



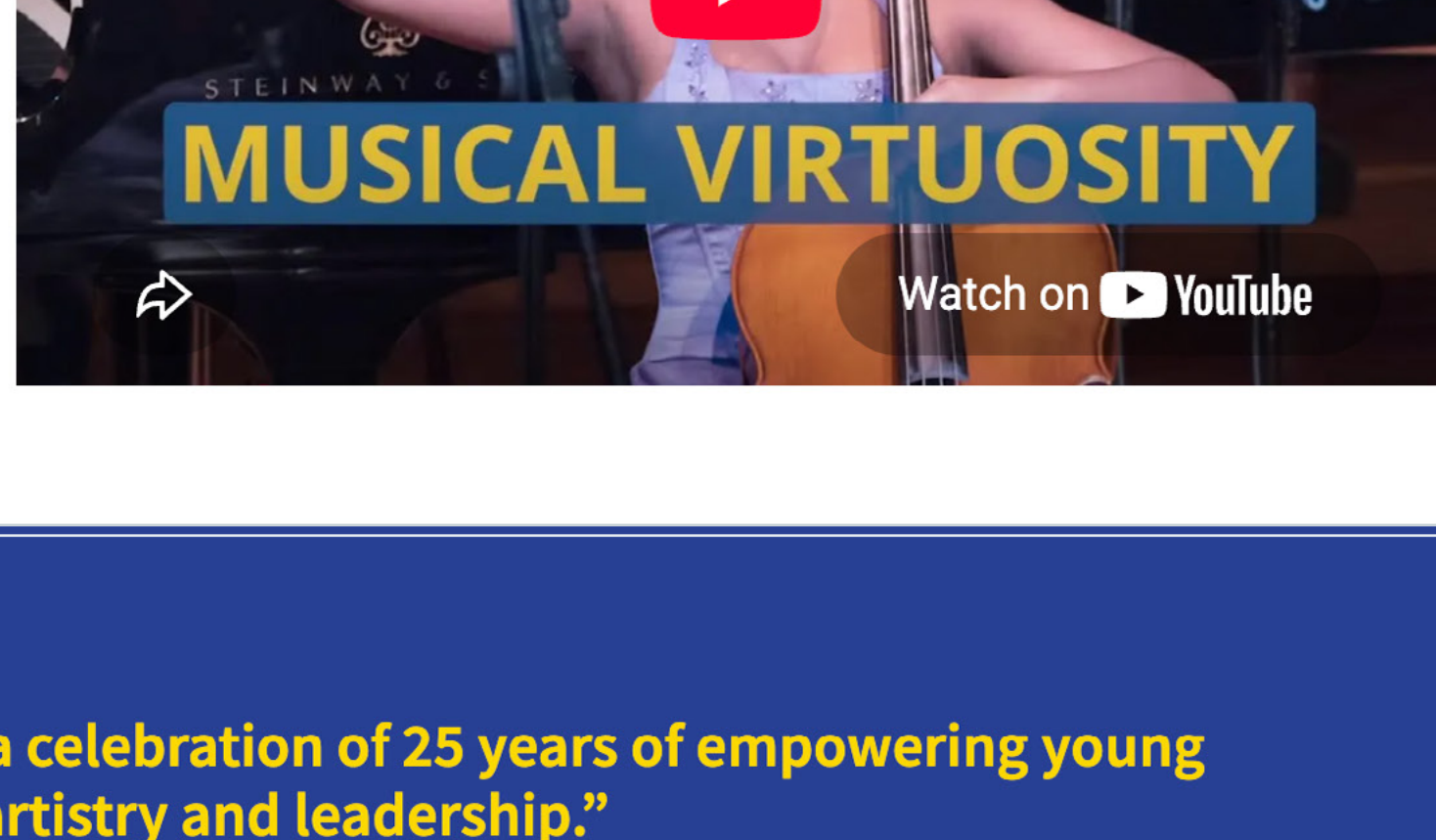
2024-2025 ANNUAL REPORT

A NOTE FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

As we close our 25th anniversary season, I am so thankful for the supporters, partners, and young musicians that have made From the Top into what it is today. It's been an honor to carry on the legacy that was built by our co-founders Jennifer Hurley-Wales and Gerald Slavet.

This has been a year of celebration, reflection, and bold new adventures and I'm so proud to be part of it.

Gratefully yours,
Gretchen Nielsen
Executive Director



"This year marks a defining moment for From the Top – a celebration of 25 years of empowering young musicians and a bold step into a future shaped by their artistry and leadership."

