



June 8, 2021

Dear Ms. Calhoun,

I am writing to clarify the situation described in the recent article, “Musicians Flee Arapahoe Philharmonic on a Sour Note.”

The heart of the situation and issue with the article is a misunderstanding of our organization’s purpose and place in the community. The Arapahoe Philharmonic’s mission is to “engage, enrich, and inspire our community through musical performance, education, and outreach.” As a state-funded performing arts non-profit, we serve our community as a whole. We felt we were not serving our musicians *or* our audience to the best of our ability and set out to change that.

Early this year, in the interest of keeping our organization relevant, financially sustainable and something our community can be proud of; our board made the decision to implement an annual audition program for all musicians. These are not open auditions, where musicians would play for a panel, and either be welcomed into the orchestra or rejected. These are pre-season auditions, which are designed to provide helpful feedback to all our musicians and ensure they are playing music that is enjoyable and appropriate to their current skill level. Regardless of how they perform in their audition, every musician was guaranteed the opportunity to perform in at least one concert. If a musician is not selected to play on certain concerts or not happy with their placement, they can always decide to re-audition.

While we are sad that some of our longtime volunteer musicians made the decision to leave, we have had almost 60 players, both amateur and professional, participate in our new auditions program. The auditions have also allowed us to attract a more diverse group of musicians who may have not been aware of our organization previously. As with all community organizations, membership changes over time. We are happy that most of our members are still with us, and we have an excellent group of new musicians who auditioned this year for the first time.

Diverse views are encouraged in our organization. We have always provided a safe environment for our musicians to work in and will continue to do so in the future. While we understand that change is hard, some volunteer musicians were upset they had to audition, so they attacked us personally and threatened the orchestra’s property and instruments. No organization would tolerate this sort of behavior, those players are no longer in the orchestra, and appropriate legal action was taken to decrease these threats.

The board is incredibly happy with Devin Patrick Hughes’ performance as a conductor and artistic leader of the Arapahoe Philharmonic. Mr. Hughes is talented, charismatic, and incredibly dedicated to the AP and its future, continually going above and beyond, donating extra time and resources to the

organization. His rehearsals are professional, respectful, and productive, and his artistic guidance has led the Arapahoe Philharmonic to new musical heights.

There are a lot of people who feel passionately about this organization, including our board and staff. Our goal is to provide quality, community-based music to the South Denver Metro area now and in the future, while making music more accessible for a wider audience. We hope you will join us at one of our upcoming concerts.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "S. Corinne Denny". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, stylized initial "S" and a decorative flourish at the end.

Corinne Denny  
Executive Director  
Arapahoe Philharmonic