



# YOLA Impact Report

10th Anniversary

2007 - 2017





Celebrating its 10th anniversary, Youth Orchestra LA (YOLA) is Gustavo Dudamel's signature initiative through which the LA Phil and community partners provide free instruments, intensive music training, and academic support to students (ages 6-18) from underserved neighborhoods, empowering them to become passionate learners and vital citizens.

Beginning with 80 students in 2007, today YOLA serves nearly 800 students studying 15-18 hours per week at three after-school sites where mentorship and leadership training is integral. YOLA students have the opportunity to work with LA Phil musicians and world-renowned artists and conductors, travel to cities foreign and domestic, and perform in iconic venues Walt Disney Concert Hall and the Hollywood Bowl.

YOLA is made possible in South Los Angeles, the Rampart District and East Los Angeles through the following community partners that share fiscal and programmatic responsibilities with the LA Phil: EXPO Center, Harmony Project, Heart of Los Angeles, LA County High School for the Arts. Learn more at [laphil.org/YOLA](http://laphil.org/YOLA).

# YOLA

## ...the First 10 Years

2006

Inspired by a visit to Venezuela, the LA Phil decides to create a program modeled on El Sistema, and begins to convene individuals and organizations interested in launching it in Los Angeles.



2007

The first YOLA site begins in South L.A., in partnership with the Harmony Project and the EXPO Center, a Department of Recreation and Parks facility.



2009

Gustavo Dudamel begins his tenure as LA Phil Music Director by leading 100 YOLA students in a performance of "Ode to Joy" during *iBienvenido Gustavo!*, a free community concert at the Hollywood Bowl.



2010

A second YOLA site opens in partnership with Heart of Los Angeles (HOLA), a community center in the Rampart District.



2011

YOLA@EXPO reaches 350 students, who all perform on stage at Walt Disney Concert Hall for the first time.



2012

The LA Phil partners with the Longy School of Music of Bard College and Bard College to form Take a Stand, a national initiative inspired by El Sistema that supports social change through music.

# YOLA

## ...the First 10 Years



2012

YOLA and their counterparts from El Sistema—the Simón Bolívar Symphony Orchestra of Venezuela—perform a side-by-side concert, conducted by Dudamel as part of the bi-continental Mahler Project.



2013

Ten YOLA students accompany the LA Phil on tour to London—the first of a series of annual YOLA tours including Boston, Tokyo, and a return to London.



2014

YOLA@LACHSA, the program's third site, opens in East LA with the partnership of the Los Angeles County High School for the Arts, and generous support from the office of LA County Supervisor Hilda Solis.



2015

The National Take a Stand Festival kicks off in Los Angeles, a three-part, student-focused initiative bringing together students from El Sistema-inspired programs from around the country.



2016

String players from YOLA@EXPO join Chris Martin and Beyoncé on stage at the Super Bowl 50 Halftime Show, performing before an audience of more than 100 million viewers around the world.

2016

An orchestra comprised of 80 YOLA students goes on a first-of-its-kind California Tour, performing in Northridge, Fresno, Visalia, and Oakland.



# YOLA

## ...in the Words of its Musicians

Now serving nearly 800 students, YOLA has helped its young musicians empower themselves through opportunities on and off the stage.



“One of my favorite YOLA memories—there are so many—was in September 2013. At Walt Disney Concert Hall, there was a side-by-side concert with us and the LA Phil. My stand partner was [LA Phil Concertmaster] Martin Chalifour. It was incredible playing next to him and having Gustavo conducting. It was like being a part of the LA Phil.

“Martin gave me great advice to keep pushing forward. He told me that I had the talent to succeed and that my success was in my own hands, and that he wanted me to keep working. I couldn’t have gotten better advice to motivate me to keep pushing forward.”

**-Juliana, Violist, 17**

“When I would practice, my teachers taught me, when you want a measure of a piece to be nothing short of perfect, you have to have a constantly evolving approach to a thing. You have to have a lucid consciousness and not run on autopilot.

