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ASSOCIATION OF CALIFORNIA  
SYMPHONY ORCHESTRAS

*Empowering Our Music Community*

**KATHRYN R MARTIN RECEIVES ACSO'S EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP AWARD**

**Thursday, June 20, 2024** – The Association of California Symphony Orchestras (ACSO) is pleased to announce that **Kathryn R Martin**, President & CEO of the Santa Barbara Symphony, is the recipient of the 2024 Executive Leadership Award that will be presented at ACSO's 2024 Annual Conference in San Francisco from July 25-27.

The ACSO Executive Leadership Award recognizes the chief executive officer, executive director, or managing director of an ACSO member organization for extraordinary leadership in the classical music field by advancing the mission of their organization, creating a vision that inspires others, creating strategies to overcome challenges, and uniting a team to meet the demands of the changing world of classical music performance.

Kathryn was nominated by the board and staff of the Santa Barbara Symphony for her extraordinary efforts to turn the orchestra around after a period of financial and leadership challenges that took place before her tenure and that was exacerbated by the COVID pandemic.

"For the Santa Barbara Symphony, Kathryn Martin was the right person at the right time," said Kim Kebler, Executive Assistant & Board Liaison, on behalf of the Santa Barbara Symphony in its nomination of Kathryn. "With a 30-year career leading and consulting nonprofit organizations during times of transition and change, Kathryn's leadership and unique abilities are one of the key reasons our symphony survived the pandemic, is on a path to financial stability, and is at the forefront of the California symphonic world today. Through Kathryn's leadership, we are currently bucking national trends in ticket revenue, subscription households, and revenue from individual donors. Kathryn's leadership philosophy begins with kindness and inclusion, often admitting that we were 'building the plane while flying it.' Her extraordinary leadership and ability to navigate and pivot inspired staff, board, and musicians, who together are finding strategies to succeed at delivering on our mission and finding a path forward to bring the power and joy of music to the community."

ACSO Executive Director Sarah Weber said, "We created this award because oftentimes the work of an orchestra leader is the last to be recognized. In our field, executives spend their time supporting their board members, mentoring and coaching their staff, shining the spotlight on their music director, and collaborating with musicians. They lift up everyone before themselves. But they truly provide a strong backbone and influence the internal culture of any successful orchestra. Kathryn certainly does all that and more for Santa Barbara Symphony, and she is truly deserving of this recognition."

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The mission of the Santa Barbara Symphony is to enrich the lives of Santa Barbara residents by producing and presenting the highest quality musical experiences performed with artistic excellence, which is accessible to the entire community; and to inspire a passion for symphonic music in the next generation of audience members, musicians and funders. [www.thesymphony.org](http://www.thesymphony.org)

The Association of California Symphony Orchestras (ACSO), founded in 1969, is a member service organization representing 120 classical music organizations and their 2,000 board and staff in its

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network. ACSO's members are comprised of professional, academic, youth, and community-based orchestras, choruses, and festivals in California and the western region. ACSO's annual awards program recognizes remarkable individuals and organizations for their meaningful contributions to the orchestra field. To read about all our 2023 award winners, click [here](#). [www.acso.org](http://www.acso.org)