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR GRETCHEN NIELSEN



From the Top empowers and celebrates young musicians and envisions a more empathetic and connected society through their contributions.

From the Top is:

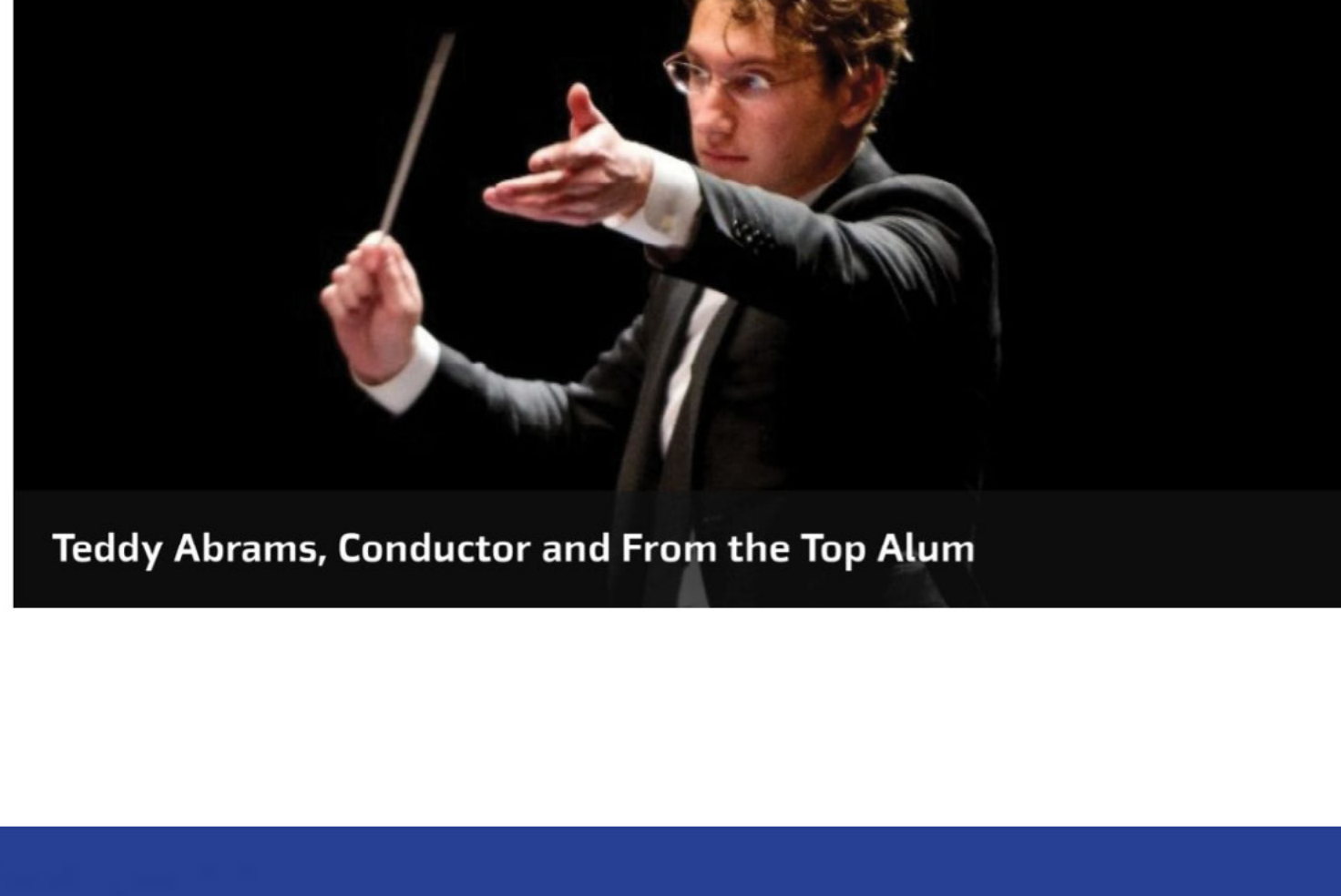
LEARNING & FELLOWSHIP Bringing young musicians together to explore career development, content creation, and community engagement	MEDIA Celebrating young musicians through From the Top's NPR broadcast/podcast and social media platforms	THOUGHT LEADERSHIP Exploring the intersection of music and societal issues through programming and discourse	AWARDS Helping to offset the costs of studying classical music
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Fellowship Connects Young Musicians with Arts Leaders

The Learning and Media Lab Fellowship is a six-week online program for all From the Top musicians, exploring what it means to be an artist in today's world, including:

- making an impact through music,
- developing a community with peer and professional mentors, and
- discovering the wide career possibilities available to musicians today.

