

We Envision a Hawaii Where Music Is A Right



# About Hawaii Youth Symphony

Hawaii Youth Symphony (HYS), founded in 1964, is among the largest youth symphony programs in the country. HYS's mission is to foster fun and creative experiences for youth that inspire a deep appreciation for music and lifelong relationships within the unique culture of Hawaii. As the only statewide instrumental music education program for students ages 7-18, HYS envisions a Hawaii where Music Is A Right, not a privilege.

Serving over 750 students each year from more than 100 schools statewide, HYS produces and presents more than 40 orchestra, jazz, and ensemble concerts per season with an annual budget of \$1.7M and 20 employees. HYS has nearly 5,000 alumni and has introduced over 100,000 young people to the joys of orchestral music to date. To ensure that no interested child is turned away from a quality music education because of financial need, HYS provides more than \$50,000 a year through its financial aid program which offers assistance for tuition and registration fees, instrument repairs, private lessons, and air and surface travel for neighbor island students. HYS maintains an instrument lending library from which students may borrow for extended periods.

A complete spectrum of out-of-school music programs are offered for beginning students to the most advanced conservatory-track students. In addition to the traditional symphony orchestra training, HYS offers jazz ensembles, bucket drumming, ukulele workshops, as well as general music classes.

- **Symphony Program** consists of three orchestras, and students go through a competitive audition process to be a member of these ensembles. About 300 advanced middle and high school students participate in symphony orchestras.
- **Academy String Program** engages approximately 200 students from more than 70 schools to learn orchestral string instruments. The Academy has partnered with the Boys & Girls Club of Hawaii since 2010.
- **HYS Jazz** offers training in a variety of popular, commercial, and jazz styles through three ensembles ranging from beginning to advanced.
- **Music in the Clubhouse (MITCH)** are low-cost, entry-level music classes provided for a nominal fee through private foundations and public support in partnership with the Boys & Girls Club of Hawaii and other organizations.

- **Pacific Music Institute (PMI)** provides summer intensives for students of all levels through a comprehensive music curriculum that includes ensemble rehearsals, workshops, and performances.

Through its 13 different programs, HYS helps youth build courage, leadership skills, friendships, and passion that they will carry throughout their lives. To develop young people to their fullest potential, HYS creates a pathway of continuous improvement encouraging students to gain skills and confidence as they move up to more advanced ensembles. Students are also provided unique opportunities for community performances, such as Side-by-Sides with the Hawaii Symphony Orchestra and their Nā Hōkū 'Ōpio Young Stars Talent Competition.

HYS has received numerous awards for its organizational excellence and community impact. Most recently HYS was named No. 1 in the Social Good category for the Best Workplaces for Innovators list by *Fast Company* for its efforts to broaden access to music education for all youth and expanding outreach to Hawaii's underserved communities and more. Free concerts for school children across the state are provided through the Department of Education-endorsed Listen & Learn Community Concert Series and at community centers. The joy of music is also spread through locally televised concerts and radio broadcasts.



## HYS Core Values:

- **Inspire.** We connect and uplift our communities through music.
- **Have Fun.** We celebrate creativity, curiosity, and the joy that comes with making music.
- **Dream Courageously.** We dream and act with authenticity. Be bold!
- **Grow Together.** We play, listen, and learn with kindness and respect.



# The Opportunity: Chief Operating Officer

Approaching its 60th year, Hawaii Youth Symphony's leadership and Board of Directors developed a forward-looking strategic plan that will recommit HYS to its vision and guide the organization's work from 2023-2028. More than 60 stakeholders from across the organization participated in the process and helped define six key areas that will define HYS's future:



Out of this work came a realization and commitment that HYS must strengthen its core infrastructure to fully achieve its mission. HYS is launching the Chief Operating Officer role as part of intentional efforts to strengthen the organization's operations while the President and CEO [Randy Wong](#) and the Board of Directors fortify external relationships with partners, donors, and the community at large. The Board, as a full partner in this investment, understands that the expanded leadership will amplify HYS's impact and better support Hawaii's youth toward creating their lifelong relationship with music.

