's first joint event taking place Monday, November 9, 2026, with a commemorative program marking Kristallnacht, developed in partnership with the Rodgers Center for Holocaust Education at Chapman University. Additional programming will coincide with International Holocaust Remembrance Day and the Philharmonic Society's January 21, 2027, Itzhak Perlman recital, followed by programs connected to American Jewish Heritage Month and Holocaust Survivor Day in spring 2027. Future planning includes programming surrounding a visit by the Israel Philharmonic.

"This collaboration will establish something neither organization could have built alone: a recognized, countywide series of music-centered community programs that Orange County's Jewish community, and the broader cultural landscape, can count on as a permanent fixture," said Tommy Phillips, President and Artistic Director of the Philharmonic Society. "Together we can create meaningful pathways for people to experience music, culture, history, and community, and we are thrilled to receive the generous support of the Samuelli Foundation to help bring this vision to life."

"An important part of this partnership is ensuring that this work is additive to what both organizations already do," said Stephanie Epstein, Chief Operating Officer and Acting CEO at the Jewish Federation of Orange County. "Music has always been central to Jewish life and identity; it connects generations and carries our story forward. Building community engagement around performances that are already part of the Philharmonic Society's season gives us a powerful new way to deepen that connection and open our community's cultural life to more families across Orange County."

“We know that lasting engagement takes time, which is why this initiative is designed to build relationships beyond individual events,” added Phillips. “It is about creating opportunities for people to gather, experience extraordinary music, celebrate Jewish culture, remember together, and build connections across generations. We look forward to growing this partnership and its impact throughout Orange County.”

#

ABOUT THE PHILHARMONIC SOCIETY OF ORANGE COUNTY

Founded in 1954 as Orange County’s first music organization, the Philharmonic Society of Orange County presents national and international performances of the highest quality and provides dynamic and innovative music education programs for individuals of all ages to enhance the lives of Orange County audiences through music.

Since its inception, the Philharmonic Society has evolved and grown with the county’s changing landscape, presenting artists and orchestras who set the standard for artistic achievement from Itzhak Perlman, Gustavo Dudamel, Yo-Yo Ma, and Renée Fleming to the Berlin Philharmonic, Vienna Philharmonic, Chicago Symphony Orchestra, and many others. In addition, the Philharmonic Society celebrates multi-disciplinary performances under its Eclectic Orange brand and embraces music from a wide range of countries with its World Music performances. Its celebrated concerts introduce children to classical music with creative and inspiring performances, instilling music appreciation for future generations.

The Philharmonic Society’s nationally recognized Youth Music Education Programs, offered free of charge, engage more than 80,000 students annually through curriculum-based music education programs that aim to inspire, expand imaginations, and encourage learning at all levels. These programs are made possible by the Committees of the Philharmonic Society comprised of nearly 450 volunteer members who provide more than

50,000 hours of in-kind service each year. As a key youth program, the exceptional Orange County Youth Symphony and String Ensemble provide top-tier training to the area's most talented young musicians through multi-level ensemble instruction, leadership training, touring opportunities, challenging professional repertoire, and performances in world-class venues. The Philharmonic Society also promotes life-long learning, connecting with colleges and universities to conduct masterclasses and workshops and providing pre-concert lectures to introduce audiences to program selections.

www.philharmonicsociety.org

ABOUT JEWISH FEDERATION OF ORANGE COUNTY

Jewish Federation of Orange County is a nonprofit organization founded in 1965 that convenes, engages, and leads the Jewish OC community to enhance and sustain Jewish life, assist people in need, mobilize on issues of concern to the local Jewish community, and strengthen the bond with Israel and Jewish people globally. To learn more, visit

www.jewishorangecounty.org.