This season 107 Fellows completed the program and had the opportunity to speak with guest artists about their careers.



SPOTLIGHT

MUSICIANS AND THE ENVIRONMENT

This special seminar series brought together 60 young artists to learn about the intersection of music and environmental awareness.

They worked with mentors like Sophie Shackleton, Yo-Yo Ma's longtime creative producer, and climate scientist, Mingfang Ting. The results were individual projects, including a teen composer who worked with elementary school kids to create instruments out of trash.

Meet Anika Gupta, one of the participants »

"From the Top has transformed from a simple idea into a powerful movement, evolving into a robust training ground for artistic leadership, community engagement, and innovation."

FROM THE TOP BOARD CHAIR KATHLEEN VAN BERGEN

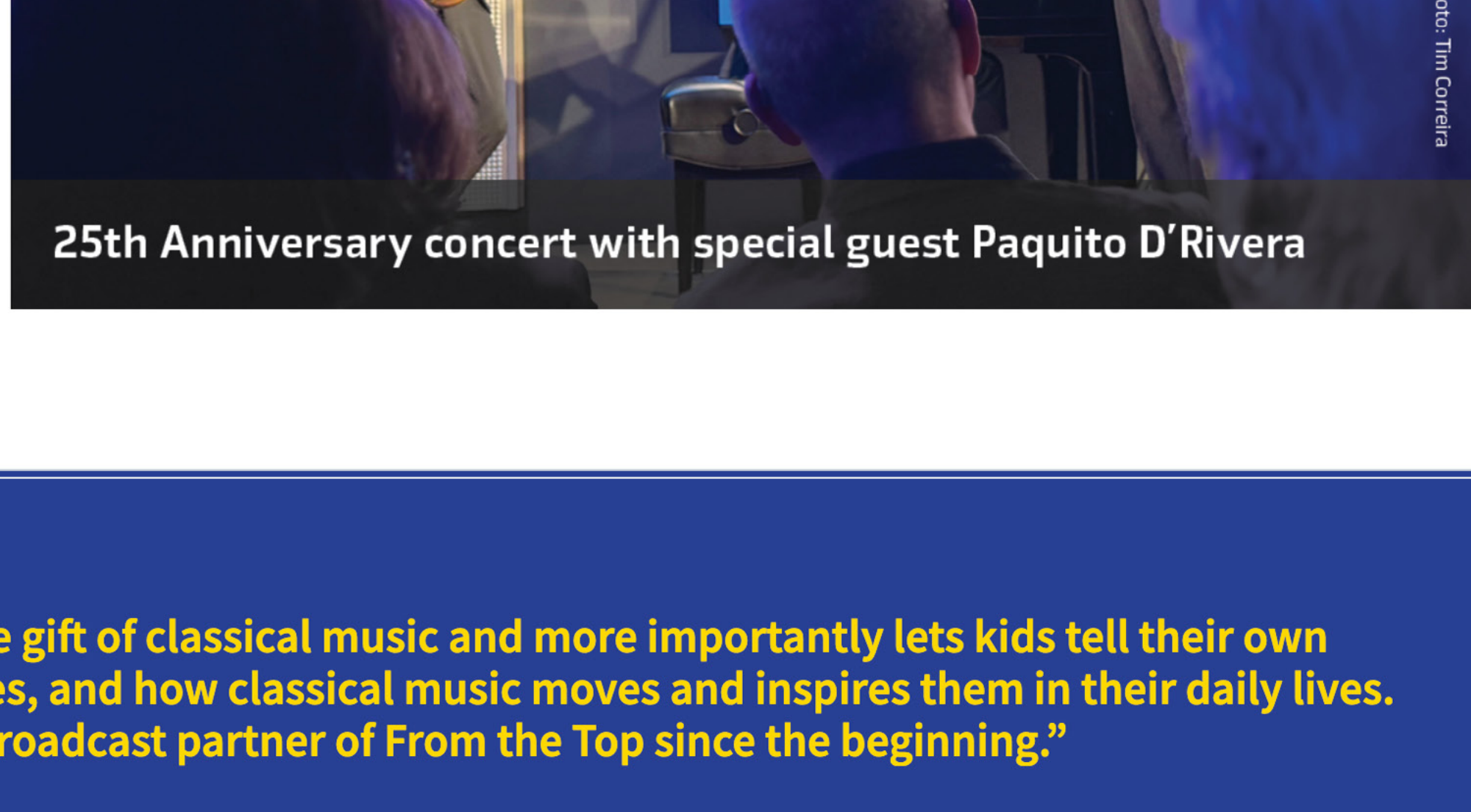


Youth & Professionals Collaborate in Making Media

Our robust media platform includes broadcasts, podcasts, and digital content.

