

Duke University String School

May 7, 2017

Letter from the Director

Dear DUSS Families and Friends,

It's wonderful to be with you all at the close of our 2016/2017 season. This year our students have participated in three Violin and Cello Choir concerts, three Orchestra concerts, two Chamber Music Concerts, two Saturdays full of solo recitals, one faculty recital, six master classes, as well as countless coachings, rehearsals, lessons and more— that's a lot of music! And all of these events couldn't be possible without the wonderful army of teachers, staff, parents, volunteers, folks who donate to the scholarship fund, and Duke music department faculty and staff that we are lucky to have supporting the Duke University String School. THANK YOU to everyone who contributes to our efforts to provide an excellent music education to students of the Triangle and beyond.

I participated in many special moments as director of DUSS this year, but I would like to describe the most memorable one. A student in a solo recital had a bit of a fumble in the opening of her piece, and instead of giving up, she brushed herself off and had the courage to get back on stage to give one of the most moving performances I have heard. This is the reason I care about music education. Performing in front of others is incredibly difficult; but working every day to conquer the demands of a challenging piece is so rewarding. The result is not only developing the tools to communicate a musical phrase to the audience, but also learning how to overcome your own fears and produce something beautiful and challenging in any aspect of life.

I believe that children from all backgrounds with the desire to play music should have the opportunity to have an excellent music education. This is why I started the Dorothy Kitchen Scholarship Fund to formally open our doors to children who might not otherwise be able to participate. Please consider donating to this fund so we can give more families this opportunity! If you can give \$5, \$50, or \$500, *every* tax-deductible dollar counts towards a lesson or an ensemble fee and can make a huge difference in a child's life:
<http://stringschool.duke.edu/support>

I want to point you towards our new website which is now sleeker and easier to navigate. On the website, you will find our

newly worded mission: *To train young musicians of diverse backgrounds in the region's premier string education program.* We strive to achieve our mission by ensuring excellence in everything we do, access to all students committed to music no matter what their socio-economic background is, and connection within our DUSS community and also with the Durham and Triangle communities through concerts and performances.

Also new to DUSS this year is our Parent Advisory Committee and the Duke University String School Community Facebook page. Dedicated parents make up the Parent Advisory Committee and represent you as we make decisions about upcoming events and concerts. They would love to hear from you! Our Facebook page is the perfect place to share photos from a concert, a practice tip, or information on a local fiddle camp. It is a closed group so only String School families who are members will see the posts.

At the end of the summer our violin and viola teacher Dr. Sangeeta Swamy will be leaving us to join the music faculty of Molloy College as professor of music therapy and violin. I am very sad to see her go but also thrilled to see what she accomplishes in New York. Thank you, Dr. Swamy, for your dedication to DUSS and commitment to excellent teaching, and best of luck!

I look forward to celebrating the 50th anniversary of DUSS next year with a new baby in tow! Stay tuned for events to honor the rich legacy of the String School as we also look forward to the exciting future of the program.

Have a safe summer, and see you in the fall!

Sincerely,



Erica Shirts
Director, Duke University String School



FIDDLING AROUND!

Caroline Branan, 16, who is in the Youth Symphony, received an "Excellent" rating performing the 1st Movement Barber Concerto, Allegro from the NC Federation of Music Club at the National Federation Junior Festival in March. She also performed on violin with her father, Andrew Branan, in their band "The Maxell 90" at the Nash Street Tavern in Hillsborough in April. Caroline looks forward to the Concerto competition through DMTA in May.



Bennett Congdon, a senior at Durham School of the Arts, was the only student from Durham County selected to participate in the North Carolina State Honors Orchestra where he won second chair for viola. He was the principal violist in the Durham Public Schools Honors String Festival Symphony Orchestra in March. He will attend the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in the fall where he looks forward to studying music performance and chemistry.

While studying at Columbia University, **Julia Gao** is also going to study violin performance with Professor Lucie Roberts and her assistant, Xiao Wang at the Manhattan School of Music.

Hannah and Samuel Miller placed in the American Protege International Strings Competition and, as a result, are soloing at Carnegie Hall this Spring. Their teacher, Erica Shirts, was given an excellence in teaching award from the same organization.

In February, **Lucas Mock** participated in the NCMEA Eastern Regional Symphony Orchestra clinic and concert. He also participated in the DPS Honors Strings Festival in March. He will be a student counselor at the DUSS Summer Camp again this summer.

Drew Mincey, 9th grade horn player for the Youth Symphony, was selected for the 2017 9th and 10th grade All District and All State Bands. Scheduling of the All State weekend of instruction and performance in May precludes him from participating in the DUSS Spring Concert. Drew will attend a second summer of music instruction at Appalachian State University's Cannon Music Camp from June-July 2017.

On April 21, **Iris Newlin** (in CSO) was a featured violin soloist with the DPS (Durham Public Schools) All County Elementary Chorus. The piece was a Hebrew prayer for peace, "Sim Shalom."

