

THE
CLEVELAND
ORCHESTRA

FRANZ WELSER-MÖST, MUSIC DIRECTOR

NEWS

25 | 26
SEASON

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The Cleveland Orchestra Board of Trustees elects Richard J. Kramer as new chair



CLEVELAND — Following its annual meeting on October 9, The Cleveland Orchestra announced the election of Richard J. Kramer, former Chairman, Chief Executive Officer, and President of The Goodyear Tire & Rubber Company, as Chair of its Board of Trustees.

Kramer, a longtime business and community leader, joined The Cleveland Orchestra's Board of Trustees in 2018 and has served as Vice Chair since 2023. He has played an active role on several committees, including the Campaign Cabinet, Distinguished Service Award, Nominating and Governance, and Personnel committees. Most recently, he served as chair of the Finance Committee in 2024.

"The Cleveland Orchestra is fortunate to have Rich Kramer's visionary leadership guiding us into the future," said **André Gremillet, President & CEO of The Cleveland Orchestra**. "He brings superb business acumen and a deep personal commitment to the Orchestra's mission, and I very much look forward to partnering with him in the years ahead as we continue to strengthen our reach and impact."

“The Cleveland Orchestra represents the very best of our community: artistic excellence, innovation and a spirit of collaboration,” **Richard J. Kramer said**. “I’m deeply honored to help advance its mission and ensure that this world-class institution continues to inspire audiences here in Northeast Ohio and around the world.”

Kramer becomes the 14th individual to hold this position in the Orchestra’s history, succeeding Richard K. Smucker, who served from 2017 to 2025. Smucker, for whom the President & CEO Chair was [recently named](#) in recognition of his extraordinary leadership and generosity, was also the recipient of this year’s Distinguished Service Award, the institution’s highest honor recognizing individuals whose exceptional commitment and service have shaped the Orchestra’s success.

“Rich is an accomplished and thoughtful leader who has long demonstrated his commitment to the greater Cleveland community,” **said Richard K. Smucker**. “Through his service with organizations such as the Cleveland Clinic and John Carroll University, he’s shown a deep dedication to strengthening our region. The Orchestra will benefit greatly from his experience and passion for giving back.”

In his new role, Kramer will work alongside the Board’s officers, Executive Committee, and Trustees, and in collaboration with President & CEO André Gremillet and Music Director Franz Welser-Möst, to provide steady leadership and strategic direction.

About Richard J. Kramer

Rich Kramer is the former Chairman, CEO and President of The Goodyear Tire & Rubber Company. He became CEO and President in 2010 and Chairman later the same year, holding all three roles through January 2024.

Kramer’s tenure as CEO – the second-longest in company history – coincided with an inflection point in transportation that led to the evolution of Goodyear into a technology-driven mobility company. While continuing to supply a portfolio of high-quality tires and services, Goodyear became a leader in providing products and services for evolving transportation modes, including electric vehicles and fleets of shared and connected vehicles.

Kramer drove strategic initiatives that delivered the five highest annual segment operating income results in company history. Among his achievements were fully funding and de-risking the US salaried and hourly pension plans, refinancing debt and divesting unprofitable businesses, as well as the acquisition of Cooper Tire.

Under Kramer’s leadership, Goodyear has been recognized among Newsweek’s Most Responsible Companies, Time’s World’s Best Companies, Fortune’s World’s Most Admired Companies and Forbes’ World’s Best Regarded Companies. In 2023, Kramer received the prestigious Bill France Award from NASCAR for his leadership and contributions to the sport of racing, which is integral to Goodyear’s marketing and product development.

Kramer’s appointment as CEO followed a series of key leadership roles over the course of a decade. After joining Goodyear in 2000 as vice president of corporate finance, he served in a variety of key leadership roles including executive vice president and chief financial officer, president of North America and chief operating officer. Before joining Goodyear, Kramer was a partner with PricewaterhouseCoopers.

Born in Cleveland, Kramer attended John Carroll University, earning a Bachelor of Science degree in business administration in 1986. He remains active as a JCU alumnus and served on the school's Board of Trustees from 2007-2019. A recognized community leader in Northeast Ohio, Kramer also previously served on the board of the Greater Akron Chamber of Commerce from 2004 to 2006.

Understanding the importance of STEM careers to the region and the company's talent pipeline, Kramer prioritized introducing underserved students to STEM careers and supported engineering, polymer and materials science initiatives at the University of Akron. Under his leadership, the company established the Goodyear Foundation in 2016 and Goodyear's Global Week of Volunteering in 2017. Reflecting these and other accomplishments, Kramer was the 2024 recipient of the prestigious H. Peter Burg award, recognizing leaders who demonstrate a commitment to economic and community development in the Greater Akron region.

Currently, Kramer serves on the board of directors for the Federal Reserve Bank of Cleveland, Whirlpool, Cleveland Clinic and CNH Industrial and is a member of the Business Council.

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