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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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EMPIRE STATE YOUTH ORCHESTRA PLAYATHON RETURNS

MARCH 21 AT CROSSGATES

Organization's Largest Fundraiser Showcases Hundreds of Young Musicians

Guilderland, NY – On Saturday, March 21st, hundreds of Empire State Youth Orchestra (ESYO) musicians will take over Crossgates as part of ESYO's annual Playathon fundraiser, a musical marathon that features every ensemble in the organization. This free, family-friendly event will take place from 10:30 a.m. through 5:15 p.m. and will showcase 11 ESYO ensembles including CHIME (Creating Harmony Inspiring Musical Empowerment), which is celebrating a ten-year anniversary.

The marathon display of musical talent is more than a community concert as it helps ESYO ensure no qualified musician is ever turned away because of an inability to pay. The money raised will fund a substantial portion of ESYO's operating expenses and musician scholarships.

The return of this annual tradition will bring beautiful, energetic music, camaraderie, inspiring stories from ESYO's members, and memories that will last a lifetime.

WHEN:

Saturday, March 21, 2026

10:30am - 5:15pm

WHERE:

Crossgates - Lower Level near Primark

WHO:

Hundreds of Young ESYO Musicians in Multiple Ensembles!

PERFORMANCE SCHEDULE

10:30 am - 11:25 am Percussion Ensembles/ <i>Merengue Del Primero</i>	1:45 pm - 2:30 pm Symphony Orchestra & Auction
11:25 am - 11:55 am Wind Orchestra & Auction	2:45 pm - 3:20 pm Repertory Orchestra & Auction
12:10pm - 12:35 pm CHIME	3:35 pm - 4:00 pm Repertory Jazz Orchestra
12:45 pm - 1:00 pm Concertino Strings	4:05 pm - 4:30 pm Youth Jazz Orchestra
1:05 pm - 1:35 pm String Orchetra	4:40 pm - 5:10 pm Symphony Orchestra

For more information, visit esyo.org/playathon.

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About Crossgates Mall

Crossgates is the Capital Region’s premier shopping, dining and entertainment destination offering an impressive selection of national brands and the newest retail concepts. The center is anchored by Macy’s, JCPenney, Dick’s Sporting Goods, Going, Going, Going Gone!, Primark and Best Buy, while offering more than 180 retail shops, including Apple. Crossgates offers 10 entertainment venues and over 20 on-site eateries, such as Dave & Buster’s, Get Air, Billy Beez, Apex Entertainment, Maggie McFly’s and Regal Cinemas with IMAX. Or simply relax at our award-winning day spa, Spa Mirbeau. Located adjacent to a dual-branded 192-room Homewood Suites and Tru by Hilton hotel and a COSTCO Wholesale, Crossgates is your destination to EAT. SHOP. PLAY. STAY. Additional information regarding Crossgates can be found at shopcrossgates.com, Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter.

About Pyramid Management Group, LLC:

Pyramid Management Group, owner of Crossgates, is one of the largest, most innovative, privately-held real estate developers in the northeast. Headquartered in Syracuse, New York, Pyramid's portfolio of dynamic shopping, dining and entertainment destinations dominate the northeast with 9 properties located throughout New York and Massachusetts. For nearly 50 years, Pyramid has built its reputation on being first, fast, ahead of the curve and always what's next, leading the industry in combining the best elements of traditional retail with world-class dining and entertainment, all under one roof. For more information, visit www.pyramidmg.com

About Empire State Youth Orchestra:

ESYO is a 501(c)(3) in New York's Capital Region. Founded in 1979, ESYO engages, inspires, and empowers more than 600 young musicians each year from across a two-hour radius of New York's Capital Region, including western New England. Through 14 performing ensembles and orchestras serving a wide range of ages and skill levels, ESYO offers exceptional training with outstanding conductors, dedicated coaches, and world-class guest artists. Students don't just learn their instruments — they develop creativity, adaptability, and social-emotional skills that help them thrive in life. Along the way, they gain opportunities to lead, mentor peers, and take ownership of their musical journeys. In 2015, ESYO launched CHIME (Creating Harmony Inspiring Musical Empowerment) to expand access to high-quality music opportunities that complement school programs for Schenectady youth. CHIME now reaches about 170 students with daily instruction, instruments, and ensemble experiences. ESYO musicians present more than 30 concerts annually, performing in schools, parks, and hospitals as well as at renowned venues such as Carnegie Hall, Tanglewood's Ozawa Hall, and Troy Savings Bank Music Hall. The organization also maintains a long history of international touring and exchanges. Recognized nationally for adventurous programming, ESYO nurtures not only musicianship, but also confidence, curiosity, collaboration, and resilience — proving just how powerful young people can be when given the tools and trust to rise. For more information about Empire State Youth Orchestra and Building Harmony, visit www.esyo.org.