

# NEWS

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Video on the program at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yD5-Sh1ySLM>

## **A FIRST! ASSISTANCE LEAGUE OF ST. LOUIS HOSTS ST. LOUIS SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA VOLUNTEERS AT NEW SCHOOL UNIFORM FITTING FOR WOERNER ELEMENTARY STUDENTS**

**St. Louis Symphony Orchestra Volunteer Association Members Show Saint Louis Public School Elementary Students How to Play Instruments**

*This is third of the year's 60 fittings for thousands of local school children*

**NOTE: Members of the media are welcome to cover SLSO Volunteer Association Members demonstrating instruments, while children get new school uniforms and other items on Thursday, August 29 from 10:15 a.m. to 11:45 a.m., at Assistance League of St. Louis Headquarters, 30 Henry Avenue, Ellisville, 63011.**

Assistance League is marking the beginning of the school year with an appearance on Thursday, August 29 by St. Louis Symphony Orchestra Volunteer Association Members at Assistance League's third new uniform fitting of 60 Kindergarten through fifth graders.

The SLSO volunteers will demonstrate how to play orchestra instruments to students from Woerner Elementary School in South St. Louis, while the children wait to be fitted for uniforms.

August 27, Assistance League volunteers began fitting children from 33 schools. Fittings are scheduled over 60 dressing days and end in late January. School children are coming for fittings from the school districts of Ferguson-Florissant, Hazelwood, Jennings, Normandy and St. Louis City. Each year, through its Operation School Bell® program, Assistance League volunteers contribute 5,700 hours to the program. In 2018-2019, Assistance League served 7,312 elementary school children through this program, providing each student 22 items, including two pairs of pants, knitted hats, gloves, two short-sleeve and one long-sleeve shirt, one fleece jacket, socks, underwear, a toothbrush, toothpaste and other hygiene products and for each girl—a headband. Each student also receives a book of the child's choice.

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School nurses are given for emergency distribution boy and girl underwear, hats and gloves, socks, elastic belts, sports bras, deodorant, and dental kits. Operation School Bell® has served over 90,000 students since it began in 1990.

“We appreciate Symphony volunteers for offering instrument instruction to our enrichment activities on August 29. We know that their involvement will make the day even more special for the children,” said Assistance League of St. Louis President Jane Harbron. “Each year, for 32 years, Operation School Bell®, our largest program, has helped provide new uniforms to school children in need. Research shows that clean well-fitting new uniforms help create positive outcomes for students and for learning. At these fittings, each child receives the attention of a caring volunteer, who helps the child with the perfect fit. The volunteers love seeing the wonderful smiles on the children’s faces, and the children leave with new uniforms and a new sense of pride.”

She adds in 2018-2019 alone, Assistance League members and friends donated more than 79,000 volunteer hours through nine philanthropic programs, touching 50,000 lives.

**ABOUT ASSISTANCE LEAGUE OF ST. LOUIS.** Assistance League of St. Louis is run by an all-volunteer group of more than 500 volunteers. The organization’s mission is to identify, develop, fund and implement ongoing philanthropic programs to serve specific needs of children and adults in the St. Louis community. Volunteers manage nine programs for the benefit of various underserved populations in the St. Louis metropolitan region. Designed to empower, not enable, programs include Operation School Bell®, Operation HUG, Steps to Success, My Own Fun Stuff, Project ROSE, Assistance League Outreach, Assistance League Scholarship, Assistance League Waste Not and Assistance League Beyond the Bell. Each program has a special focus from new school uniforms to shoes and socks and from personal care items for crisis shelter clients to teddy bears for comfort. All funds raised are returned to the St. Louis community. Assistance League of St. Louis is an accredited charity of the Better Business Bureau and Platinum Guide Star member.

**ABOUT ST. LOUIS SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA’S COMMUNITY COMMITMENT.** Musicians of the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra are an integral part of the community, sharing the gift of music with tens of thousands of people each year through free community and education programs. For every concert produced at Powell Hall, St. Louis Symphony Orchestra musicians present an average of 2½ free activities and programs in schools, hospitals, parks and other public spaces throughout the region. This outreach includes SLSO musician residencies in classrooms through Symphony In Your School, performances in hospitals and nursing homes through SymphonyCares, its flagship SLSO IN UNISON diversity program in partnership with 40+ primarily African American churches, and its deepening connection with St. Louis' immigrant/refugee population through Music Without Boundaries. SLSO musicians also present a variety of free community chamber concerts through Symphony In Your School, SymphonyCares, Symphony In Your Neighborhood, Symphony In Your College, and Symphony Where You Worship.

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