

# NEW JERSEY SYMPHONY

XIAN ZHANG MUSIC DIRECTOR

## Community Partners Monthly Highlights

# January 2026

In January, musicians served more than **4,000** community members of all ages, through **15** events across **7** New Jersey counties.



### Kean-CAU Concert

On January 9, Brennan Sweet, Naomi Youngstein, Brett Deubner, and Jonathan Spitz performed “By Chance” with Community Access Unlimited’s Academy of Continuing Education (ACE), a work arranged and conducted by New Jersey Symphony Youth Orchestra alumnus Owen Davitt. This annual concert unites ACE participants, Kean music education majors, faculty, alumni, and K-12 partners to share original music in support of equity. We were honored to join Kean’s Music Department, whose ongoing support of our Relaxed Performances helps make music welcoming to patrons of all abilities.

### East Brunswick High School

On January 9, Henry Kao, Andy Lamy, Levi Boylan, and Luca Esposito visited East Brunswick High School to present the *Something for Everyone* program in collaboration with the East Brunswick Symphony and Assemblyman Sterley Stanley of New Jersey’s 18th Legislative District, which serves Middlesex County. The musicians shared insights about their instruments and personal musical journeys with the students. The visit concluded with sectional rehearsals, during which the musicians provided coaching and individualized guidance for the students.





## The Montclair Foundation

On January 17, Theo Bockhorst, Nayoung Baek, and Nabeel Hayek performed at the Van Vleck House in Montclair as part of the Montclair Foundation's Cultural ARTS Series. The program included Mendelssohn's Piano Trio No. 1 in D minor, Rachmaninoff's Trio No. 1 in G minor, and Ryu's *Early Summer*, all of which were met with enthusiastic audience response.

## Governor Sherrill Inauguration

On January 20, New Jersey Symphony Chamber Players performed both at the swearing-in ceremony and at the VVIP reception of the Inaugural Ball. A brass quintet comprised of Garth Greenup, Tiago Linck, Katie Jordan, Levi Boylan, and Derek Fenstermacher, performed celebratory music at different points of the gubernatorial inauguration of Mikie Sherrill at New Jersey Performing Arts Center. In the evening, a string quartet with Brennan Sweet, David Southorn, Izia Weyman, and Jonathan Spitz provided upbeat music to welcome guests to the Inaugural Ball held at the American Dream Mall.



## Preschool Program: Speedway School

On January 16, New Jersey Symphony Chamber Players with Greg LaRosa, Kathleen Nester, and Mark Timmerman kicked off the preschool program with rousing sing-along songs and instrument demonstrations. This was followed up with classroom visits on January 23, where Kathleen Nester and Jonathan Storck visited the preschoolers at Speedway School in Newark to kick off this year's series of preschool visits sponsored by PNC Foundation. The preschoolers were actively engaged, singing along to "Itsy Bitsy Spider" and "Head, Shoulders, Knees, and Toes," joining in to accompany the musicians with egg shakers. The preschool program is supported by PNC Foundation.

As always, thank you for your support of the Community Partners program.  
Stay tuned for the next edition of Monthly Highlights!