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NYCHA TO CREATE A YOUTH ORCHESTRA

The New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) is looking for the next Yo Yo Ma, or maybe the next Louis Armstrong. NYCHA is seeking motivated elementary and middle-school aged residents who want to learn to play a musical instrument and then become an inaugural member of the NYCHA Youth Instrumental Ensemble.

“NYCHA residents are incredibly talented,” said Tino Hernandez, NYCHA Chairman. “I expect this new orchestra to be in demand as much as our Youth Chorus, which performs all over the city.”

This free program is designed for NYCHA residents, ages nine to 13, and requires no musical training at all. In addition to learning how to play a brass, string or percussion instrument, students will also learn how to read sheet music and work together as a team. Participants must exhibit maturity and dedication as they commit to attend weekly scheduled lessons. Students will also be held responsible for maintaining the condition of the new instruments they will be allowed to borrow so they can practice at home.

This program is being offered through NYCHA’s Community Operations, Department of Citywide Programs office.

Both parents and students will be interviewed for consideration for one of the 50 spots in the Youth Ensemble. Interested students are required to complete an application, submit a 100 word essay explaining their desire to join the Youth Ensemble, and obtain one letter of recommendation from a teacher, guidance counselor or NYCHA Community Center Director.

The actual instruction and rehearsals will take place at NYCHA's Straus Performing Arts Center at 225 East 27th Street, New York, NY 10016. Straus Performing Arts Center provides a host of workshops for NYCHA residents of all ages including, vocals, dance, theater, and orchestra.

Applications are due by March 30, 2007. For more information, or to request an application, those interested should call 212-306-3527, or go on-line at www.nyc.gov, and look under Residents' Corner.