

## **New Jersey Symphony Orchestra trustee Eduardo Lara assumes role as co-chair of NJSO Board of Trustees**

- Lara joins Ann Borowiec as board co-chair, succeeding Norman Slonaker

NEWARK, NJ—New Jersey Symphony Orchestra trustee Eduardo Lara has joined the leadership of the NJSO Board of Trustees, joining Ann Borowiec as board co-chairs. Lara succeeds Norman Slonaker, who co-chaired the board with Borowiec for the past two years.

Lara is vice president for marketing and product development at Newark-based Horizon Blue Cross Blue Shield of New Jersey, the state's leading health insurance provider. He brings years of experience, strong business acumen, marketing expertise and a deep commitment to the NJSO mission to his new role as co-chair. Prior to this appointment, Lara had been a member of the board's executive committee and co-chair of the NJSO's marketing committee.

Lara says: "I am honored to be joining Ann Borowiec as co-chair of the New Jersey Symphony Orchestra, one of the premier musical organizations in the country, and am grateful for the support of my fellow board members and the leaders of the NJSO. My wife, Joy, and I have been longtime supporters of the NJSO because of our love of classical music and the Symphony's commitment to musical excellence, diversity, and community engagement and education.

"Over the last year and a half of the pandemic, I have developed a deeper appreciation for the artistry, flexibility and commitment of our musicians and our music director Xian Zhang. In addition, President & CEO Gabriel Van Aalst and his staff have demonstrated great leadership, resilience and focus under such trying conditions. Through their collective efforts, and the ongoing support of our many patrons and donors, the Symphony has become more innovative and vibrant, and is set up well for the upcoming Centennial celebration."

Borowiec says: "I am delighted to welcome Ed as the new NJSO board co-chair. He brings deep marketing expertise and a true passion for our work, founded in his love of classical music and his commitment to serving the community. The partnership the New Jersey Symphony Orchestra has with Horizon BCBSNJ is longstanding, and it is wonderful to have a seasoned business leader like Ed Lara to co-lead the board as we work to advance the mission of the NJSO.

"I have to thank Norm Slonaker for his outstanding service as board co-chair. His thoughtful leadership and counsel was truly value added over the last two years."

NJSO President & CEO Gabriel van Aalst says: "Ed has been a key leader for the NJSO board and a passionate advocate for the Orchestra's mission, and we are thrilled to have him join Ann to lead our board through and beyond our centennial celebrations. We want to thank Norm, who along with Ann, have led the Orchestra board through an unprecedented time in our history."

### **Eduardo Lara**

Ed Lara is vice president for marketing and product development at Newark-based Horizon Blue Cross Blue Shield of New Jersey, the state's leading health insurance provider. He is responsible for brand and product marketing, member experience and product management of health, digital and service products. Lara joined Horizon Blue Cross Blue Shield of New Jersey at the end of 2011 as director of marketing strategy. In this role he helped to build out new consumer and B2B marketing capabilities, including consumer segmentation and analytics, improved market intelligence, and revenue-building marketing campaigns for the Individual and Small Group segments. In his current role, he led the development and launch of the OMNIA line of affordable, high quality health plans. He also led key member experience, digital

enhancement and brand-building initiatives which have resulted in Horizon being ranked No. 1 in New Jersey by J. D. Powers for Overall Member Satisfaction in Commercial Health Insurance in four of the last five years.

Prior to joining Horizon Blue Cross Blue Shield of New Jersey, Lara worked at Procter & Gamble and GlaxoSmithKline Consumer Healthcare, where he had increasing P&L and marketing responsibilities on major US and global brands. He received his undergraduate degrees in film and marketing at De La Salle University in the Philippines, and his MBA majoring in marketing from Columbia Business School in New York City.

Lara is co-chair of the Board of Trustees of the New Jersey Symphony Orchestra. He also sits on the board of St. Benedict's Preparatory School in Newark, working with the Campus Life subcommittee. Ed lives in Westfield, NJ, with his wife of 31 years, artist and art educator Joy Cabanos-Lara. They have two sons: Jaime, the director of branded content at Newark-based tech startup 1Huddle, and Javier, a civil engineering graduate from the University of Pittsburgh and a newly commissioned Second Lieutenant in the United States Army.

### **New Jersey Symphony Orchestra**

The New Jersey Symphony Orchestra connects with the people and diverse communities of New Jersey through the power of live symphonic music to inspire, entertain and educate. Internationally renowned Music Director Xian Zhang has garnered critical acclaim on the podium and has deepened the NJSO's commitment to presenting diverse voices that reflect the communities the Orchestra serves.

The NJSO embraces its legacy as a statewide orchestra through mainstage and chamber performances at venues across New Jersey, as well as partnerships with fellow Garden State arts organizations, universities and civic organizations. The Orchestra's education and community engagement programs promote meaningful, lifelong engagement with live music.

Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, the NJSO has made virtual performances and educational online programs available for free, reaching more than 10 million people across the Orchestra's digital channels. NJSO Concert Films pair world-class NJSO performances with stunning imagery of the people and cityscapes of New Jersey. The NJSO has presented innovative programs with fellow arts organizations, community ensembles and statewide partners. Musicians perform solo and chamber works from iconic New Jersey locations in NJSO Everywhere. NJSO at Home spotlights intimate at-home performances, instrument demonstrations, educational videos and hours of concert recordings.

The NJSO Youth Orchestras have expanded to a hybrid in-person/virtual design, introducing entirely new dimensions to the program, from composition and rhythm courses to an eclectic array of electives. In 2020–21, nearly 200 students collaborated on a yearlong creative composition project—a uniquely engaging opportunity to explore their own musical voices and shape new works drawing from all the genres that inspire them. The project culminated in *Our Voices*, an album of 25 original compositions.

The safety of our patrons, musicians and staff is of the utmost importance to the NJSO. Please visit [njsymphony.org](https://njsymphony.org) for constantly updated details focused on attendees' well-being at our performances.

The Orchestra's online hub for free musical content is [njsymphony.org/virtual](https://njsymphony.org/virtual).

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