



November 15, 2021

Dear Friends of Santa Barbara Strings,

As President of the Board of Directors, I would like to take this moment before the holiday season to thank you as a valued supporter of Santa Barbara Strings. We find this a time for gratitude, especially as we reflect on the past year. Amidst a global pandemic, we were humbled by the resilience, flexibility, and cooperative spirit found in every student, teacher and volunteer involved in our orchestras.

Your generosity over the last year enabled us to provide an opportunity for students to continue playing when many activities were suspended. Our orchestras rehearsed outdoors for most of the year and we additionally provided a robust weekly online program. We filmed and recorded our December concert and made it available online. With an easing of restrictions, our spring concert in May was joyful for students and families, allowing parents and close family to experience Santa Barbara Strings performing for a live audience once more. Despite the many challenges over the past year, our ongoing commitment to providing the highest quality music education to young string players was unwavering.

Our current season is well underway as we continue to adapt our program to current health restrictions. In this regard, El Montecito Presbyterian Church has been a gracious host, providing an enchanting outdoor courtyard for our orchestra rehearsals. However, during these trying times, Santa Barbara Strings is not just surviving, but thriving. This season is one of growth for both our students and our program. Toccata, our beginner orchestra, has over a dozen members and is the largest it has ever been. We have also launched the trial of a new mentorship program for those just beginning to learn a stringed instrument. Additionally, our chamber ensemble program has restarted. Chamber students will participate in a master class this holiday season and perform a concert in the spring.

We are excited to present our three orchestras in the holiday concert at the Music Academy of the West, at 6pm on December 11, 2021, for the first time in two years! In addition, our annual fundraiser, *The Artistry of Strings*, featuring Artistic Director Mary Beth Woodruff, will take place on March 19, 2022, at the Music Academy. We look forward to seeing you there in the new year.

Every year, we are impressed and grateful for the commitment of people like you, who support our mission. Our tuition fees only cover approximately 30-40% of our operating budget in any given year. As with many non-profit youth organizations, we keep tuition low so that our programs will be accessible to as many families as possible, and we provide financial assistance where needed. **Therefore, we need your help to keep our program going!** Please make a tax-deductible donation to Santa Barbara Strings. Your gift today allows us to continue enriching the lives of young people in our community. Thank you for your support!

Very Truly Yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Rebecca G. Ball'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name 'Rebecca' and last name 'Ball' clearly legible.

Rebecca G. Ball
President, Board of Directors