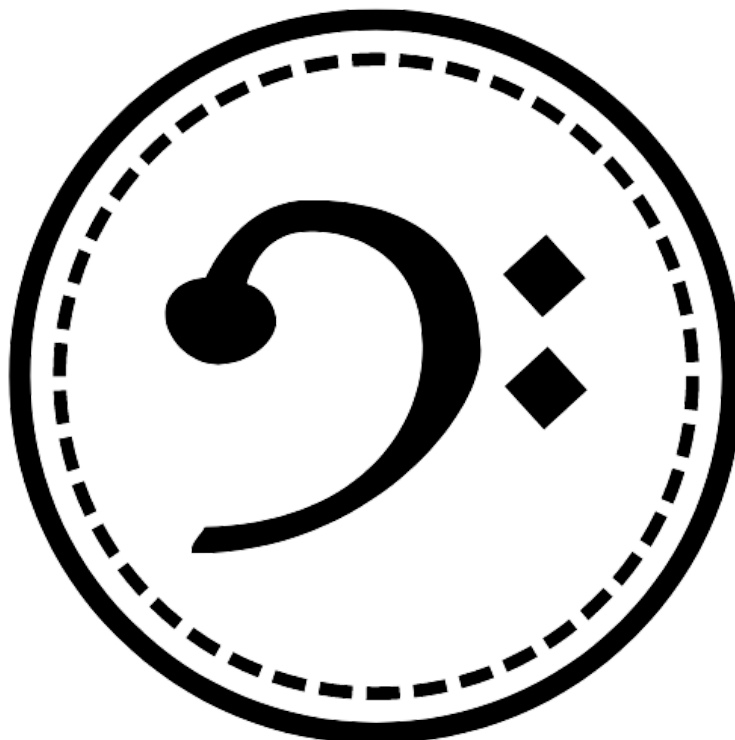




**2023 Annual Report  
Low Brass Network  
501(c)(3)**

Published December 28, 2023



[lowbrassnetwork.org](http://lowbrassnetwork.org)

Directors / Executive Officers:

- Lester Yu** (Fremont, CA) - President
- Eunhyeok Jee** (Davis, CA) - Chief Director
- Ethan Hsiung** (Atlanta, GA) - Associate Director
- Andrew Hazard** (Columbia, TN) - Associate Director
- Arnav Chowdhry** (Fremont, CA) - Chief of Staff

***Mission Statement:***

Founded in November 2021, Low Brass Network (LBN) is a student-run organization with the primary goal of providing opportunities to low brass instrument students with the help of advisors. We strive to build a connected community of low brass players, provide free music lessons to push students to their potential, provide affordable instruments, and promote the playing of low brass instruments worldwide, especially in underserved areas.

***By The Numbers:***

As of 2023, our volunteer and student network spans over 5,000 low brass players, covering all fifty states in the U.S. and 40+ countries. This represents a roughly 1500 percent growth in membership from 2022. Furthermore, these volunteers have provided over 10,000 free lessons this year.

***Letter from Executive Team:***

As we wrap up another year at Low Brass Network, we want to express our gratitude to everyone who played a vital role in making 2023 a success. Your passion, dedication and generosity to the world of low brass will continue to impact our community.

*To Artists and Composers,*

Your talent and insights have inspired countless individuals within our network. We are immensely grateful for the inspiration, advice, and captivating performances that you have brought to our low brass community. We constantly receive messages from excited students, emphasizing how well you demonstrate to them what is possible through low brass. Special thanks to Adam Frey, Lauren Rudzinskas, Emmy Rozanski, Steven Verhelst, Johan de Meij, and Louise Anna Pollock for being especially helpful.

*To our Volunteers,*

Behind every event and every lesson, there is a large network of volunteers. From the secondary and university level students teaching lessons, to our advisory board, to those who help with our events, and to those who helped out our cause at any point, you are what makes Low Brass Network, a network. Your hard work and commitment in the past year did not go unnoticed. Your contributions have been nothing short of invaluable, and we could not have done anything without your support.