Tim Rinehart, bass section leader, Youth Symphony, will be promoting his rock band, Some Antics, debut recording, "The Mess I've Made" at local rock clubs this summer. The disc is available for \$10 from Tim. Please follow the band at www.facebook.com/someanticsband/

Both **Isabella and Matteo Santillo** auditioned for and made Junior Eastern Regional Orchestra.

Violinists **Oskar Schulmeister-Antona & Natalie Pienkowski** performed Irish Fiddle songs for the George Watts Montessori Elementary Assembly on St. Patrick's Day.

Wood•shed:

1. *noun* A shed for holding firewood.
2. *verb* To practice a musical instrument.
3. *informal (and not recommended)*
To take out frustration on a musical instrument.



CONGRATULATIONS TO DUSS SENIORS!

Best wishes to our senior students now leaving DUSS for the next stage in their careers. We wish them well and hope they will send news of their adventures for future editions of our newsletter. If we have inadvertently left someone off the list, please let us know and we will publish corrections in our next edition.

Senior	Future plans
Bri Clary	Will attend Oklahoma State University for Biochemistry and Molecular Biology
Bennett Congdon	Will attend UNC-Chapel Hill for Chemistry and Music
Julia Gao	Will attend Columbia University
Max Gilchrist	Will attend New York University for Mathematics
Zachary Jacobs	Will attend Eastern Carolina University
Deborah Kim	Will attend Vanderbilt for Music and Nursing
Silvia Knappe	Will attend Massachusetts Institute of Technology and will minor in Music
Jane Parris	Will attend UNC-Charlotte
Adam Shamblin	Will attend Northeastern University for Mechanical Engineering
Theresa Webber	Will attend UNC-Chapel Hill for Music and Psychology
Stephen White	Will attend Cedarville University for Music Education

How long have they been with DUSS?

11 years; Julia Gao, Adam Shamblin

7 years; Jane Parris

6 years; Bri Clary, Max Gilchrist

5 years; Stephen White

4 years; Deborah Kim

3 years; Bennett Congdon, Theresa Webber

2 years; Silvia Knappe

1 year; Zachary Jacobs

Duke University String School Summer Camp

We offer a concentrated 6 days of music study and fun for students age 6-18.

Camp includes large ensembles, chamber music groups, theory games and outdoor activities.

Violin and Cello Choirs: half day camp from 9am – 1pm (\$300)

Summer Chamber Orchestra: full day camp from 9am – 3pm (\$415)

After Camp Care from 3-5pm is available.

July 17-22, 2017

@ ST. STEPHEN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH, DURHAM

<http://stringschool.duke.edu/summer-camp>

Questions? Please contact DUSS Staff Assistant Katharine Whitmore: Katharine.whitmore@duke.edu

Departing Seniors Have A Final Word

Silvia Knappe: I value the emotional aspect of music most. I love finding out the history of different musical works so I can better incorporate the true feeling of the music into my playing.

Bennett Congdon: My favorite piece to play is Finlandia by Sibelius. It was the first piece I played with the Youth Symphony and that was the piece that made me truly fall in love with being a performer.

Bri Clary: I'd advise young musicians to learn the basics of more than one instrument. If you can play the most challenging violin pieces perfectly, that's great, but having a basic mastery of another instrument such as the piano makes you more flexible in what you can do.

Theresa Webber: One of the most challenging aspects of strings is learning to be musical in addition to being technically strong. Compared to an instrument such as the piano, a stringed instrument does not immediately produce a melodious sound. Thus, I think one of the most difficult factors in playing a stringed instrument is learning so many new things --- finger placement, bow movement, posture, shifting, etc. ---- and applying those techniques to create a nice sound.

Adam Shamblin: The hardest part of playing strings is learning to use the entire bow. I still catch myself staying in the upper half sometimes!



INSTRUMENT SALES

Piano Sales: Support Duke String School by buying your next piano or keyboard at Ruggero Piano. Special Pricing will be in effect through May 20, 2017. A portion of each sale will be donated to the Duke String School to help under-resourced students participate in orchestra and chamber music ensembles. Call Chris Ruggero for an appointment at [919-839-2040](tel:919-839-2040) or email him at cmruggero@gmail.com. Visit the store M-F, 9:30-5:30 at 4720-120 Hargrove Road, Raleigh, North Carolina, 27616.

Log onto www.ruggeropiano.com to see their full inventory of new Yamaha, Schimmel, Estonia and Bösendorfer acoustic pianos, Yamaha Clavinova and Arius digital pianos, AvantGrand hybrid pianos, Silent pianos and Disklavier reproducing pianos. They have a wide selection of pre-owned pianos in all price ranges and financing is available. Bring this program into the store for \$250 off any new or pre-owned instrument.

Violin for sale: Deborah used this violin since 2013 to pass numerous auditions, including the ones for her two Carnegie Hall performances as well as for college. This would be a great opportunity for intermediate/advanced musicians who want to take playing the violin to the next level to upgrade their instrument.

Please contact [919-457-6360](tel:919-457-6360) or jungelee91@gmail.com if you are interested.