



Concert programs and posters spanning the 75-year history of the Amherst Symphony Orchestra. COURTESY AMHERST SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

# Amherst Symphony Orchestra

## 75 Years of Concerts and Community Connectivity

By Sarah Pozzuto

With three quarters of a century of history, the Amherst Symphony Orchestra (ASO) prides itself on being one of the nation's oldest continuously operating community symphony orchestras – if not the oldest. Since its inception nearly 75 years ago, it has delivered thousands of free performances to the Greater Buffalo community. Indeed, it continues to offer five free concerts each year.

In part because the group is composed entirely of volunteer musicians, its longevity may seem uncharacteristic of a community orchestra. However, the ensemble's willingness to continuously adapt to an ever-changing social landscape has been its greatest strength. Over the years, the orchestra has become increasingly involved in the Western New York community, partnering with local schools to provide underprivileged children with exposure to orchestral music and offering scholarships to student musicians. From its humble beginnings as an adult education program in the Amherst Central School District, the group has grown and morphed into a truly community-based organization.