



Across the Stars and Stripes

The 2026 Town of Hamden Independence Day Fireworks Concert



Friday, June 26th 2026

7:30 PM

Hamden Town Center Park at Meadowbrook



www.hamdensymphony.org

About HSO

This Spring marked the conclusion of Hamden Symphony Orchestra's 64th season! An all-volunteer orchestra of more than 75 musicians from the Greater New Haven area and beyond, Hamden Symphony members share a passion for rehearsing and performing great music together.

Founded in 1962 by Ruth T. Brooks, the Orchestra provides cultural enrichment to the community of Hamden, Connecticut, through its series of concerts, its annual Young Musicians Concerto Competition (YMCC), the Ruth T. Brooks Scholarship Award, and the rewarding experience offered to its members and guest artists.

The Orchestra's commitment to the musical development of local students is a source of great pride. For the last 56 years the Hamden Symphony Orchestra's YMCC has provided an invaluable educational experience to gifted high school musicians in the area: the chance to perform as a soloist with a full symphony orchestra. The competition is held annually each winter, and the winners are featured at the Orchestra's spring concert. In addition, for over 40 years the Orchestra has honored a graduating Hamden High School senior who has demonstrated excellence in their musical studies with the Ruth T. Brooks Award for Excellence in Instrumental Music. The 2026 winner of this award was violinist Zhihan Liu.

From 1969-2007, Hamden Symphony Orchestra was under the baton of Maestro Paul Gacek (1945-2021). To honor his distinguished leadership, continuing support and several return appearances to the podium Maestro Gacek was officially designated Hamden Symphony Orchestra's "Conductor Laureate" in 2017.

In 2008, Vesna Mehinovic became the Music Director of Hamden Symphony Orchestra. Under Vesna's baton, the Orchestra has continued to expand, and has presented compelling and innovative concert-programs that have featured new compositions, talented instrumental and vocal soloists, and even dance and multimedia components. Hamden Symphony Orchestra has been honored to be invited by the Town of Hamden to perform at its Independence Day Fireworks Celebration for a vast audience several times in recent years.

Hamden Symphony Orchestra
Vesna Mehinovic, Music Director

Opening Festivities

Lift Every Voice and Sing

J. Rosamand Johnson &
James Weldon Johnson

Andrea Barley, Vocalist

The Star Spangled Banner

John Stafford Smith &
Francis Scott Key

Lindsay Crum, Vocalist

Concert Program

Featured Vocalists

Andrea Barley

Lindsay Crum

Derrick Roland Harmon

Karen Kriner-Souris

Carol Palumbo & Charlie Shafer, Announcers

Semper Fidelis

John Philip Sousa

God Bless America

Irving Berlin
arr. Keith Christopher

Journey's Greatest Hits

Jonathan Cain, Steve Perry & Neal Schon
arr. Victor Lopez

The Thunderer

John Philip Sousa

American Pie

Don McClean
arr. Patrick Sheehan

The Star Wars Epic - Part I

John Williams
arr. Robert W. Smith

1. DUEL OF THE FATES *from Episode I. The Phantom Menace*

2. ACROSS THE STARS *from Episode II. Attack of the Clones*

3. REVENGE OF THE SITH *from Episode III. Revenge of the Sith*

Holding Out for a Hero

Dean Pitchford & Jim Steinman
arr. Jennifer Lindberg

Intermission

Battle Hymn of the Republic

William Steffe & Julia Ward Howe
arr. Peter Wilhousky

Sweet Caroline

Neil Diamond
arr. Daryl McKenzie

Armed Forces Salute

Various Artists
arr. Bob Lowden

Guest Announcer: Connor Valentine, United States Navy

We Are Family

Nile Rodgers & Bernard Edwards
arr. Daryl McKenzie

A Sky Full of Stars

Jon Buckland, Will Champion,
Chris Martin & Guy Berryman
arr. Daryl McKenzie

The Stars & Stripes Forever

John Phillip Sousa

America The Beautiful

Samuel A. Ward & Katharine L. Bates
arr. Carmen Dragon

Musicians of the Orchestra

Violin I

Stacy Shafer '09
Concertmaster
The Ruth T. Brooks Chair

Kimberlee Arnett '23
Ann Clemmons '10
Fred Leng '12
Tim Shizume '23
Amanda Zubek '22

