

November 14, 2025



Dear Friends of Santa Barbara Strings,

Artistic Director

Mary Beth Woodruff

Board of Directors

Christopher Elstner

Alita Rhodes

Sherylle Mills Englander

Rebecca Smylie

Amy Trujillo

Sellers Whitehead

Gamble Parks

Kyle Abello

Mary Beth Woodruff

Christopher Yick

Artistic Advisory Board

Julia Bushkova

Andres Cardenes

NancyBell Coe

John Harbison

Suzy Perelman

Andrew Smith

At Santa Barbara Strings, we remain deeply committed to providing the highest quality music education to young string players throughout Santa Barbara County and ***we are asking for your help to allow us to continue our commitment unabated.*** Thanks to the ongoing strength of our programs and the dedication of our community, we are thrilled to share that enrollment has been exceptionally strong, and the level of playing among our students continues to soar. Our weekly Sunday rehearsals at El Montecito Presbyterian Church are filled with joy, inspiring music, and a true sense of community. In a few weeks, we are excited to bring our Vivace String Orchestra to the Valle Verde senior living community to perform for the residents.

Our three levels of string orchestras - Toccata, Sinfonietta and Vivace rehearse weekly as do our chamber ensembles. These groups are complemented by our Early Strings Training Program, now in its third year. ESTP is designed as a launchpad for families of beginners offering access to instruments, private lessons, and monthly group instruction. **We are proud that this program is inclusive of all families, regardless of economic background, and provides personalized, one-on-one lessons with our talented faculty.** Watching these young musicians graduate from ESTP and progress into our string orchestras has been a deeply rewarding experience.

Our impact is also expanding in the North County. We were recently honored to receive a renewal of a generous grant from the City of Buellton, which will allow us to offer a 16-week introductory strings course free of charge to youth ages 5 to 14. The program was incredibly impactful last spring and we are grateful for its continuance this coming year.

As we reflect on the year, we humbly invite you to consider making an end-of-year gift to help us further our impact in the community. We are deeply grateful for the generosity of supporters like you, whose contributions allow us to continue offering life changing opportunities to young people. With tuition covering only 30-40% of our operating budget, we rely on the support of our donors to sustain and expand our programs. We believe in the transformative power of music to teach empathy, teamwork, resilience, and intellectual curiosity—and to touch the human heart in ways that last a lifetime. Your gift today will help us continue to enrich the lives of young people and provide them with the tools they need to succeed, both in music and in life. We would be honored to have you join us for our Winter Concert on December 13th at the Music Academy of the West at 4:00 PM, where you can see firsthand the incredible progress of our students. **Should you be in a position to help support our work, you can donate here: santabarbarastrings.org/donate.**

Sincerely,

The Santa Barbara Strings Board of Directors