“Whenever something fails, try another way. They showed us how to beat life, just by showing us how to practice. When you are going through life, you have to have a clear image of what you want, and you have to put in many, many hours of hard work to reach it.”

**-Daniel, Flute, Alumnus**



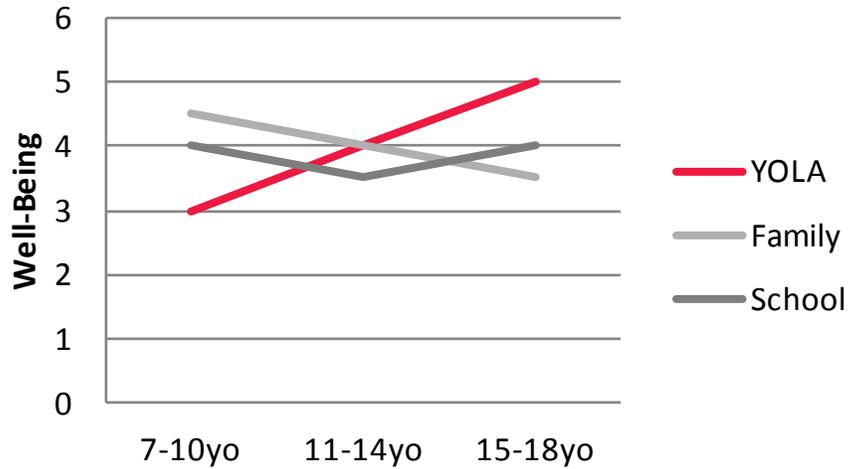
# YOLA

...Impact on its Students' Lives

## By the Numbers

Students Served Per Year	800
Retention Rate	88%
Alumni	60+
Alumni Attending College	90%
Annual Hours of Instruction	600
Total Classtime Hours (Since 2007)	2.8M

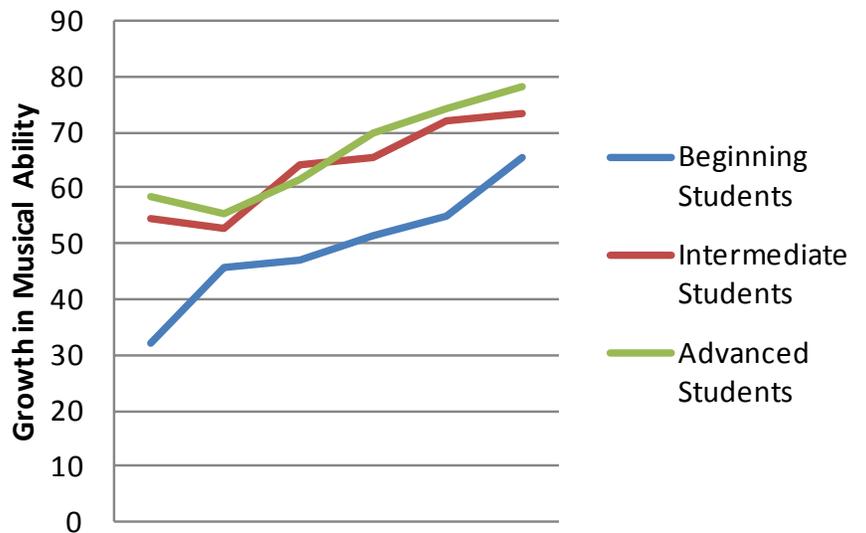
## Student Well-Being



As YOLA students deal with the difficulties that accompany growing into the teenage years, YOLA becomes the environment in which they feel the most supported, creative, and positive overall (rated on a scale of 1-5).



## Musical Proficiency Index



Nearly all students, regardless of their tenure in YOLA, demonstrate improvement in musical proficiency as they progress, (beginning, 0-2 years, intermediate 2-4, advanced 4+).

# YOLA

## ...in the Words of its Parents

Committing to hundreds of hours spent driving students to class and rehearsals, volunteering, and attending workshops, YOLA's parents have an enormous stake in the program's success.