Violin II

Oscar Lin '24
Joeanna Novak '20
Chloe Oraa '26
Avinash Veeraghav '23
Sophia Yu '25

Viola

Ariane Bolt '26
Anand Veeraghav '23

Cello

Elizabeth Baldwin '17
Walden Bass '26
Noah Benjamin '25
Pri Chavez Lara '26
Liam Oraa '25
Manuel Sanchez '26
Abigail Tubis '26
Marney Walker '19

Bass

Evan Betancourt '25
Raymond Quigley '24

Flute

Gianna Gassira '21
Tessa Godu '26
Pam Allen Hunter '24
Mamie Wang '22
Elyssa Wrubel '24

Piccolo

Judith Kramer Koret '08
Mamie Wang '22

Oboe

Terri Bennett '16
Clara Wang '22

English Horn

Terri Bennett '16

Clarinet

Kathryn Anderson '25
Kathy Muench '15
Gabrielle Molina '26

Bass Clarinet

Harper Liles '25

Bassoon

Sue Lonergan '24
Brenda Tousignant '24

Alto Saxophone

Courtney Carrignan '25
Evann D'Adamo '18
Jonathan Zhang '25

Tenor Saxophone

Brendan Cassidy '23
Nick Gardinier '24

French Horn

Michael Braverman '25
Michelle Scalzo '19
William Shea '26
Jean Webb '19

Trumpet

Olivia Enny '22
Kei Kohmoto '23
Dylan Ludoviconi '26
Steve Moskowicz '23
Christian Venturella '22

Trombone

Jon Craig '24
Bill Gambardella '92
Gabriella Testani '26
Tylarr Throm '24
Cody Uman '26
Alan Weide '22

Tuba

Ryan Nemeti '25

Electric Guitar

Victor Ramirez '25

Electric Bass

Maddie Chasse '25

Piano

James Morcaldi '15

Drums & Percussion

Matthew Ennis '26
David Liskov '10
John Martin '25
John Tedeschi '26
Adam Weber '21
Jonathan Zhang '25

Hamden Symphony Orchestra

Save the Date

Fall Concert

Friday, November 20th - 7:30 PM

Hamden Memorial Town Hall

2372 Whitney Avenue

Hamden, CT 06518

More Details to follow...

Have a wonderful summer!

Special thanks go to the following for their help in making tonight's concert possible:

- ♪ Mayor Adam Sendroff.
- ♪ Karen Bivens, Director of Cultural Affairs & Human Services.
- ♪ Rose Lion, Legislative Council Administrator.
- ♪ Tom Brown, Parks Superintendent.
- ♪ Town of Hamden facilities services staff.
- ♪ Student musicians from Central Connecticut State University, Frost School of Music at University of Miami, Hartt School of Music at University of Hartford, Ithaca College, Notre Dame High School, Southern Connecticut State University, University of Massachusetts Amherst, Worcester Polytechnic Institute & Yale University.
- ♪ Carpool drivers: Olivia Enny, James Morcaldi & Clara Wang.
- ♪ Jon Bean & Christopher Bradley, Notre Dame High School (bar chimes usage).
- ♪ David Liskov & Cody Uman (bar chimes transport).
- ♪ Our generous financial supporters throughout the year!

About the Performers

Andrea Barley is delighted to be celebrating here with the Hamden Symphony Orchestra. A resident of Cheshire, her lifelong love of music began with the violin - in a house full of musical instruments. (She still loves collecting interesting musical instruments). She's always loved to sing and has performed in a few choruses as an alto and second soprano. Andrea is currently a Soprano 2 Section Leader with Another Octave Connecticut Women's Chorus.

She's also been known to rock a karaoke microphone every now and then. When she's not making a joyful noise, she works for a technology retailer, which still allows her to get creative.

Lindsay Crum is thrilled to be performing with the Hamden Symphony Orchestra as part of this year's fireworks celebration. Born and raised in Hamden, she has loved singing for as long as she can remember and is especially grateful for the opportunity to share music with her hometown community. Lindsay currently sings second soprano with Another Octave: Connecticut Women's Chorus. In her professional life, she works in sustainability in higher education, helping to advance environmental initiatives through collaboration and data-driven strategy. Lindsay enjoys spending time with her fabulous husband and son, family, and friends; baking; and staying active through fitness.