Hawaii Youth Symphony seeks its first Chief Operating Officer who will play a key role in realizing the organization's strategic growth in the years ahead. As a newly created role to bolster HYS's strategic plan, the Chief Operating Officer will serve as a thought partner and deputy to the President and CEO and will be directly responsible for the daily leadership of the organization's personnel, financial management, and administrative operations. Reporting to the President and CEO, the Chief Operating Officer will manage 4 direct reports and a total team of 16, as well as managing HYS's work with external business partners (Accounting, Human Resources, etc.).

The ideal candidate brings experience in leading and managing teams, skills in financial management and accounting, and demonstrated abilities to implement and drive effective operating practices to achieve organizational objectives. Alongside a visionary President and CEO, mission-driven staff team, and highly dedicated Board of Directors, the Chief Operating Officer will play a critical strategic leadership role in realizing HYS's vision to make music a right for all young people in Hawaii.



# Performance Objectives

## Operational Leadership and Administration

- Provide hands-on direction to all day-to-day operational areas of the organization, including business administration, financial management, human resources and payroll, and the logistics of programmatic activities.
- Collaborate with the President and CEO and Board of Directors to develop and execute strategies that drive organizational growth and sustainability.
- Acting as the chief deputy to the President and CEO, represent HYS internally and externally, building and maintaining strong relationships with HYS families, faculty and staff, Board of Directors, community partners, funders, and other stakeholders to advance HYS's vision and objectives.
- Implement collaborative operating structures, systems, and processes to ensure HYS's financial and human resources are utilized to their fullest potential.
- Collaborate with the artistic and program staff teams to support the planning and execution of HYS activities and concert performances.
- Lead and support the logistics of HYS rehearsals, concerts, fundraising events, and other activities, ensuring a seamless and positive experience for students, staff, and audiences.
- Work with the President and CEO to monitor HYS program outcomes and impact, regularly assess and evaluate program effectiveness and make recommendations for improvement aligned with HYS's strategic plan.

## Financial Management

- Manage all aspects of budgeting, financial planning, reporting, cash flow management, A/P, A/R, and financial aid/scholarship program to ensure fiscal responsibility and sustainability.
- Develop and implement financial practices and policies that support HYS's strategic plan objectives.
- Serve as liaison to the Finance Committee; provide financial analysis and insights to inform decision-making by the President and CEO and Board of Directors.
- Produce accurate and timely financial statements and reports, cash flow projections, and model financial scenarios as needed.
- Direct monthly financial processes including journal entries, payroll, accounts, bank reconciliation, and overhead allocations to ensure accuracy and compliance.
- Maintain consistent reporting on the organization's financial position and outlook and ensure fiscal responsibility and integrity in all work with the proven ability to meet funder guidelines.
- Maintain productive working relationships with external accountants, auditors, bankers, and other financial stakeholders.
- Ensure adherence to all legal and regulatory financial requirements, including tax filings, grant reporting, and financial audits, to maintain the HYS's compliance and integrity.





# Performance Objectives

## Human Resources and Staff Management

- Provide supportive leadership and guidance to HYS staff, fostering a culture of collaboration, innovation, and excellence, facilitating positive working relationships with and among team members.
- Mentor and develop team members, supporting their personal and professional growth.
- Build strong relationships with all HYS staff, faculty, students and their families, and other stakeholders to promote a culture of humility, transparency, and trust.
- Serve as the primary contact for HYS's professional employer organization (PEO; Altres); Manage annual benefits enrollment process and distribute salary and benefits information to all staff members.
- Advise the President and CEO on workforce planning and oversee staff hiring, onboarding, training, and retention.
- In collaboration with the President and CEO, develop, recommend, and implement HR policies to create equitable organizational practices and inclusive culture aligned with HYS's vision and strategic plan.





