New Chicago Philharmonic Mentorship Program to create partnership with Old Orchard Junior High

Chicago, IL: The Chicago Philharmonic Mentorship Program is a pilot program through which Chicago Philharmonic musicians will provide in-school mentoring in Spring 2015 for over 200 band and orchestra students at Old Orchard Junior High School (OOJH) in Skokie. Elements of the program include master classes, a side-by-side rehearsal, and a concert at the school presented by students and their musician mentors. The program further engages the students’ families with a group outing to attend a Chicago Philharmonic concert.

Through repeated meaningful contacts with professional musicians, the program helps cultivate students’ music skills while also advancing their overall development and success in school and
beyond. “One aspect of this program that we think really sets it apart,” says Chicago Philharmonic Executive Director Donna Milanovich, “is the opportunity, through repeated meaningful contacts between the students and the musicians, for real relationships to develop and for the musicians to become role models for the students in their development as musicians and as they chart their paths for future careers.”

The Chicago Philharmonic hopes to use the pilot program as a model for similar programs to be offered at other Chicago area junior high and high schools in the future, expanding the program’s impact to hundreds of additional students. The program builds on other existing outreach initiatives from the Chicago Philharmonic, including Families to The Phil, which provides free concert tickets to Chicago-area students and their family members, and Side by Side, which provides selected high school students the opportunity to perform alongside the orchestra at Chicago Philharmonic concerts.

The side-by-side concerts at OOJH will take place on Tuesday, May 12 at 7:00 p.m. (band concert under the direction of Julie Liebman), and Wednesday, May 13 at 7:00p.m. (string orchestra concert under the direction of Ingrid Nevinger). Both concerts are open to the public. Old Orchard Junior High School is located at 9310 Kenton Ave, Skokie, IL 60076.

The Chicago Philharmonic Mentorship Program is made possible by generous contributions from the Charles and M.R. Shapiro Foundation and program sponsors J.W. Pepper and Wintrust. Individual contributions to The Chicago Philharmonic Society are welcome and can be made here.