



For immediate release January 28, 2008
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Illinois Council of Orchestras to present awards Feb. 29

The Illinois Council of Orchestras is pleased to announce the 2008 recipients of its annual awards for excellence in the field of music performance and for support of musical organizations. An awards panel that included judges from the Illinois Council of Orchestras and from outside arts organizations reviewed nominations representing orchestras, youth orchestras, and chamber ensembles from across Illinois.

This year's awards:

Cultural Leadership Award	Bruce Polay (Galesburg) Music Director of the Knox Galesburg Symphony and Professor of Music at Knox College
Orchestra of the Year	Ars Viva (Skokie)
Community Orchestra of the Year	Knox-Galesburg Symphony (Galesburg)
Youth Orchestra of the Year	Schaumburg Youth Orchestra (Schaumburg) Honorable mention: Merit Symphony Orchestra (Chicago)
Conductor of the Year Small Orchestra	Randal Swiggum , Music Director of the Elgin Youth Symphony Orchestra (Elgin)
General Manager of the Year	Jane Polett , General Manager of the Quincy Symphony Orchestra (Quincy)
Volunteer of the Year	Walter Wolodkin , Northwest Symphony Orchestra (Des Plaines)
Programming of the Year	Rockford Symphony Orchestra (Rockford)
Guild of the Year	The Guild of the Champaign-Urbana Symphony (Urbana)

The Illinois Council of Orchestras was founded in 1974 with a mission

- * to encourage, promote and assist orchestras throughout the State of Illinois
- * to promote an exchange of information among members, including providing consultants and speakers
- * to hold educational conferences for member organizations, including musicians, staffs, boards, volunteers and audiences.

Presentation of the awards will take place on February 29, 2008, at 6:00 p.m. at a reception to be held at The Merit School of Music, Joy Faith Knapp Music Center, 38 South Peoria Street, Chicago, IL 60607. Additional presentations will also be made throughout the state this spring at concerts of the winning orchestras.

Information about the Illinois Council of Orchestras is available at www.ilcouncilorchestras.org