# The Qualified Candidate

Hawaii Youth Symphony seeks an experienced Chief Operating Officer with a track record of organizational development, financial management, and operational savvy within the nonprofit sector, preferably in youth development and/or arts education. With a passion for empowering young people through music, the ideal candidate brings excellent interpersonal skills and the ability to foster collaboration, open communication, and operational efficiency across diverse stakeholders. As a credible manager, the successful Chief Operating Officer is highly organized, enjoys creating systems and processes, and embodies the operational backbone of HYS. As a second-in-command and key partner to the President and CEO, the Chief Operating Officer will focus on driving HYS's financial stability and executing organizational objectives toward its vision to Make Music a Right.



## Specific Requirements Include:

- Minimum 7 years of professional experience, with demonstrated ability to lead staff of full-time and part-time team members. Experience in non-profit youth development and/or arts education preferred.
- Analytic and strategic thinking skills to translate the organization's vision and goals into actionable plans and initiatives.
- Results-oriented mindset and excellent organizational skills to execute on complex projects.
- Financial acumen and experience in budgeting, forecasting, and fiscal management.
- Proven success in building collaborative and productive teams with a focus on mentoring and supporting staff development.
- Clear communication and interpersonal skills to build trust with diverse stakeholders ranging from HYS students and families, staff and artistic faculty, and community partners to the Board of Directors, significant donors/investors, and the general public.
- Career track record that shows stability with an organization and capacity to develop relationships culminating in overall success.
- Understanding of youth development, arts education, and/or community programming with a specific passion for Hawaii Youth Symphony's mission.

Don't check off every box in the requirements listed above? Please consider applying anyway! Studies have shown that underrepresented communities - such as women, people of color, LGBTQ, people with disabilities, and immigrants - are less likely to apply for jobs unless they meet every single qualification. Hawaii Youth Symphony is dedicated to building an inclusive, diverse, equitable, and accessible workplace that fosters a sense of belonging - so if you are excited about this role but your experience doesn't align perfectly with every qualification in the job description, we encourage you to consider still applying.

# How To Apply

Compensation for this position has recently been benchmarked by HYS and KEES. This position offers a competitive salary range of \$105,000-115,000 commensurate with experience, along with strong benefits including medical, dental, vision, and life insurance; pet insurance; 401K with 5% employer match; paid maternity leave; vacation and sick time; and 18 paid holidays.

This role requires in-person, in-office work. Many HYS events occur on nights and weekends, and the person in this position must be able to work accordingly. Some HYS events take place off-island and require travel. All employees must comply with HYS policies and procedures for safe work environment. A valid driver's license, personal vehicle, and clean driving record are required for this position.

Hawaii Youth Symphony is an equal opportunity employer and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, gender, religion, age, sexual orientation, national or ethnic origin, disability, marital status, veteran status, or any other occupationally irrelevant criteria.

**APPLY HERE**

Applications with specific Cover Letters will be given priority consideration. To assure confidential tracking of all applicants, no applications will be accepted via email. ALL INQUIRIES WILL BE HELD IN STRICT CONFIDENCE. All candidate submitted materials and credentials will be reviewed for consistency and accuracy. Candidates can expect that KEES will verify employment/academic/background information both in the screening process and for the finalist(s) in a formal background check.

This search is being managed by Heather Eddy, President & CEO, and Megan Taylor, Project Manager, of KEES. Questions may be addressed to [mtaylor@kees2success.com](mailto:mtaylor@kees2success.com).



## About KEES

KEES (formerly Alford Executive Search) is a nonprofit executive search firm that builds diverse teams with dynamic leaders in the nonprofit and public sectors. A woman owned and operated firm, KEES offers a full array of nonprofit consulting services including executive search, leadership development, interim staffing, and HR support. For more information, please visit [KEES](https://www.kees2success.com).