

NEW JERSEY SYMPHONY

XIAN ZHANG MUSIC DIRECTOR

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

New Jersey Symphony Announces Colton Conducting Fellowship Audition for the 2024–25 Season

NEWARK, NJ – The New Jersey Symphony announces that it will hold an audition for the 2024–25 Colton Conducting Fellow, a program currently in its inaugural season.

The 2023–24 Colton Conducting Fellow, Jessica Rivero Altarriba, is leaving the Symphony at the end of the 2023–24 season to accept a position with another orchestra, to be announced soon. During her time as the Colton Conducting Fellow, Altarriba has served as cover conductor to Music Director Xian Zhang and conducted the New Jersey Symphony’s Concerts for Young People in Morristown, Rahway and Newark. Altarriba will take the podium for part of the Symphony’s “Epic Scores of John Williams and More!” concerts in late May and early June, and will conduct a 2024–25 season preview concert on August 15. Altarriba originally hails from Cuba and is currently finishing her master’s degree in conducting at the Peabody Institute at Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore.

Altarriba says, “Serving as the inaugural Colton Conducting Fellow was an incredible opportunity and has been an invaluable launching pad for my career. I have learned so much from the musicians, Xian, and the staff, and have developed a well-rounded set of skills as a conductor over the course of the season. I am grateful for the mentorship and opportunities I’ve had access to here, and I will always look back fondly on my time as the Colton Conducting Fellow at the New Jersey Symphony.”

Launched in 2019, the Colton Fellowship for orchestral musicians has been a vital program for the New Jersey Symphony to provide opportunities for talented early-career orchestral musicians from Black and Latino communities to gain valuable professional experience and exposure that is often a prerequisite for success in the music industry. In 2023, the Symphony expanded the Colton Fellowship program to include a conducting fellow. The Colton Conducting Fellowship is an excellence-based program designed to support early-career orchestral conductors representing populations that have historically been underrepresented on the podium, namely, people of color, women and LGBTQ+ communities. This fellowship is made possible by a generous gift from Judith and Stewart Colton.

The Fellowship also provides professional development funds to be used for national auditions, leadership development and professional learning as well as chamber music programming and design. A relocation stipend will be made available.

The New Jersey Symphony is now accepting applications for the Colton Conducting Fellowship for the 2024–25 season. Interested applicants can find more information at njsymphony.org/colton.

Applications will be open through 11:59 pm on June 3, and finalists will be invited to audition on July 25, 2024, in Newark, NJ.

New Jersey Symphony

The Emmy and Grammy Award-winning New Jersey Symphony is redefining what it means to be a nationally leading, relevant orchestra in the 21st century. The Symphony is renewing its deeply rooted commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion by championing new, and often local, artists; engaging audiences for whom the inspiring depth and breadth of classical music will be a new experience; and incorporating the broadest possible representation in all aspects of our organization—all to better reflect and serve our vibrant communities. Since 2021, Music Director Xian Zhang has worked together with composer, violinist, educator and social-justice advocate Daniel Bernard Roumain, the orchestra's Resident Artistic Catalyst, to offer programming that connects with diverse communities in Newark and throughout New Jersey.

Internationally renowned Chinese American conductor Xian Zhang began her tenure as the New Jersey Symphony's current Music Director in 2016. Since her arrival at the New Jersey Symphony, Zhang has revitalized programming with an industry-leading commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion in mainstage concerts.

For more information about the New Jersey Symphony, visit www.njsymphony.org or email information@njsymphony.org. Tickets are available for purchase by phone 1.800.ALLEGRO (255.3476) or on the Orchestra's website.

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