*To our Sponsors and Partnering Organizations,*

Your belief in our mission and financial support have been the backbone of our endeavors. Your awareness and commitment to improving the opportunities for low brass players have allowed us to expand our reach and impact. We are thankful for your partnership and the opportunities they have provided, whether monetarily or through other means of support. Special thanks to Richard Galime and Brett Baker for working with us through every step of this process.

*To our Donors,*

Your generosity has made it possible for us to continue our mission. Your financial contributions have directly supported our outreach programs, lesson costs, instrument donations, the festival, and the overall growth of LBN. Your belief in our cause fuels our determination to continue building a space for all who share a passion for low brass.

With all this and more, we look forward to everything to come in 2024!

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### ***Section 1: Logistics of Low Brass Network***

LBN's officer team oversees the network's various opportunities and events. Sponsors, artists, volunteers, and casual players all have the opportunity to benefit from what LBN has to offer.

All low brass players are offered a community where they can discuss and learn the intricacies of low brass music and instruments. Additionally, members are eligible to receive lessons, where they can gain valuable experience that can significantly improve their embouchure, range, tonguing, and other aspects of playing low brass instruments. On top of this, members can receive massive discounts on essential low brass equipment including instruments, mouthpieces, and maintenance equipment.

Volunteers in the Low Brass Network get to receive invaluable opportunities: from significantly improving their experience in leadership, expanding their low brass knowledge, learning how a nonprofit runs its logistics, receiving service hours, and even developing relationships with other volunteers and students.

Sponsors can further their goals and ignite change within the low brass community through collaboration with LBN. This provides the added benefit of significantly increasing their exposure to a well-receptive community of low brass players that would be interested in their products. Also, by supporting LBN, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, corporations are eligible for certain tax benefits.

Artists that support LBN help grow the market for low brass, which, in turn, raises demand, leading to a mutually beneficial relationship between the artist and LBN. Moreover, by being advertised to the low brass community, artists can receive more exposure while also providing quality information and performances to the LBN community. Some artists also receive monetary benefits.

Note: If you would like to help out with our endeavors monetarily, feel free to donate to our organization. Any help goes a long way towards helping support the low brass community.

## ***Section 2: Summary***

### ***Section 2.1: Summary of Lessons***

We offer two different types of lessons at LBN. Our large network of volunteer students, who are looking to gain teaching experience, are matched up with underprivileged students and beginners alike. For this lesson format, accessibility is key: lessons are free and largely online. The other lesson format consists of matching professional teachers with intermediate / advanced-level students who are unable to find teachers in their local areas; lessons are paid and mostly in-person.

### ***Section 2.2: Summary of Festival***

The International Low Brass Festival was a 3-day international festival that featured 28 world-class low brass artists / ensembles. The festival was free and live-streamed on YouTube from 5 am to 9 pm PST. Audience members got to view masterclass performances from professionals such as Adam Frey or Denson Paul Pollard, view their favorite content creators such as Christopher Bill perform some of their favorite pieces, and even listen to ensembles like the Eastman Trombone Choir and Slokar Quartet. Additionally, frequent Q&A sessions allowed viewers to address any potential questions that they may have regarding the low brass community, ranging from advice on going pro, to more technical aspects regarding mouthpieces and intonation to improve their playing.

The festival took an immense planning effort that involved multiple branches of the Low Brass Network Staff team, headed under the president, Lester Yu, over the course of 11 months. A large quantity of emails and calls had to be completed to onboard the new performers into the festival and organization, as well as discuss benefits and compensation. Corporate sponsors were also identified to provide the majority of these benefits (*see Section 3*). The staff team worked diligently to secure the cooperation of around fifteen sponsors. Additionally, members of the staff team had to constantly be online in order to move the festival along, play ad breaks when necessary, and address any technical difficulties. Our team spent over 2,500 hours in the total planning and execution of the festival.

Overall, the festival was a success, garnering up to 300 participants at times, with high levels of engagement and thought-provoking discussions on the future of low brass in classical music. Artists and low brass players were able to come together and enjoy their shared fondness of low brass instruments.