From the Top's signature broadcast/podcast distributed by NPR features the stories and performances of dedicated young artists and reaches 350,000 listeners per week on more than 200 stations across the United States.

Our digital media is co-created with our young musicians and delivered on Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, TikTok, FromtheTop.org and Daily-Joy.org. These video shorts and "takeovers" engage 3 million views across the globe.



"From the Top continues to share the gift of classical music and more importantly lets kids tell their own stories about their lives, their families, and how classical music moves and inspires them in their daily lives. Texas Public Radio is proud to be a broadcast partner of From the Top since the beginning."

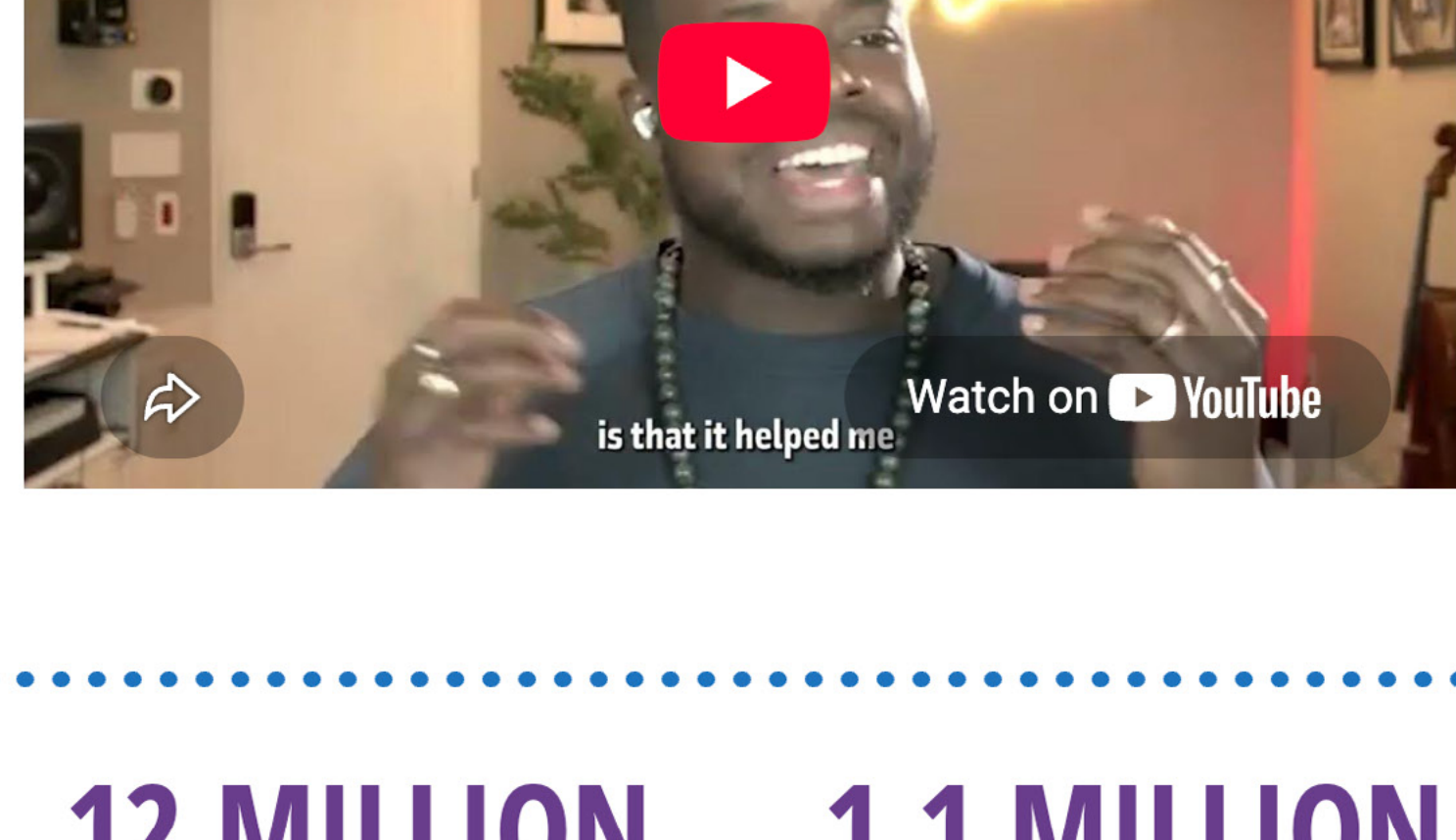
NATHAN CONE, VICE PRESIDENT OF PROGRAMMING, TEXAS PUBLIC RADIO (SAN ANTONIO)