"We grew up without music. As an adult, I realized how sad that was. When they opened YOLA@LACHSA, I was very interested in helping my son Daniel join. Daniel is the most confident person in his entire family, and YOLA has reinforced this. He has learned what it means to become part of a community, and also he has gained a competitive spirit, a desire to be the best in his section, and to help inspire others to do their best."

-Hugo, YOLA Parent



"My son is on the spectrum; he gets anxiety, and he has ADHD. Since starting with YOLA two years ago, he has flourished. He's opened up since he's been here, he's become more social. YOLA has become a second family for him and for me.

"He knows his teacher believes in him; not all teachers have that sensitivity. After class today, he went up and thanked his teacher for helping him. As a parent, it is just incredible to watch."

-Jessica, YOLA Parent

# YOLA

## ...in the Words of its Parents

Each year YOLA's parents provide feedback to help guide the program, reflecting on the progress they've witnessed and the room for growth. Highlights from parent surveys are below.



### Parent Survey Highlights

**“I tell my child: music is going to open doors for you.”**

**“It’s an experience for him as well as for us, because it’s something new in our lives.”**

**“She does her homework faster, and she concentrates better. I put on classical music in the house, and it helps her stay relaxed.”**

**“The teachers are dedicated and they love music, and that’s the most important thing; that they love what they do and don’t feel obligated.**

**“YOLA opens my daughter’s mind so that she can know other things, and want to learn other types of things. My daughter was a little shy, but since she started the program, it has become easier for her to socialize with other kids. There is another world to discover. She would not have had this opportunity in my country, where this kind of program doesn’t exist.”**

# YOLA

## ...in the Words of its Teachers

YOLA's faculty of more than 30 experienced teaching artists are critical to the program's success. With diverse backgrounds in musical training, El Sistema-education, or education in general, YOLA teachers become pillars in their students' tumultuous lives over many years.



"A lot of what we are teaching them isn't exactly about music. A lot of them, we're teaching these young people about life. The number one problem is that they don't have a place where they are heard and respected and educated in a safe environment.

"A few years ago, one specific student I was totally blown away by. This girl's talent was tremendous, so I agreed to work with her for free in private lessons, maybe 20 or 30 minutes after class. From that point, she absolutely took off. Now she is bound for conservatory. In a perfect world, any of the students who show that ability will have that opportunity."

**-Michael, YOLA@EXPO Teaching Artist**

"What attracted me to YOLA as a teacher is that it's so much about the positive experience that comes with music. Half of our program is dedicated to social development as much as it is to music. This means that my relationship with the children is equally as important as whatever information I'm trying to give to them that day.

"At the end of the day, they are going to sound good when they are happy and prosperous and feel they are knowledgeable and they own the music. I think all the teachers are on board with that. That's our goal is to make them feel ownership of their identity as a musician."

**-Katie, YOLA@LACHSA Teaching Artist**



# YOLA

## ...its Faculty, Orchestras, and Ensembles

As each program site matures, its students form orchestras based on skill level, while instrument-specific instruction becomes more in depth.

### Faculty & Staff

#### Leadership & Administration

YOLA Conductor	1
Program Directors	3
Program Coordinators	3
Tutors & Support Staff	3

#### Teaching Artists

Strings	15
Woodwinds	7
Brass	5
Choir/Percussion	4

(As of 2016/17)



### Three Sites & Eight Orchestras

#### YOLA@EXPO

EXPO Symphony Orchestra  
EXPO Center Youth Orchestra  
EXPO Young Ensemble

#### YOLA@HOLA

HOLA Symphonic Winds  
HOLA Youth Orchestra  
HOLA Children's Chorus

#### YOLA@LACHSA

LACHSA Youth Orchestra  
LACHSA Children's Orchestra

(As of 2016/17)

# YOLA

...a Community-Driven Initiative

YOLA is grounded in partnerships in the community. From the start it was imagined as becoming part of an eco-system of organizations and individuals committed to improving neighborhoods in innovative ways.