### ***Section 2.3: Summary of Other Initiatives***

The **LBN Research Program** conducted research and published a paper in October of 2022 regarding toxic buildup inside low brass instruments. Since then, there has not been

progress on LBN research due to a shift in focus, and plans for the future of LBN research are yet to be determined.

The **LBN App** private beta has been released on Google Play and the final version will be released shortly on both Google Play and the App Store. The app has been in development for over 18 months and its functions will also be available on our website shortly after the full release.

The **LBN Podcast** has released seven episodes, featuring Richard Galime, Lauren Rudzinskas, Dan Vecchitto, Russ Zokaites, Emmy Rozanski, and Johan de Meij. These episodes were published on YouTube, Spotify, Soundcloud, and the LBN website. Each episode was recorded prior to or shortly after the LBN International Festival (*see Section 2.2*), and no new episodes have been recorded since then. Plans for the podcast are on hold, but we expect more episodes to come out sometime in the first half of 2024.

The **LBN Instrument Donation Program** has donated a couple of instruments to students of an underprivileged status, but the expansion of the program has been delayed to next year.

The **LBN Ensemble Program** has been canceled due to a lack of direct impact on LBN's mission statement, and future plans are to be determined.

The **LBN Competition** and **All-World Ensembles** have been canceled due to an overestimation of the number of submissions. We expect them to return in 2025 at the latest.

### ***Section 3: Finances***

LBN, as a nonprofit organization, relied primarily on sponsors and executive funds to fulfill its goals and events in 2023, rather than on donations. Thus, the current state of LBN's non-profit checking account remains slightly funded and underused due to this approach of allowing events to fund themselves. While this allows LBN to be kept accountable and consistently remind itself of its core values for every venture, the process is slow and daunting.

Attempts to fundraise for LBN were made. Other local fundraisers around LBN's current Fremont headquarters were proposed but never initiated due to a lack of staffing and time. Merchandise sales, which included hats, hoodies, and shirts were posted on the website. However, due to a lack of buyers, not all orders ended up shipping, so we barely broke even in terms of merchandise sales.

Roughly 60 percent of LBN's funds for the 2023 fiscal year were spent on the International Low Brass Festival (*see Section 2.2*). While most artists were generally compensated with funds from our sponsors or requested no payment, there were still some payments that LBN incurred. Additionally, an upgrade to Zoom (for broadcasting), upgrades to the LBN website (to sell tickets), and other smaller costs were required in order to run the festival.

Roughly 40 percent of the remaining funds were spent on helping out with lesson costs, some instrument donations, merchandise production costs, general maintenance costs, and promotional costs. The \$2000 USD in LBN research program funding was pulled in order to make room for these expenses.

Overall, we brought in roughly \$40,000 USD in terms of funding from sponsors, fundraisers, sales, and donations, and spent around \$500 USD more than we brought in (incurred by LBN executives / directors).



## ***Section 4: Future Goals/Plans***

### ***Section 4.1: LBN App***

The Low Brass Network App will have several key features critical to improving the low brass community's experience and technical abilities. Currently, students are manually assigned to teachers through the officer team via a survey (*see Section 2.1*). This method is inefficient and takes a lot of time. Thus, the app's primary feature will focus on automating the process, which will be the student-teacher connection page.

The app will use a digital program to match students to teachers based on their specific needs. Students can also create profiles showcasing the best of their work and add personal information they want the teacher to view. Teachers share the same privilege and can add information to their profiles that they might feel benefits prospective students. Moreover, teachers are eligible to record their service hours and other benefits if the lessons provided are free.

Additionally, the app will have a sight-reading feature that provides challenging sheet music for all low brass musicians to sight-read, with the pieces changing every day. The LBN app also features some interactive games for musicians to improve their music-related vocabulary, and incorporates social media to post their best low brass-related highlights.

We expect the app to be able to significantly grow our membership, making the sign-up process easier across all spectrums. These app features will also be on our website. The Public Beta release will occur in early 2024, with full release likely occurring at the start of the 4th Quarter of 2024.

