



Letter from the Director

May 5, 2020

Dear DUSS Families and Friends,

I hope you are reading this message safe and healthy during these strange times. When 2020 started, I don't think anyone could have imagined that we would soon experience a war against a virus that would affect every aspect of our life.

Reflecting on the year behind us, I first want to highlight the successes of the year. These include:

- *Largest ever numbers of students participating in lessons and ensembles at DUSS.* It is wonderful that our organization is growing and providing excellent music instruction to more families than ever before. We had over 260 registered students in 2019/2020.
- *Mimi Zweig Residency:* Ms. Zweig worked with our Violin Choirs as well as our orchestra students in the Bach Double Workshop back in November. For the first time, we hosted a teacher workshop for over 50 area teachers, bringing together the local string teaching community.
- *20 Incredible seniors graduating.* These students will be leaders in the next generation showing ingenuity, flexibility, and grit as they go on to amazing futures. We are very proud of our graduates.
- *Record attendance and funds raised:* We didn't have an empty seat at our February faculty fundraiser featuring Prokofiev's Peter and the Wolf. We raised a record \$2,115 towards our annual \$10,000 goal for financial aid scholarships.
- *ASTA Conference in Orlando.* Before travel was restricted, 6 DUSS teachers attended the national String Teachers conference. We learned a lot and we have new ideas that we can't wait to share with our students and ensembles when we can meet again.



*DUSS founder Dorothy Kitchen
with Mimi Zweig and Erica Shirts*

This is a very strange time for all of us. For some, it is financially straining, for others it is anxiety-producing, for others it is a blessing to spend more time with family. For most of us, it is a combination of these, plus more.

Musicians are particularly hit during this time, as performances have been cancelled and livelihoods put on hold. The DUSS teachers are grateful to have the musical outlet and regular schedule of teaching your children. I am personally grateful for the DUSS community during this time as it gives me purpose, structure, and connection. Each week, I see my students on the screen, and we find innovative ways to continue progressing. I think of each of you as I look for virtual ideas to share for how we can be inspired and continue learning. Whether by pulling out your own instrument, turning on a favorite song, or connecting over lessons, music is a glue that holds our community together.

I am grateful to our teachers for offering their eye strain on the altar to continue lessons and all the virtual work necessary to keep things going. I am grateful that we could offer rebates/refunds to those who needed them, and also thankful to those who did not need them and said "We're Ok!" This has kept us afloat during uncertain times.

There will be more folks in our community in need of financial aid to continue music lessons and participation in the future. If you are able, please consider donating to the [Dorothy Kitchen Scholarship Fund](#) so that we can assist these families.

I look forward to the time when we can meet all together again-- even though at this moment, it seems so far away.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Erica A. Shirts".

Erica Shirts

FIDDLING AROUND!

Caroline Branan, a former DUSS violinist and NCSU sophomore, is on the cover of the Spring 2020 Wolf Tones, NC State's alumni music magazine. She is quoted in the magazine saying, "Music...is starting to change even more and even faster now. I think it's because of technology. The circulation of ideas is exponentially faster. And once new ideas are formed, people are moving on to the next thing. It's all about the next thing...the new thing...and keeping it fresh." Branan is a biology and marine science major and music minor.

Amelia Cho, DUSS YS, won the 3rd place at the Peter Perret Youth Talent Search competition by Winston-Salem Symphony Orchestra in December 2019.

Anna Darr, has been performing "driveway concerts" at her house for neighbors, friends, and anyone who happens to pass by. Not only does this provide comfort for people who have little social interaction at this point, but it's also a great performance opportunity! She is rapidly becoming more confident with the pieces she normally plays for concerts, and she's going back through her old repertoire lists to come up with non-repetitive music for others. It's been fun, and she encourages others to try it at their houses as well!



Dafne Delgado is a YSO cellist and senior. She has been accepted to New York University, UNC Greensboro, and Appalachian State U. She plans to major in music education.

David Durham is in Cello Choir I with Carlos and has been taking lessons for a little over a year. Since church services have gone online due to COVID-19, David has been accompanying the worship team with his quickly learned cello skills. Many from the congregation shared how much the cello has added depth and a richness to the worship. We are proud of David because he has been working hard with Carlos despite the fact that lessons have been via Zoom. He is been good sport with a great attitude



and wanted to share this with the Duke String School community. He was such a reluctant cello player in the beginning but now has been really enjoying it because he sees how it can bless others. There is a silver lining in everything that happens to us. We just have to look for it!!

Matthew Erickson, DUSS violinist and orchestra member at Northern High School in Durham, earned Concertmaster chair for the Durham All County Orchestra for a 3rd year in a row.

