

To the Friends of the North State Symphony:

First of all, I want to say again how thrilling our Beethoven 9 was at the close of this last season. It was musically triumphant, and with sold-out audiences in both Redding and Chico, I can say how grateful we are to have had our communities turn out in such force to support and celebrate our work. The energy of a live performance comes from both the musicians and the audience, and we thank you for being part of those exciting performances!

Secondly, I want to say how proud I am of everything we have accomplished here in the last 12 years. The North State Symphony is a remarkable testament to trust, commitment, enthusiasm, and community. When we first began negotiations to merge the Redding and Chico Symphonies, many in both communities were concerned that this could signal the end of the individual cultural institutions that they loved and had been part of for years. What emerged was a new, stronger, and more vibrant organization that bridged the communities of the North State, allowed for tremendous artistic and administrative growth, and has been my first musical home as a conductor.

It is therefore not without some real sadness that I am announcing that 2013-14 will be my final year with the North State Symphony. I have had the tremendous and almost-unheard-of good fortune to have won not just one, but two, conductor searches this year. I have just been appointed Music Director and Conductor of the Springfield Symphony Orchestra in Missouri. This job, combined with my other new post as Music Director and Conductor of the Topeka Symphony in Kansas, means that it is time for my family and me to move to the Midwest. We will be moving to Springfield in the coming months, and maintain a joint residency in Kansas and Missouri.

I have been able to schedule my new jobs around the North State Symphony's 2013-14 season, so I will not miss any of the subscription concerts of our last year together. In fact, I'm very excited by the upcoming season and look forward to seeing you at the concerts. It will be our best year ever!

I will be asking a guest conductor to take on the holiday concert. I will also make myself available to the board and California State University, Chico, to advise on their upcoming search for my replacement. I trust, after having spent years building this orchestra with you into the truly remarkable regional orchestra that is, that you will have a talented pool of enthusiastic conductors eager to join in the continued growth of the North State Symphony.

I am immensely grateful for the opportunity this job has given me to grow as a musician and for the exciting role I've been able to fill as an ambassador for orchestral music here in the North State. We've accomplished far more than I even dreamed when I first took these jobs, and I am indebted to the musicians, board, staff, audience, and community members who have been a part of this exciting chapter of my life.

With deepest gratitude,

Kyle Wiley Pickett