



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## **The YMCA of Greater St. Petersburg and The Florida Orchestra team up to provide free music and arts summer camp to underserved families**

ST. PETERSBURG, FL | 04/21/2021 – Two long-standing nonprofit organizations who serve the St. Petersburg community, the YMCA of Greater St. Petersburg and The Florida Orchestra, are teaming up to offer a new music and arts education camp to aspiring young musicians in South St. Petersburg, free of charge.

Offered at Childs Park YMCA, children ages 8 – 12 will have the opportunity to participate in the YMCA Summer Music and Arts Camp in partnership with The Florida Orchestra (TFO) from June 14 through July 9. Anchored by TFO Strings for Kids program, the camp will offer an in-depth, progressive experience in three art forms: violin, keyboard and visual arts. This unique curriculum of learning musical instruments and visual arts gives the students time to explore music deeply, helping them to develop focus, discover new passions and learn important life skills such as teamwork and dedication.

“Learning to play an instrument can change children’s lives,” said TFO President & CEO Mark Cantrell. “It sets them up for success by developing critical thinking, discipline and confidence. It gives them a way to safely express emotions and make sense of their world. Every child deserves that opportunity, no matter their background or circumstances. This partnership helps make that possible. By working together, we can provide music education at the highest levels to kids who might not have the opportunity any other way. That’s a huge win for our community.”

“I believe this partnership is a rare ‘Reese’s Peanut Butter Cup Moment’ in which two impactful, mission-driven organizations come together to create something extra special for the community we serve,” said David Jezek, President and CEO of the YMCA of Greater St. Petersburg. “We both bring to the table our unique expertise – the Y’s experience in youth development and The Florida Orchestra’s musical talent – but together we can deliver unique programming with greater reach. I’m excited about this partnership and grateful for the generosity of both organizations’ donors for making this possible.”

The YMCA Summer Music and Arts Camp in partnership with The Florida Orchestra is available to our community for free thanks to philanthropic support. All supplies are provided at no cost to participants, including instruments for the duration of the camp.

Interested families can learn more about the camp during one of three open house events at Childs Park YMCA on April 24, May 8 and May 15, where YMCA staff and The Florida Orchestra instructors will share what to expect during camp. Visit [stpeteymca.org/music-camp](http://stpeteymca.org/music-camp) to make an open house appointment or learn more.

***About the YMCA of Greater St. Petersburg***

For the past 100 years, the YMCA of Greater St. Petersburg has been strengthening the foundation of our community across southern Pinellas County through youth development, healthy living and social responsibility. By nurturing the potential of children and teens, improving the community's health and well-being and providing opportunities to give back and support neighbors – the Y has the long-standing relationships and physical presence not just to promise, but to deliver, lasting personal and social change. [stpeteymca.org](http://stpeteymca.org)

***About The Florida Orchestra***

The Florida Orchestra (TFO) is recognized as Tampa Bay's leading performing arts institution, the largest professional orchestra in Florida, and one of the most vibrant and innovative orchestras in America. For its 53<sup>rd</sup> season, the orchestra is proud to introduce free live-streaming video of select concerts so everyone has access to the music. Under the leadership of Music Director Michael Francis, TFO performs series of classical, popular, and morning coffee concerts in Tampa, St. Petersburg and Clearwater, as well as free Pops in the Park concerts. The orchestra is dedicated to connecting to the community both in-person and virtually, with TFO at Home, family and youth concerts and other educational programs. For tickets and information: [FloridaOrchestra.org](http://FloridaOrchestra.org). To support the power of live music: [FloridaOrchestra.org/donate](http://FloridaOrchestra.org/donate)