This year we launched **Talks From the Top**, a video series about artist life and navigating a career in music. The multi-episode project features esteemed guest artists speaking with FTT Fellows about their backgrounds, as well as collegiate and professional journeys.

"Being in college helped me understand how my music can be part of a global society, so when I present my music there's a deeper conversation to be had. That's the beauty of bringing your uniqueness to the table," advised multi-platinum and Grammy Award winning artist and From the Top alum Kevin Olusola.

[Watch the full series of conversations here.](#)



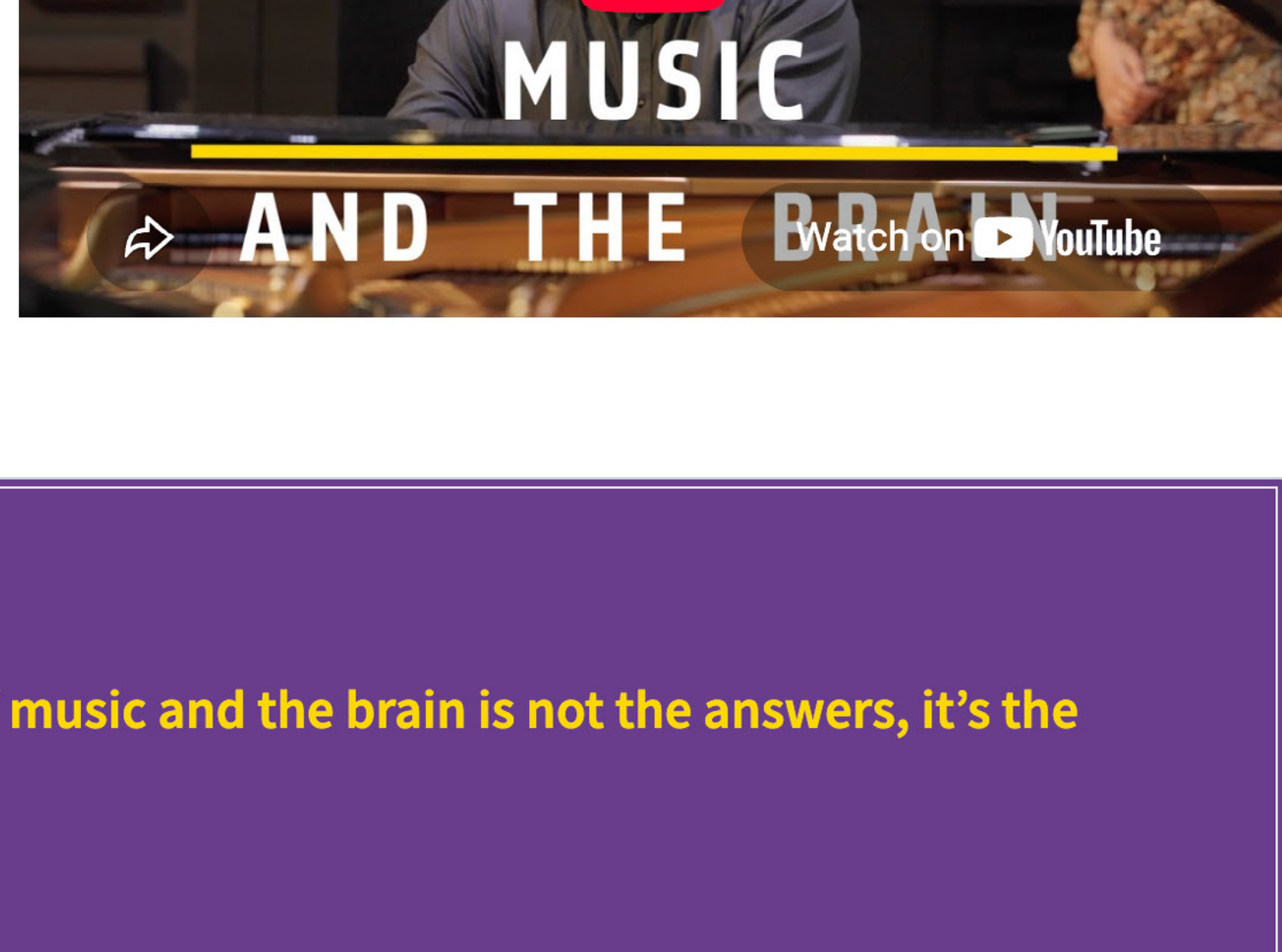
3 MILLION	5 MILLION	12 MILLION	1.1 MILLION
Social Media Reach	Daily Joy Reach	Broadcast Reach	Tiny Desk Concert Views

