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DC Youth Orchestra Program receives significant funding from the DC Commission on Arts and Humanities

Washington-DC-based DC Youth Orchestra Program will be the recipient of the DC Commission on Arts and Humanities UPSTART Grant for 2008. This grant provides up to \$100,000 to the grantee. The UPSTART Program supports the development of small to mid-sized arts organizations with budgets between \$100,000-\$900,000. UPSTART seeks to provide Washington, DC neighborhood community-based arts organizations with funding of up to \$100,000, intensive leadership education, and training to assist in building financial and operational capacity. This program targets core arts management and administrative functions that include: marketing, information systems, organizational development, human resources and accounting/finance.

"This is an extraordinary opportunity for The Program and our ability to strengthen the organization," says Executive Director, Ava Spece. The Program has recently experienced some significant transition, as the founder and conductor of the organization, Lyn McLain, retired after 46 years of service, in the spring of 2006. The Program has undergone a year-long conductor search.

The DC Youth Orchestra Program provides instrumental music education to approximately 600 students annually, ranging in age from 4 ½ to 19. Students participate in a 12-level curriculum, advancing by means of a jury exam system. Students may begin in the program with no prior experience. The top level of the program culminates in an internationally and nationally recognized Youth Orchestra, now under the first year of direction of Maestro Jesus Manuel Berard. The orchestra's final performance of the season will be in the Terrace Theatre of the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, on June 8, 2008 at 6:00 p.m.

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