

YOUTH PERFORMERS ANNOUNCED FOR 2026 RISING STAR SHOWCASE

Showcase Open to All Performance-Ready Young Musicians

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: FEBRUARY 17, 2026

Park Forest, IL – The Friends of the IPO, a volunteer partner group of Illinois Philharmonic Orchestra, is proud to announce the selected performers for the 2026 Rising Star Showcase on March 22nd, 2026, in Flossmoor, IL.

The Rising Star Showcase is a program designed to offer performance-ready music students from Chicago’s South Suburbs a chance to perform before a live audience. Past IPO Rising Stars have gone on to great musical success, with many securing collegiate music scholarships. A notable number of Rising Stars have also become accomplished, professional musicians after participating in the program.

Performers this year range in age from 13 to 18 years old and span from 8th grade through high school seniors. The musicians selected to perform are:

- **Levana Chen** • Violin • Grisson Middle School (Tinley Park)
- **Annie Ford** • Trumpet • Homewood-Flossmoor High School
- **Flower** • Violin • Homeschool
- **Elly Jeon** • B flat Clarinet • Stevenson High School
- **Sophie McManus** • French Horn • Homewood Flossmoor High School
- **Lillian Pearson** • Flute • Lincoln-Way West High School
- **Bonnie Rickman** • Violin • Homeschool
- **Liam Viebach** • Piano • Lincoln-Way West High School

The Rising Star Showcase takes place on Sunday, March 22nd at the Flossmoor Community Church (2218 Hutchison Rd, Flossmoor, IL) at 4:30pm. **Tickets are free to all students** and just \$20 for adults and can be purchased at IPOmusic.org/rising-star-showcase.

The IPO Rising Star Showcase is presented by the volunteer “Friends of the IPO.”

ABOUT ILLINOIS PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA

The 2025/26 concert season marks the 48th for Illinois Philharmonic Orchestra, the three-time Illinois Council of Orchestras “Professional Orchestra of the Year.” Under the leadership of Gibb Music Director Stilian Kirov and Executive Director Christina Salerno, the mission of IPO is to utilize the universal expression of music to create profound, inspiring and personal connections between the people and communities of Chicago’s Southland.

During the 2025/26 season, IPO will perform several classical concerts at their home venue, the state-of-the-art, 1,100 seat Ozinga Chapel at Trinity Christian College in Palos Heights, IL, while continuing to strengthen a partnership with the Center for Performing Arts at Governors State University for one concert. In addition to live orchestral concerts, IPO presents a myriad of educational youth offerings each year via its educational arm - The



Marilynn Tannebaum Youth Music Education Institute. IPO also performs an annual summer chamber series, IPO Summer @ Olympia Fields Country Club.

From its community orchestra roots in Park Forest, the 69-member orchestra has grown into a critically acclaimed professional regional orchestra. Illinois Philharmonic Orchestra is supported in part by the Center for Performing Arts at Governors State University, Ozinga Foundation, Gerhard Manufacturing and Design, Michuda Construction, Old National Bank, and the Illinois Arts Council. For more information, visit ipomusic.org.

Media Inquiries:

Ken Churilla – IPO Marketing & Communications Director
kchurilla@ipomusic.org | 708.481.7774