

NEWS & RECORD

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greensboro.com

Music festival back with new name, leadership

Eastern Festival of Music will be held next summer at Guilford College

SUSIE C. SPEAR
Staff Reporter

A new group that includes with wife of the founder of the former Eastern Music Festival will relaunch the festival as the Eastern Festival of Music on June 29-Aug. 1, 2026, administrators announced on Thursday.

And while the festival's name is slightly different, its fresh cadre of leaders say they will preserve the format of the prestigious 63-year-old summer program and keep its home at Guilford College.

Musicians will perform during the five-week festival under the familiar baton of



Schwarz

Gerard Schwarz, long-time EMF music director and conductor, who has joined the new program, administrators said. An internationally-celebrated maestro, Schwarz had been EMF music director since 2008.

The board of directors for the Eastern Music Festival abruptly canceled the 2025 EMF season in late February, citing negotiation problems the 60 some unionized professional faculty musicians.

Then on Oct. 6, that board voted to dissolve the EMF. Former Executive Director Chris Williams said the board had reached an impasse with unionized faculty and could no longer sustain the program, long-considered one of the Piedmont's cultural crown jewels.

If You Go

For more information about the festival, go to easternfestivalofmusic.org.

The new iteration of the festival will be run by a board of seasoned EMF patrons, most of whom served as past chairs and members of the EMF board. Led by chairwoman Barbara Morgenstern, they include: vice-chair George Lawson, as well as Greensboro philanthropists Jeanne Tannenbaum, Sylvia Samet, and Sam LeBauer, also a former EMF board chair who has supported the program for six decades.

Morgenstern, the ex-wife of EMF founder, the late Sheldon "Shelly" Morgenstern, said in early October that the new board had garnered pledges of roughly \$1 million from patrons and felt confident

it could raise the more than \$2.4 million it will take to fund the 2026 season.

"I am thrilled that a group of artistically motivated supporters will lead us into the future through artistic integrity and deep commitment to music education," Schwarz said in a news release from administrators.

The EFM will soon announce information about the application process for the 2026 program, Morgenstern said.

The festival, which historically received about 1,000 applications per season, will accept about 250 new students from around the globe for 2026, Morgenstern said in a release. Promising musicians, ages 14-24, will study specialized and challenging curriculum in orchestral instruments, piano, and conducting.

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'COMFORTABLE WITH THE IDEA OF FAILURE'



WOODY MARSHALL, NEWS & RECORD

Red Lobster CEO Damola Adamolekun spoke at The CEO Edge, Commanding Every Opportunity, program at Harrison Auditorium at N.C. A&T on Thursday.

Red Lobster CEO tells A&T students that an unwillingness to try new things is a barrier to success

NANCY McLAUGHLIN
Staff Reporter

Damola Adamolekun's high-profile success at leading Red Lobster out of bankruptcy has consequences for other children of immigrants, whose parents are paying attention.

Those children used to get compared to other children in the family.

"They are not comparing us to cousins," a student at N.C. A&T

State University told Adamolekun during Thursday's leadership event on campus, "they are comparing us to you.

"When opportunities feel inaccessible," she continued, "what did you do?"

Go after them anyway, he said.

"What's the worst thing that can happen?" he asked the audience. "You are right (back) where you are. "

Or maybe looking back wondering how you ever doubted yourself, he said.

Adamolekun, 36, the son of Nigerian immigrants and a former Goldman Sachs investment banker, shared lessons from his professional journey during A&T's Chancellor's Speaker Series, "The CEO Edge

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NC A&T receives \$63M donation

It's the second time billionaire philanthropist MacKenzie Scott has given to the university

NANCY McLAUGHLIN
Staff Reporter

Billionaire philanthropist MacKenzie Scott has donated \$63 million to N.C. A&T State University, Chancellor James Martin announced Friday during a board meeting with university trustees.

It is the second no-strings-attached gift to the university by Scott, who wrote a check for \$45 million to the country's largest historically black school and university (HBCU) in 2020, then the school's largest ever donation by nine times.

Martin unveiled the news on a large screen to applause. It read "\$63 million" and underneath: "Thank you MacKenzie Scott!"

"We are grateful to have this incredible gift," Martin said.

The university didn't fill out an application — there aren't any for Scott's gifts. But A&T might have drawn attention for awarding the highest number of degrees to African Americans in the state, as one of the state's top three public universities in research productivity. The university is also ranked among the nation's top 25 "most innovative" universities by U.S. News & World Report.

It was Scott's second large donation this week to a Triad HBCU. On Wednesday, Winston-Salem State University announced a \$50 million gift from Scott.



Scott

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Police: Shootout over a turkey at a High Point Food Lion leaves 1 injured.

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Weather

Warm, partly cloudy

High 71
Low 55

FORECAST • A10

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