Derrick Roland Harmon is an active singer and member of the New Haven Heritage Chorale and the Yale Camerata. He has a deep appreciation for sacred choral music and believes it has the unique ability to inspire hope, strengthen faith, and bring people together across communities and generations. His love for sacred music was nurtured through years of singing in the choirs of Bethel AME Church in Bridgeport, Connecticut. He studied music at Florida A & M University and performed with the University's Symphonic Band and University Choir.

Professionally, Roland serves as Co-President & Chief Program & Administrative Officer of The Governor's Prevention Partnership, Connecticut's statewide nonprofit dedicated to youth mentoring, substance misuse prevention, and public-private partnerships. A nationally recognized

nonprofit executive, he has more than 30 years of leadership experience advancing organizational strategy, systems change, and cross-sector partnerships.

Roland is the proud father of two adult children and grandfather to an eight year-old granddaughter. A resident of Hamden, Connecticut, he remains committed to serving others through leadership, mentorship, and music.

Karen Kriner-Souris, originally from Norfolk, Virginia, moved to Connecticut in June 2013 and has been a Hamden resident ever since. Her lifelong passion has always been music. Raised in a family of musicians, she graduated high school, lettering in Orchestra. Then she spent time in college at VCU Richmond, VA with focus on voice and classical viola performance. After college, she began singing with top-40 cover bands, touring the south-eastern states. Currently, she is a violist and board vice president with the Hamden Symphony Orchestra. She is also a second soprano and publicity coordinator with Another Octave: Connecticut Women's Chorus.

She currently works remotely for a Physical Therapy company based in Texas as a patient account representative. Her professional background is in healthcare insurance billing. She is an advocate for chiropractic and natural healthcare. She is also a DoTERRA essential oil consultant and loves to share her knowledge and experiences with chiropractic and the benefits of using essential oils in her daily life.

Fun fact...she LOVES purple and vibrant hair color experimentation. :)

Vesna Mehinovic has been the Music Director and Conductor of Hamden Symphony Orchestra since 2008. She began her formal education in music by receiving a diploma in Music Theory and Piano Teaching and Performing from the High School for Music in Sarajevo. She continued her Bachelor of Arts degree in Conducting and Music Theory at the Sarajevo Music Academy, and a Master of Arts in Conducting and Music Theory at Wesleyan University in Middletown.

Vesna has been the recipient of many honors in her native country, and is the first professional woman to conduct an orchestra in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

She specialized in Conducting at the Academy for Music and Stage Arts in Graz, Austria in the class of Milan Horvat. Ms. Mehinovic has also served as guest conductor for orchestras in Austria, Serbia, and Croatia.

While in the United States, she has worked with several church and non-religious choirs both in Connecticut and Arizona. As a music teacher Vesna has taught in many elementary, middle, and high schools, as well as having worked with college students at Yale and Wesleyan Universities. Currently, she teaches music and directs the Orchestra and Choirs at Sacred Heart Academy in Hamden. She is also the Conductor of the Quinnipiac University Orchestra, and Organist & Choir Master at St. Michael's Church in Naugatuck.



Hamden Symphony Orchestra: April 25, 2026

Becky Lipnick, Photo

Hamden Symphony Orchestra

Board of Directors (2026-2027)

David Liskov, President

Karen Kriner-Souris, Vice President

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Andrea Osburne, Elective Director

Charlie Shafer, Elective Director

Stacy Shafer, Elective Director

Nic Kriner-Souris, Elective Director

Anand Veeraraghav, Elective Director

Avinash Veeraraghav, Elective Director

Amanda Zubek, Elective Director

Additional Support

Bill Gambardella, Legal Counsel

Judith Kramer Koret, YMCC Chairperson

Tracy Turner, Logo Design

Play An Instrument?

Hamden Symphony Orchestra seeks musicians interested in joining the group for its 2026-2027 concert-season!

Rehearsals are anticipated to begin Thursday evenings in early September. For more information, and for the most up-to-date list of openings, visit:

www.hamdensymphony.org/join