



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact:
David Sherry
505-944-2571

NMSO Trustees To Make Decision on Filing Bankruptcy If Agreement with Musicians Is Not Reached by Thanksgiving

Information Below on Offer Rejected by Musicians

(ALBUQUERQUE, N.M., Nov. 17, 2009) – At its meeting last night, New Mexico Symphony Orchestra (NMSO) Board of Trustees discussed forms of bankruptcy and the potential impact on the NMSO of filing bankruptcy. The Board gave NMSO management until Thanksgiving to reach an agreement with the musicians before making a final decision on filing.

NMSO management and the musicians' negotiating team have agreed to return to the negotiating table on Saturday, Nov. 21. The federal mediator previously involved in the negotiation process will also participate in that meeting.

On Friday, NMSO management was informed that the full orchestra voted to turn down the work agreement offer that included the musicians' union's final economic proposal of Oct. 27 and NMSO management's final wording on a Shared Success Initiative of Nov. 5.

NMSO management is concerned that inaccurate details of the final economic proposal continue to be distributed. Accurate information is as follows: First proposed by the musicians' union on Oct. 27 and unanimously accepted by the NMSO trustees on Oct. 28, the final economic proposal that the orchestra did not approve would have resulted in pay and benefit reductions of 12.1 to 18.4 percent for orchestra members. It differed from the NMSO management's original economic proposal which included pay reductions of 18 to 23 percent.

The musicians are asking for "equitable and shared sacrifice" according to information they have distributed. All non-union employees of the NMSO took a 14 percent reduction in pay and benefits beginning April 1, 2009, five months before the current fiscal year began Sept. 1, 2009. Add those five

months to the 12 of the current fiscal year, and the annualized reduction in pay and benefits for all non-union employees is 19.8 percent for the current fiscal year.

“We know this uncertainty concerning the NMSO’s future is frustrating and disheartening for many. We are hopeful that the musicians will reconsider and approve the work agreement so that this great institution can continue to provide New Mexico with excellent musical performances and valuable music education opportunities,” said Coleman Travelstead, NMSO Board of Trustees chair.

Background information about the proposed work agreement and labor negotiations is available at nmso.org. As announced Friday, following is information concerning concert cancellations and changes.

NMSO Classics cancellation

The performances of Elgar’s Enigma, scheduled for Nov. 20-22, are cancelled. These programs will not be rescheduled due to a lack of available dates in the performance calendar ending May 31, 2010.

Information about other scheduled performances will be announced when it is available.

Nutcracker by New Mexico Ballet Company to be performed as scheduled

The Nutcracker will be performed as scheduled by the New Mexico Ballet Company, but without the partnership with the NMSO. The Ballet Company will hire a conductor and musicians to preserve its Nutcracker as the only one in Albuquerque performed with live orchestra.

Information for ticket holders

At this time, NMSO cannot offer any refunds on tickets. As soon as an agreement is in place with NMSO orchestra musicians, instructions for ticket holders will be announced. Patrons who still hold tickets for a concert that has been postponed or cancelled are asked to keep their tickets because they will be valid for rescheduled concerts. If ticket holders are unable to attend on a rescheduled date, they may exchange the tickets for another concert, or the NMSO can provide a ticket voucher, valid for two years, for the full ticket value. If the ticket is part of a subscription package, the NMSO can provide a ticket voucher, valid for two years, for the prorated portion of the subscription.

About the NMSO

The New Mexico Symphony Orchestra is the official orchestra of the State of New Mexico, serving over 130,000 people each year through its Classics, Pops and Symphony Under the Stars series, as well as many free NMSO Family Concerts. The NMSO is the largest non-governmental provider of music education in New Mexico and has also been recognized by the Mellon Foundation for its innovative community engagement efforts. The NMSO is under the baton of Music Director Guillermo Figueroa and Resident Conductor and Chorus Director Roger Melone. For more information about the NMSO, visit nmso.org.

###