



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**The Charles County Youth Orchestra**

**announces**

**Two CCYO Quartets advance to finals of Misbin Chamber Music Competition**

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Two string quartets of students from the Charles County Youth Orchestra have advanced to the finals of the Misbin Chamber Music Competition in Washington D.C. presented in conjunction with the Washington Performing Arts Society. All the students have participated in CCYO's summer chamber music festivals and have continued rehearsing through the winter. Members of the quartets are Blythe McCammon, Kelsey Njembu, Esther Bonney, Joseph Bonney, Eileen Browning, and Candace Jackson. The quartets will be performing works by William Grant Still and Franz Joseph Haydn at the finals on April 24 at the Levine School of Music in Washington DC.

Designed to support the development of young artists and celebrate the lifelong creativity of D.C. area performers, the Misbin Family Memorial Chamber Music Competition is open to instrumental chamber music students and professional musicians in DC, Virginia and Maryland. The competition is presented by the Washington Performing Arts Society, one of the most established and honored performing arts institutions in America with more than a half-century history of engaging with artists, audiences, students, and civic life.

According to CCYO director, Dr. Osman Kivrak, "I am so very proud of these students! Participating in CCYO and chamber music helps students develop good working habits: teamwork, social skills, discipline and perseverance while having fun performing great works of composers from all around the world."

Upcoming CCYO events include the Spring Concert, May 15, at Thomas Stone High School, performances at Nature Fest on April 30 and Arts Fest on June 11 and three "Secret Garden Concerts" at Christ Church, La Plata, on the first three Saturdays in May. In addition, the third annual Concerto Competition Concert will be held on June 4 at Christ Church.

CCYO is one of the largest youth organizations in Southern Maryland, providing music education and performance opportunities for talented young musicians ages 8 to 18 in Charles, Prince George's, St. Mary's, and Calvert counties.

Live performances in 2021 by CCYO have included an outdoor orchestra concert, a Concerto Competition concert and six chamber music concerts at the Alice Ferguson Foundation in Accokeek, MD and Christ Church, La Plata.

In 2020, during the pandemic, CCYO and its ensembles were very busy: they completed eight online orchestra concerts, performance labs once per month, and five master classes with world class artists from the Pittsburgh Symphony, Colorado Symphony, United States Marine Band, and the National Symphony Orchestra.

The Charles County Youth Orchestra is sponsored in part by grants from the Charles County Arts Alliance, the Maryland State Arts Council, the Rotary Club of Charles County, MD, the Charles County Charitable Trust and the Knights of Columbus of Accokeek, MD. Other major contributors include Potters Violins, Gailes Violin Shop, and the Neighborhood Creative Arts Center of La Plata as well as generous donations from individuals.

