

Yo-Yo Ma Helps Midwest Young Artists Raise Over \$100,000 at Crescendo Gala in Chicago

(Highwood, Illinois) Two-hundred seventy arts supporters gathered on the beautiful 30th floor of the Blue Cross Blue Shield Building in Chicago for the Crescendo Gala last month to honor Yo-Yo Ma and support the mission of Midwest Young Artists (MYA). In doing so, they raised over \$100,000 for the Highwood-based non-profit music education center. MYA selected the world famous cellist and Chicago Symphony Orchestra Judson and Joyce Creative Consultant as the recipient of its annual Golden Baton Award, which recognizes those who have made significant contributions to music education.

The evening featured performances by several MYA ensembles in chamber music, choral, and jazz, giving guests the opportunity to see how their support directly impacts students by nurturing talent and building confidence, work ethic, and leadership skills. The 2014 Fischhoff Chamber Competition Gold Medal winning Quartet Fuoco of MYA was also on hand to give an energetic performance on the main stage. In addition, guests enjoyed a gourmet meal and special dessert while participating in a wine pull, live auction, and paddle raise.

However, for many guests, it was an entrancing private performance by Mr. Ma of the first three movements of Johann Sebastian Bach's Suite No. 6 for Solo Cello that was the highlight of the fundraiser, which was followed by an inspiring speech stressing the importance of chasing even the craziest of dreams. This, and his refreshing sense of humor and willingness to pose for photos with star-struck young musicians and guests, created many priceless memories for MYA supporters.

The mission of Midwest Young Artists is "to build a home with the power of music to enrich the lives of our students and community", which is accomplished through musical training, concert performances, community outreach initiatives, competitions, and scholarship awards based on both merit and financial need. Graduates of the MYA program who chased and achieved their crazy dreams now have prominent positions in major US orchestras, including the New York Philharmonic, Los Angeles Philharmonic, Pittsburgh Symphony, and of course, the Chicago Symphony Orchestra.

Midwest Young Artists would like to thank its Season Partners and Crescendo Gala Sponsors, including; Barnes and Thornburg, Baxter, Deloitte, Franczek Radelet, Hollister, and Walgreens.

About MYA: Midwest Young Artists is the premier youth music education and ensemble organization in the Midwest and represents some of the best young musicians in the country. The program offers exceptional training in jazz, choral, chamber and orchestral instruction. Midwest Young Artists was founded in 1993 with just one orchestra. The organization currently reaches more than 1,000 students over 75 communities in the metropolitan Chicago area, with students ranging in age from 6 months through 12th grade. MYA has eight youth orchestras, more than 65 chamber music ensembles, four choral groups, an all-inclusive jazz program, classes in music theory and composition and an early childhood education program. Students have the opportunity to travel abroad and to perform in major venues

throughout Chicago and around the world. Leading the nation in chamber music instruction, MYA graduates are accepted at the most selective conservatories, universities and colleges in the country.

MYA Website: www.mya.org **Podcast:** wmya.fm **Social:** Facebook.com/midwestyoungartists, @musicatmya