### ***Section 4.2: Financial Plans***

One of our requirements next year is to bring in more money than we spend. This is to ensure the long-term financial stability of our nonprofit. We will look towards focusing more on outreach, looking to reach a larger audience and being able to secure more monetary donations along the way. Nevertheless, LBN's IDAAP (*see Section 4.4*) is expected to significantly improve financial gains throughout the next year.

### ***Section 4.3: Expansion Toward Certain Regions***

Roughly 95 percent of LBN members do not reside within Oceania. Roughly 98 percent of LBN members do not reside within Asia. Roughly 99.5 percent of LBN members do not reside in Africa. In the next two years, one of our main focuses is to expand our area of operations, and to work with more students and volunteers in these areas, mainly through our new instrument donation program (*see Section 4.4*).

### ***Section 4.4: IDAAP: Instrument Donation and Assistance Program***

Starting in March of 2024, we will be working with individual music nonprofits (i.e. school bands, community bands, and community music hubs) to provide their underprivileged students with access to instruments at a significantly reduced price, thanks to our sponsors. We will also be able to connect these students to our large volunteer network to provide them free guidance along the way. In 2024, these programs will be specifically targeted towards large cities in areas where LBN members are underrepresented and will expand to more rural areas in the future. We can expect this program to double our membership by 2025 and save students millions of dollars through the next two years.

#### ***Section 4.5: Headquarters***

Currently, our main headquarters is located in Fremont, California, and a secondary location in Columbia, Tennessee. However, starting in the middle of 2024, our headquarters will be moved to either Nashville, Tennessee, or Atlanta, Georgia (pending a final vote from the Board of Directors). A physical location is in the plans with a timeline of 2026-2027. We plan to bring on full-time employees to work at this location, allowing us to better manage our app, programs, festivals, partnerships, and introduce a more direct approach to assisting the low brass community.

#### ***Section 4.6: Festival/Future Competitions***

Although LBN will not be hosting a low brass festival in 2024, it is expected to return in some capacity in 2025. Specific details are to be determined. As for competitions, we expect them to return no later than the next festival. Whether they return in 2024 is to be determined. There may be other smaller events outside the festival and competitions, so updates will be posted on the official LBN website and social media.

***Resolution***

*Resolved:*

That Low Brass Network hereby acknowledges the receipt of this Annual Report for the year two thousand twenty-three. That the contents of the Annual Report, as presented by the Low Brass Network, are found to be true and correct to the best of our knowledge and understanding.

That the initiatives detailed in the report are recognized as significant contributions by our network to the low brass community. That the Executive Team has thoroughly reviewed and agrees with the information and statements presented in the Annual Report. That the Board of Directors of Low Brass Network has duly considered and officially endorses the Low Brass Network Annual Report for the year two thousand twenty-three. That Low Brass Network expresses its appreciation for the dedication and efforts of all leadership, staff, volunteers, students, artists, donors, and everyone involved in fostering a growing collaborative environment within the low brass community. That Low Brass Network commits to continued support for the improvement of opportunities for all low brass players. That this resolution is hereby adopted and approved by the Executive Team and the Board of Directors of Low Brass Network.

Resolved further, that the officers of Low Brass Network are hereby authorized and directed to take all necessary actions to implement and follow this resolution.

In witness whereof, the undersigned, being those who wrote this report, have executed this resolution as of the date first above written.

Lester Yu

Position: President

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Eunhyeok Jee

Position: Chief Director

A handwritten signature in black ink, featuring a large, stylized 'E' followed by a 'j'.

Ethan Hsiung

Position: Associate Director

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing as the letters 'EH' in a stylized, blocky font.

Andrew Hazard

Position: Associate Director

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a series of overlapping loops and a long horizontal stroke.

Arnav Chowdhry

Position: Chief of Staff

A handwritten signature in black ink, featuring a large, stylized 'A' followed by a 'C' and a long horizontal stroke.