Music and the Brain: An Extraordinary Residency

We believe that connecting music to ideas and societal issues is a powerful tool to help us better understand our world. In March 2025, From the Top partnered with the University of Southern California's Brain & Creativity Institute to host **Music and the Brain**, an extraordinary residency to explore the intersection of music, neuroscience, and well-being.

The residency at USC brought together 11 From the Top Fellows who recorded for the NPR broadcast, performed in a multimedia concert, participated in a brain scan project, and presented research projects to 100 of their peers during a Youth Symposium.

"I've always thought of music and STEM as totally separate. Now I see they're beautifully connected," said From the Top Fellow Evan Ding, 17, from West Roxbury, Massachusetts. [Hear more from Evan.](#)



"The thing that moves me most about the science of music and the brain is not the answers, it's the mystery."

FROM THE TOP HOST PETER DUGAN



Investing in Musicians with Financial Need

From the Top's longstanding partnership with the **Jack Kent Cooke Foundation** has been a game-changer for over 428 remarkable young artists striving to attain excellence in music despite financial barriers. More than \$4.2 Million has been granted to young musicians over the past 19 years. [Meet the Jack Kent Cooke Young Artist Class of 2025.](#)

In its second year, the **Tim Banker Talent Development Award** supports musicians with financial need who have enormous potential but face the immediate need for additional music training to bolster their rising talent. [Meet the Tim Banker Talent Development Award recipients.](#)