Fred Larsen was selected as trombonist for the 2020 Jazz Band of America. Fred will attend Harvard University and Berklee College of Music as a dual degree student in fall 2020.

Ella Rosselli, ISO, 6th grade, violin student of Ms. Leah Peroutka, competed in the DPS Odyssey of the Mind Competition and her team brought home a 4th place finish for Rogers Herr Middle School, keeping her school's "team streak" running. Ella also auditioned for All-County Orchestra for the first time, and placed in the first violin section, representing RHMS. She was planning to attend Lamar Stringfield Music Camp this summer and sadly it was canceled! Looking forward to a safe and healthy musical summer!!



Mimi Zweig works with VC3

Emily Thacker joined Violin Choir II in the fall of 2018, and began lessons with Clara Vazquez Ledesma. Clara recently returned to Spain, but continues lessons with Emily via Skype. Emily has been guided by wonderful teachers at DUSS. Erica and Julia have been at her side, as we have watched Emily progress from a clunky plucker, to a player of the violin. Without both of them, here for her, helping her, guiding her, she would not have joined with her precious violin, and become friends. Without them, Emily would not have carried on with her heart in her music. Without them, Emily would not have learned what it is to interweave her music, with the music of others. DUSS has shaped Emily's life in ways that we never could have known. It has become a constant in Emily's life, our life, especially important as we experience the chaos around us.

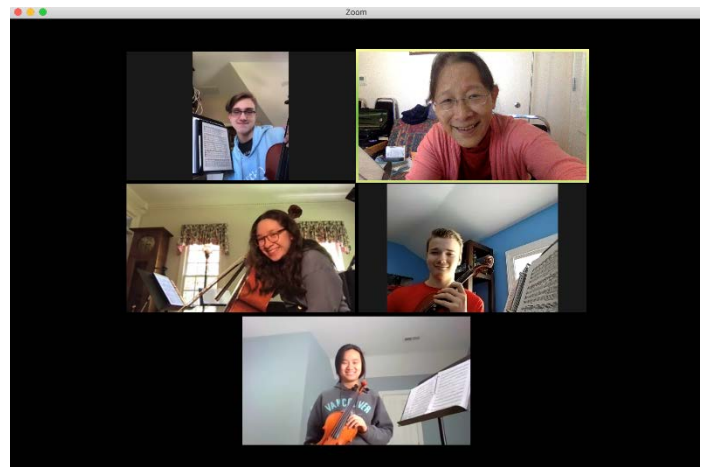
Colette Charles is staying creative and inspired even during difficult times such as COVID-19. Her teacher, Maria Valencia, said "it has been an inspiration to see Colette and our DUSS students coming excited and inspired to their online lessons."



harmonies that each of our instruments created together. A large part in chamber music is being able to trust, sense, and openly communicate with your group mates; it's how you combine four separate instruments into a single line or phrase. So, not being with them to communicate in person has limited how much that we're actually able to do and get done. But, not being together to work on a piece has made us all turn to sources on the internet for inspiration in music. These sources helped us realize how universal and diverse the expression of music is, and I feel that I've gained more appreciation for every part that goes into creating a piece of music and playing that piece of music. But even though we're in this technological era where every bit of music can easily be found somewhere online, there's still nothing quite like witnessing a group of people playing music in person.



Catherine Yates: Virtual coachings have helped me realize that chamber music is a very personal and intimate thing and that the experience of playing in a small group is something that you can't recreate online. Not being able to physically be with my group members was very disorienting because I couldn't feel that intangible connection between each other and the music, or the vibrations and



DCC Zoom coaching with Professor Ku

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. Here are their plans for college and how they intend to incorporate music into their lives after DUSS.

Senior	Future plans
Andrew Ahn (cello)	UNC - Chapel Hill; Student orchestra or chamber group
Jerome Bermudez (double bass)	NC State University; Start a college band
Joshua Bermudez (violin, viola)	NC State University – Biochemistry
Annie Brooks (viola)	Hillsdale College
Lauren Burris (violin, viola)	UNC – Chapel Hill – Human Biology, pre-med; UNC symphony, continue private lessons
Dafne Delgado (cello)	NYU – Music Education; Continue cello, learn more double bass, piano
Sriya Dhupati (violin)	Duke University; Orchestra
Fred Larsen (trombone)	Harvard University/Berklee College of Music dual degree
Liana Lessard (violin, piano)	NC State – Chemical Engineering; NC State recreational orchestra
Alexandra Love (viola)	UNC - Chapel Hill – Political Science and Music
Evan MacDonald (violin)	American University – Political Science; College orchestra
Drew Mincey (horn)	University of Maryland – horn performance (major) and arts leadership (minor)
Kathryn O’Loughlin (violin)	Bryn Mawr College; Haverford Orchestra
Tim Rinehart (double bass)	Rice University, Shepherd School of Music – Math and Double Bass Performance
Sarah Smith (violin)	UNC-Greensboro – Music
Adrian Thananopavarn (viola, violin)	Princeton University – Mathematics; University orchestra, music theory and composition classes
Camille Valentine (cello)	Swarthmore College – major or minor in music; College orchestra
Nikhilganeesh Varadarajan (violin)	Duke University – Economics and Public Policy; Duke Symphony Orchestra, participate in a quartet, music classes
Olivia White (viola)	Bob Jones University – English; College orchestra

