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## The Cleveland Orchestra announces three 2022 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Community Service Award winners

Awardees are Joan Southgate, Dolores White, and the Julia de Burgos Cultural Arts Center



Left to right: Joan Southgate, Dolores White, Julia de Burgos Cultural Arts Center

### Awards recognize individuals or organizations who have positively impacted Cleveland in the spirit of Dr. King

**CLEVELAND** – The Cleveland Orchestra announces its annual **Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Community Service Award** winners for 2022: **Joan Southgate, Dolores White,** and the **Julia de Burgos Cultural Arts Center**. Established to recognize extraordinary contributions by individuals and organizations that have positively impacted Cleveland in the spirit of Dr. King’s teachings, the MLK Community Service Awards recognize these women and this organization for their outstanding contributions to the Cleveland community.

The awards will be formally presented onstage at Severance Music Center before the Orchestra’s annual Martin Luther King Jr. Celebration Concert on **Saturday, June 4, 2022** by **Jeffery Weaver**, Chair of The Cleveland Orchestra’s Community Engagement Committee.

The concert is sponsored by community access partner KeyBank and by Medical Mutual.

#### **About the Award Winners**

2022 marks 20 years since [Joan Southgate](#) — a retired social worker and Cleveland-area activist — embarked on a 519-mile walk across Ohio, Pennsylvania, New York, and Canada as an educational mission to highlight the Underground Railroad and the anti-slavery history of the communities she visited, including Cleveland. When the walk ended, she founded the organization [Restore Cleveland Hope](#) (‘Hope’ was the Underground Railroad code name for Cleveland) to continue telling the stories of those who fought against slavery. The organization focused first on saving the historic Cozad-Bates House in University Circle as a reminder of the legacy of Underground Railroad conductors. In fall 2021,

it reopened as an Underground Railroad Interpretive Center, ensuring that generations of visitors understand this area's history shaped by brave and resourceful abolitionists.

[Dolores White](#) is a trailblazing Ohio composer, a passionate advocate for contemporary American music, and a pioneer as an African American woman in classical music. She is an alumna of Oberlin Conservatory and the Cleveland Institute of Music and the widow of cellist Donald White, who became the first African American cellist in a major orchestra when he was appointed in Cleveland by George Szell. The recipient of numerous commissions and ASCAP awards, White has used her talent and her voice to contribute significantly to musical life here in Cleveland and beyond during her long career. White's composition, *Celebration*, will be featured on the Martin Luther King Jr. Celebration Concert in June.

The [Julia de Burgos Cultural Arts Center](#), in Cleveland's Clark-Fulton neighborhood, is named after Julia de Burgos, a teacher, Puerto Rican poet, and civil rights activist who fought for the freedoms of women and minority artists. Founded in 1989, the Center provides a safe gathering place and opportunities for Latinx artists, youth, and families. It is committed to using the arts as a tool to promote greater understanding and positive social change, foster cultural pride, and preserve Latinx heritage. The center is a hub for many key arts initiatives and programs such as the Hispanic Heritage Festival, Unidos por el Arte (United by Art), and Puerto Rican Parade. The center is the heart of its community, celebrating Latinx diversity and challenging prejudice and hate.

### **The Cleveland Orchestra's Education and Community Programs Serving Northeast Ohio**

The Cleveland Orchestra's commitment to education and community service was central to the establishment of the Orchestra in 1918, and has never been more important. Over the past hundred years, The Cleveland Orchestra has introduced more than four million young people to symphonic music through live concert experiences. Today, with the support of many generous individual, foundation, corporate, and governmental funding partners, the Orchestra's education and community programs in recent years have reached more than 100,000 young people and adults annually, helping to foster a lifelong relationship with music. Now in his 20th season, Music Director Franz Welser-Möst is leading the Orchestra with a renewed commitment to music education and community engagement based on his belief that every child's life should include music. He continues to emphasize that the arts are critical to a well-rounded education and that learning is a lifelong pursuit and journey.

As we look to the future, we strive to be *Cleveland's* Orchestra, engaging our diverse citizenry and building community through music, removing barriers to participation, advocating for and helping to facilitate equitable access to comprehensive music education in schools, nurturing the next generation of musicians and audience members, and harnessing the life-changing power of music to make the world a better place through new initiatives developed for even greater impact. For more information, please visit these links: [Education](#), [Community](#), and [Learning Resources](#).

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*For more biographical information or high resolution photos of the award winners, contact Rebecca Calkin.*

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