“YOLA is a powerful initiative that expands music education opportunity for students, and I am a proud supporter of the program for my constituents and their families. Led by Gustavo Dudamel who has described music as a fundamental human right, YOLA addresses the important issues of equity and inclusion and provides access to youth who might not otherwise have access to the benefits of music and the arts.”

-Hilda Solis, Los Angeles County Supervisor



“YOLA@HOLA ensures that hundreds of underserved youth in Los Angeles receive quality music instruction, academic support, and a place to develop their skills and create a culture of community.”

-Tony Brown, Exec. Director, HOLA



# YOLA

## ...on the World's Stage

YOLA's young musicians have performed in great concert halls all over the world and hundreds of venues throughout Southern California; on national and international television broadcasts; and alongside the greatest artists from every genre of music.

Their biggest audience (to date) would be the 119 million viewers of the Super Bowl Halftime show who saw YOLA@EXPO string players share the stage with Beyoncé, Chris Martin, and Bruno Mars in February 2016.



“I never thought I'd be on a stage that big – the Super Bowl – with such amazing people. I learned a lot about music and life. I was nervous, but the moment you walk on that stage the nervousness breaks and you feel free...plus, I met Beyoncé.”

-Teresa, Cellist, 16

“There's no question about it that *our* Super Bowl 50 MVP was Youth Orchestra Los Angeles who rocked the halftime show.”

-Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti

### Guest Artists and Conductors

- Marin Alsop (Baltimore)
- Emanuel Ax, Pianist
- Beyoncé
- Coldplay
- Gustavo Dudamel
- Gloria Estefan
- Hilary Hahn, Violinist
- Journey
- Juanes
- Los Angeles Philharmonic
- wildUp
- Bruno Mars
- Johannes Moser, Cellist
- No Doubt
- Sir Simon Rattle (Berlin)
- David Robertson (St. Louis)
- Simón Bolívar Symphony Orchestra of Venezuela
- Thomas Wilkins
- Stevie Wonder

### Venue Appearances

- Walt Disney Concert Hall
- Hollywood Bowl
- Luckman Auditorium
- Cathedral of Our Lady of the Angels
- Valley Performing Arts Center
- St Thomas the Apostle, Los Angeles
- Colburn School
- Natural History Museum, Los Angeles
- Levi's Stadium
- Kresge Hall, Boston
- Paramount Theatre, Oakland
- National Gallery of Art, Washington DC
- Barbican Centre, London
- Suntory Hall, Tokyo
- Fukushima Prefecture, Japan

# YOLA

## ...as a National Model

In just 10 years, YOLA has become a leading innovator in the field of music education and a convener across the Sistema-inspired movement in the U.S. and around the world. In 2012, this role was formalized with the creation of Take a Stand, a partnership with the Longy School of Music and Bard College.



Take a Stand's key project areas include annual conferences for field-wide learning; a Master of Arts in Teaching in Music Degree Program, situated on the campus of YOLA at HOLA; and the National Take a Stand Festival (NTASF), which focuses on bringing students together from El Sistema-inspired programs nationwide.



“The discipline required to play orchestral music is a living metaphor for good citizenship. We join hundreds of other orchestras and educational institutions throughout the nation in this work, and together, we are making a meaningful, measurable difference in the lives of young people through classical music.”

**-Deborah Borda, President & CEO, LA Phil**



“El Sistema makes the world so incredibly small. There's this mutual understanding and instant rapport among students. The best part of my job is having the opportunity to help out teachers and students from other El Sistema programs, who are so excited to talk to me about YOLA. We are all trying to accomplish the same thing on every corner of the globe.”

**-Emily, Assistant Conductor, YOLA**

### National Outreach

Visits from Other El Sistema Programs	100+
Visiting Teachers, Administrators, Civic Leaders	1,000+
Combined YOLA Audience at Concerts	800K
YouTube Video Views	200K+
Visitors to YOLA Materials Library	100K+

(2007-2017)