



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Charleston Symphony Launches Inclusion Fellowship Program

November 2, 2021 (Charleston, South Carolina) – The Charleston Symphony announces the launch of a new program, the Charleston Symphony Inclusion Fellowship (CSIF). As a follow up to its public pledge for an action-driven approach to advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion in the arts at its recent Juneteenth “Call and Response: A Concert for Equality,” the Charleston Symphony designed this program to offer immersive personal and professional development for future nonprofit arts leaders from backgrounds traditionally underrepresented in the field of classical music.

The Charleston Symphony welcomed two fellows to its inaugural cohort through a competitive application process this fall. Charleston Symphony Associate Conductor and CSIF program curator, Kellen Gray said, “Ultimately our goal is to change the legacy of classical music, both on and beyond the stage.” Michael Smith, Executive Director of the CSO commented, “We are proud to launch the fellowship program as one of several steps we intend to take to honor our commitment to this goal.”

The year-long fellowship offers salaried compensation for two Executive Fellows: The Internal Relations Fellow, who receives mentorship from and collaborates directly with the Symphony’s Executive Director to ensure the Symphony delivers its mission, and the External Relations Fellow, who receives mentorship from the Symphony’s Director of Development and Marketing, and provides support in communications, marketing, and patron engagement. Fellows will also be able to renew their position for a second year with the CSO.

The fellowship was developed in partnership with the College of Charleston's (CofC) School of the Arts in alignment with its own diversity, equity, inclusion initiatives, and with support from key field experts Dr. Karen Chandler (Associate Professor, Arts Management) and Dr. Renard Harris (Chief Diversity Officer). Fellowship candidates are selected exclusively from the College of Charleston’s Arts and Cultural Management program. Kate Keeney, CofC Assistant Professor and Program Director of Arts Management noted, “We are grateful to the CSO for making such a significant investment in emerging arts managers who together will advance diversity and inclusion in the field.” Keeney continued, “Subsequently, it will be organizations like the CSO that will be successful in attracting these bright leaders in the future. The CSO Fellowship prioritizes mentorship, provides funding, and offers exceptional learning opportunities for our students—ingredients that will result in meaningful exchange and most importantly change in the arts management field.”

The CSIF will provide the fellows hands-on workplace experience and an opportunity to help guide and support the CSO in furthering its mission. In addition to daily operations and engagement, program fellows participate in professional development workshops with guest clinicians in areas such as: Leadership, developing a Personal Narrative, Molding a Compelling Vision, Advocacy, Interview and Job Search Preparation, Meaningful Engagement, and Issues and Strategies of Diversity Equity and Inclusion.

“The CSIF is a carefully curated creative placemaking opportunity for the CSO to establish a legacy of inclusivity and equity throughout the community and I feel so grateful to be a part of it” said Internal Relations Fellow, Camryn Snell. “I hope to be able to set the stage for other young Black artists or arts administrators to feel not only welcome at the Charleston Symphony but like they belong there.”

In response to being named the CSO’s first External Relations Fellow, Jailan Williams said, “The Charleston Symphony Orchestra Inclusion Fellowship Program is a program I am honored to be a part of. It is imperative we as advocates, fans, and performers of classical music address and break down the racial barriers that have been a detriment to the recognition and advancement of classical music.”

2021 CSIF Profiles



Camryn Snell: Internal Relations Fellow

Camryn Snell is immensely proud to originate the role of Internal Inclusion Fellow at the CSO. Born in Columbia, South Carolina, Camryn was introduced to the arts at the age of 2 through ballet. Quickly, she became enamored of various arts forms, and they have played a key role in developing who Camryn is today.

Advocacy, a core value of hers, also plays a key role in developing who she is today and has been the impetus of Camryn’s life and career thus far. Furthermore, it was the driving force behind

Camryn’s choice to join the Charleston Symphony’s team. Prior to joining the CSO, Camryn attended the College of Charleston in pursuit of a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science. There, she became impassioned by international relations, immigration studies, and public policy. Soon after graduation, Camryn re-joined the College of Charleston community by joining the Master of Public Administration program, pursuing a Master of Public Administration and a Graduate Certificate in Arts and Cultural Management. Camryn spent the last year in the Community Assistance Program under the tutelage of Marla Robertson where she engaged in projects aimed at advancing racial equity and increasing Black representation and visibility in Charleston.



Jailan Williams: External Relations Fellow

Jailan Williams is an artist, producer, multi-instrumentalist, and podcaster from Florence, South Carolina. He currently serves as the Charleston Symphony Orchestra’s new Inclusion Fellow working in External Relations. He says part of his mission with CSO is to “assist in creating a more inclusive/diverse environment in the world of classical music.” As an Inclusion Fellow, Jailan looks to gain the education, skills, experience, and professional development needed for him to succeed and further his career in music.

In May 2021, Jailan graduated from the College of Charleston, where he received his Bachelor of Arts Degree in Arts Management, with a concentration in the music industry and a Minor in Music. His future career plans include being a producer/musician full-time, he plays electric bass, trombone, and piano. Other plans include owning a recording studio and record label. Additionally, he is the co-founder and co-host of his podcast, JusMusic. Jailan has experience with music production as he co-produced his first single, “Losing Grip” available on all streaming platforms and has done production for several independent artists.

About the Charleston Symphony

The CSO is celebrating its 85th season of serving the community through engaging musical performances and enriching education initiatives. The Charleston Symphony is committed to advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion in the arts, and strives to provide culturally meaningful and relevant programming for audiences of all backgrounds. As the largest full-time performing arts organization in the state, the CSO serves close to 50,000 adults and children annually. The CSO now invests more than \$530,000 annually in its education initiatives to reach students throughout the tri-county region.

Employing 24 full-time “core” musicians and more than 100 guest musicians throughout the season, the organization has a \$3.5 million budget and relies on philanthropic support to cover 55% of annual operating expenses. Every year the orchestra hosts more than 150 concerts and activities throughout South Carolina, including education and family experiences, community engagement events, free performances, chamber music, main series concerts, and more. To continue learning about the CSO, visit charlestonsymphony.org.

About the College of Charleston

Located in the heart of historic Charleston, South Carolina, the College of Charleston is a nationally recognized, public liberal arts and sciences university. Founded in 1770, the College is among the nation’s top universities for quality education, student life and affordability.

The College’s five-course Graduate Certificate in Arts and Cultural Management prepares a global market of arts leaders in the creative economy through immersive experiences with diverse artists, arts and cultural institutions, and their communities. Based in the College’s School of the Arts, the Arts Management Program offers this one-year, 15-credit curriculum of

live and online classes, and includes coursework in: executive and fiscal leadership; data and cloud information systems; arts education and advocacy; social justice engagement in the arts; strategic planning and evaluation; and managing institutional resources. Students may also complete the certificate as degree-seeking students in the Master of Public Administration (MPA) and Master of Fine Arts in Creative Writing (MFA) programs. The College of Charleston is also home to an undergraduate degree in Arts Management—one of the largest programs at the College and one of the few undergraduate programs in the Southeast.

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MEDIA CONTACT

Alana Morrall

Director of Development & Marketing

Charleston Symphony

amorrall@charlestonsymphony.org | 202.246.3302