SPOTLIGHT

JACK KENT COOKE YOUNG ARTIST ZOIE GLOSSON

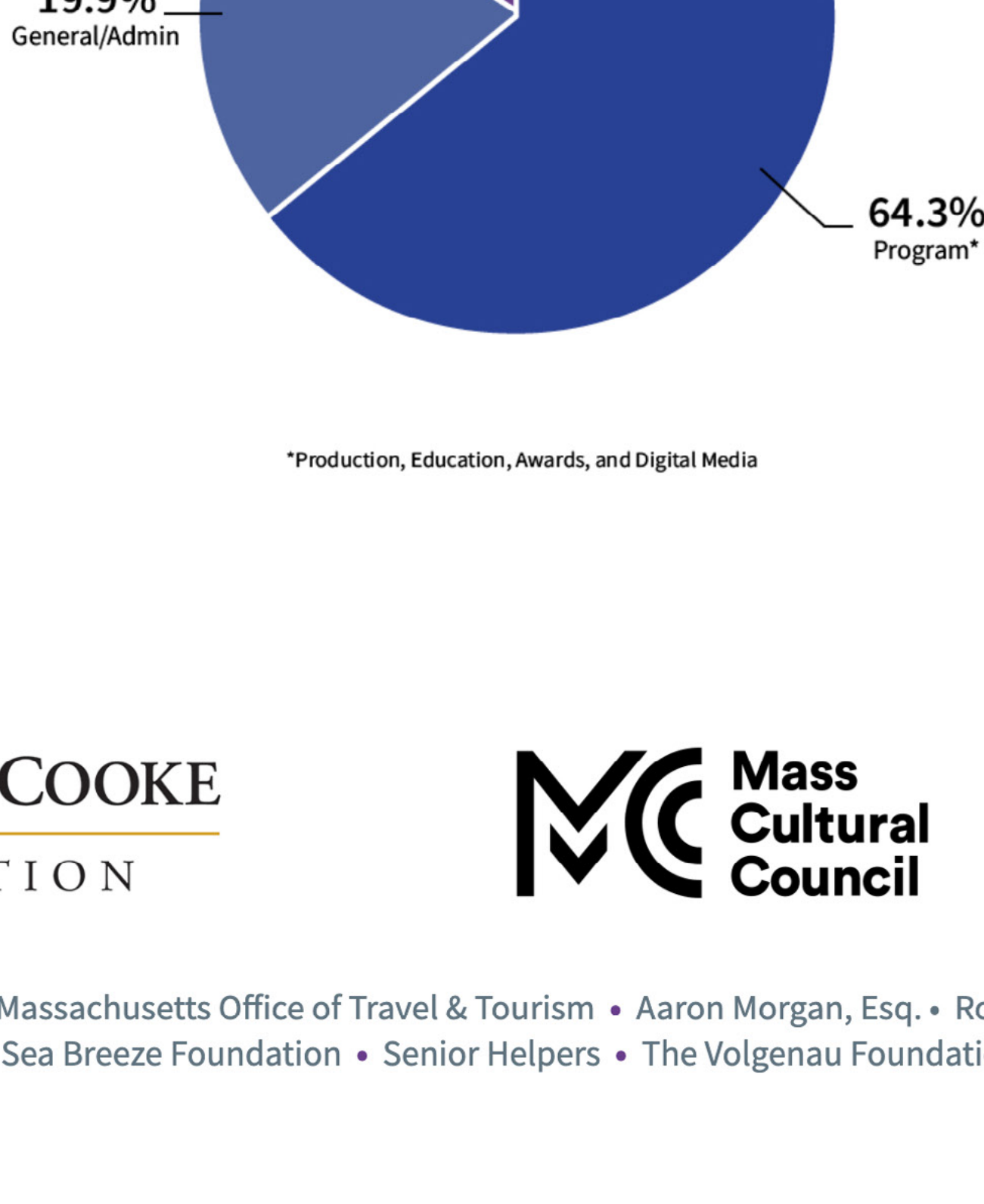
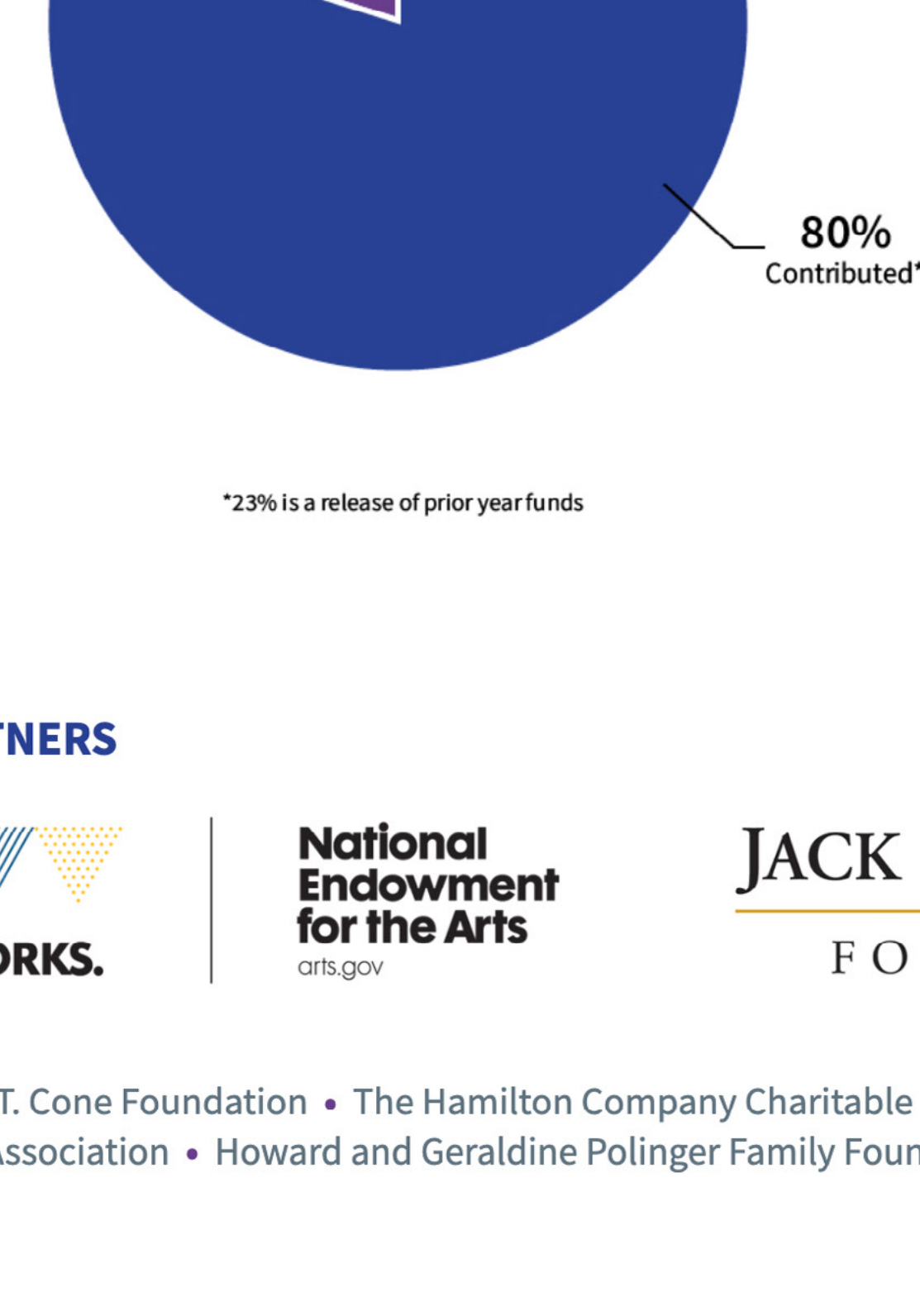
"Music has always been my safe space," says Zoie, one of this year's Jack Kent Cooke Young Artist Award recipients and one of 11 From the Top Fellows who participated in From the Top's Music and the Brain residency.

