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ECYS ANNOUNCES DR. JINDONG CAI AS MUSIC DIRECTOR OF EL CAMINO YOUTH SYMPHONY AND CONDUCTOR OF THE SENIOR SYMPHONY FOR THE 2014-15 SEASON

April 15, 2014 – El Camino Youth Symphony is delighted to announce that Dr. Jindong Cai, Music Director of Stanford University, will take the podium as the next Music Director of ECYS for the 2014-15 Season.

Dr. Jindong Cai will join ECYS as Music Director and Conductor of the Senior Symphony in June 2014.

Jindong Cai joined the Stanford University faculty in 2004 as the first holder of the Gretchen B. Kimball Director of Orchestral Studies’ Chair and Associate Professor of Music in Performance. He is currently the Music Director and Conductor of the Stanford Symphony Orchestra, the Stanford Philharmonia Orchestra, and the Stanford New Ensemble. He is also the Artistic Director of the Stanford Pan-Asian Music Festival, which he founded in 2005.

Cai, the ninth music director of El Camino Youth Symphony since its founding in 1963, follows Dr. Camilla Kolchinsky as conductor of the award-winning Senior Symphony Orchestra. Dr. Kolchinsky has been strongly in support of the appointment: "I wish him great success and from my hands I give the orchestra to his hands. I look forward to working together with very good cooperation." Dr. Kolchinsky will continue in the organization as an Associate Conductor.
Born in Beijing, Mr. Cai received his early musical training in China, where he learned to play the violin and the piano. He came to the United States for his graduate studies at the New England Conservatory and the College-Conservatory of Music in Cincinnati. In 1989, he was selected to study with famed conductor Leonard Bernstein at the Tanglewood Music Center, and won the Conducting Fellowship Award at the Aspen Music Festival in 1990 and 1992.

Professor Cai served on the faculties at the Louisiana State University, the University of Arizona, the College-Conservatory of Music at the University of Cincinnati, and the University of California at Berkeley. He held assistant conducting positions with the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra, Cincinnati Pops Orchestra, and the Cincinnati Chamber Orchestra, working closely with conductors Jesus Lopez-Cobos, Erich Kunzel, and Keith Lockhart. Read Dr. Cai’s full biography here.

"The ECYS Board of Directors was unanimous in its choice of Professor Cai. We are excited about his vision for the organization, and look forward to working with him to continue our tradition of excellence in music education," said Grace Lai, President.

"Working with youth orchestras has been an important part of my career. Indeed, my very first job in China was conducting the Beijing Children’s Palace Youth Orchestra and my first job after completing my graduate studies in this country was with the Cincinnati Symphony Youth Orchestra. I continue to believe that every conductor has an obligation to work with youth orchestras when possible; a good conductor’s influence can stay with young people for their entire lives, in music and beyond, as I know from my own experience," said Dr. Cai.

Dr. Cai currently resides in Palo Alto with his two children and his wife Sheila Melvin, with whom has co-authored several New York Times articles on the performing arts in China and a book Rhapsody in Red: How Western Classical Music Became Chinese. In addition to his duties as music director of El Camino Youth Symphony, Dr. Cai will continue as music director at Stanford University.

“Although my career has taken me to a different level, in the back of my mind, I have hoped to once again have the chance to work long-term with a good youth orchestra. We are so privileged to live in a diverse and vibrant community that values excellence – and in which so many young people are learning to perform classical music with their parents enthusiastic support – and I would draw on the ties I have built in my years at Stanford to serve as a community ambassador for ECYS."
Dr. Cai will officially take the baton at the Season Opener Concert, scheduled for November 2, 2014 at Flint Center in Cupertino. The 52\textsuperscript{nd} Season will conclude with a performance tour of Spain in Summer 2015. Further details about the 2014-2015 Season will be formally announced later this year.

The ECYS Senior Symphony is comprised of talented young musicians from all over the Bay Area who perform professional repertoire and travel internationally. In January, the orchestra was invited by the San Francisco Symphony to perform at the Bay Area Youth Orchestra Festival at Davies Hall. This past summer, the Symphony embarked on a fantastic tour to Prague, Salzburg, Bratislava, and Budapest. In previous years, the Symphony has also toured France, Spain, England, Scotland, Italy, Russia, Germany, Poland, Estonia, Finland, and Austria where they earned the International Festival of Youth and Music Award.

In 2013, the El Camino Youth Symphony Association celebrated its 50\textsuperscript{th} year of providing excellence in music education and performance. The program serves musicians ages 6-20 from throughout the Bay Area, offering six orchestras and a chamber music program.

Dr. Cai will be available for in-person interviews the week of May 10-17.

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