Receiving the Jack Kent Cooke Young Artist Award has allowed Zoie to purchase a professional level euphonium as well as take consultation lessons with leading euphonium professors in preparation for her college applications.

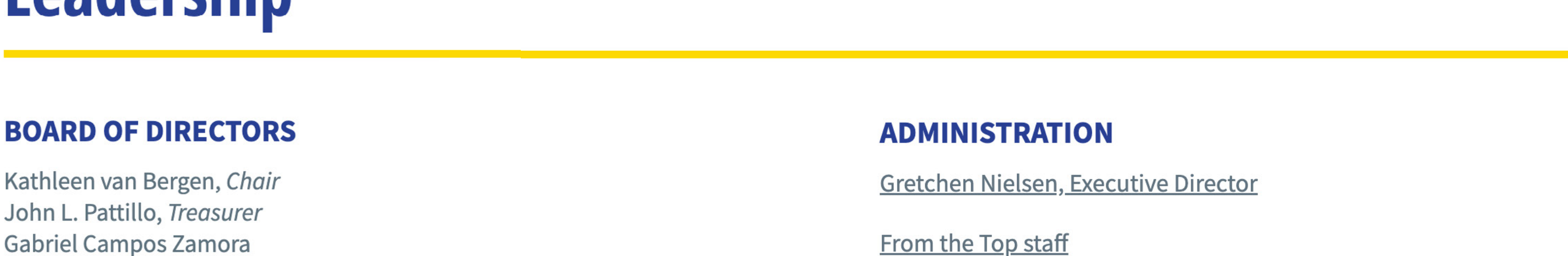
Learn more about Zoie »

Financials

From the Top's revenue last year was \$1,888,944. Expenses were \$2,308,799. We received generous individual, foundation and government support and are very grateful.



OUR PARTNERS



The Edward T. Cone Foundation • The Hamilton Company Charitable Foundation • Massachusetts Office of Travel & Tourism • Aaron Morgan, Esq. • Robert Treat Paine Association • Howard and Geraldine Polinger Family Foundation • The Sea Breeze Foundation • Senior Helpers • The Volgenau Foundation • WilmerHale

Leadership

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Louise Lee
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Peter Ross
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Elizabeth Sikorsky

In Memoriam

Francis O. Hunnewell, *Founding Chair*

Directors Emeriti

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Gerald Slavet
Jeffrey F. Rayport

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[Gretchen Nielsen, Executive Director](#)

[From the Top staff](#)

ARTISTIC

[Peter Dugan, Host](#)
Peter Dugan's position is sponsored by Susan and Gerald Slavet

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[Alex Laing, Co-Host/Creative](#)
[Orli Shaham, Co-Host/Creative](#)
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