DEPARTING SENIORS HAVE A FINAL WORD

Andrew Ahn: I value playing music for allowing me to showcase certain emotions or expressions that I'm usually not willing to show. I also value the sense of community that playing music also gives. Playing music has brought me to many of my closest friends today and it was possible due to being part of an orchestra together.

Advice to young musicians: Listen!! Listening is crucial to cultivating yourself as a musician. Whether that be listening to all kinds of music, listening to recordings of your repertoire, listening to members of your section or other sections, or listening to yourself play, using the ears is really important in developing musicianship. P.S. Look up at the conductor during rehearsals, it is a good habit to build when you're young.

Jerome Bermudez: I value the community of music and the people that have helped me get where I am now as well as the people I play with whether it's with the orchestra, my band or other musicians I meet. I believe that when you encompass other musicians around you, they can have an influence on how you play, practice, perform, and grow. Advice to young musicians: Meet as many musicians as possible. You'll grow to be inspired to practice as well as help those that look up to you.

Joshua Bermudez: I value how a musician can express feelings, thought and emotions through music. Music allows us to express ourselves in unique ways, something I find very impactful to every musician. Advice to young musicians: Always strive to improve during your practice. Even the smallest bit of improvement will help you in the long run.

Annie Brooks: I value building community through making music. I think that music is one of the most effective and fun ways of bringing people together! Advice to young musicians: Try new things! A few years ago, I would never have thought that I would play anything other than classical music, but now I'm very glad that I tried branching out, like by playing in my school's jazz/rock ensemble!



Lauren Burris: Playing in a large, full ensemble is what keeps me playing violin. Playing original repertoire with other talented young musicians, under the leadership of an amazing conductor has always been my favorite part of playing the violin. I've learned about communication and collaboration by playing with other people. Music also has a way of moving something within a person's soul, and having the privilege of touching someone's emotions with music is a true honor. Advice to young musicians: Learning an instrument may be the most tedious feat you'll ever do, but it also has the most reward. Don't quit! For a long time it'll seem like you aren't getting any better, but one day you'll realize how far you've come and how talented you've become and you'll be grateful that you stuck with it.

Dafne Delgado: I believe that through playing music with others, you can form bonds unlike any other, especially in chamber music. There's an understanding and silent language that can convey much more than words. I also like that you can choose to interpret the music differently than others, making it your own. Through this interpretation, you can express your emotions. Advice to young musicians: Join a quartet or chamber group, it will make you look at music differently and more closely, and help you with leadership and communication skills, within music and outside of it. Also, if you get frustrated, don't stop practicing, just practice something else and come back to the frustrating part, or try viewing it in a different way.

Sriya Dhupati: I enjoy the sense of purpose that playing music gives me, and also the feeling of accomplishment that comes with having solved a technical problem or mastered a difficult passage. Advice to young musicians: A skill that I'm still working on, that I wish I'd developed sooner, is learning how to focus

while practicing and how to use practice time efficiently. Also, I would advise young musicians to seek out as many opportunities to perform as possible, because those are what motivated me to practice and improve.



Fred Larsen: I love using music to communicate with other musicians on stage and with the audience. I enjoy trying to convey my feelings and emotions, and trying to convey the composer's message and the significance of their music. Advice to young musicians: Always play in a relaxed state; music that comes from anxiety or stress won't be enjoyable for you or your audience—play in the moment, always calmly. Also, when you play something, think about what it means on a broader scale, how it connects with other aspects of your, or other's life.

Liana Lessard: Playing music is an opportunity to decompress from external stressors. When I am super stressed I am able practice violin/piano and it helps me forget everything going on. Advice to young musicians: Go music camps!! It's a great way to meet other people that have a similar interest in music.

Alexandra Love: What I value about playing music is the story you can tell. I've always seen music as its own unique language. The power to tell a story and show emotion without using any words is fascinating. What makes playing music so valuable is that it connects us all no matter our backgrounds or walks of life. Advice to young musicians: If something is easy, then everyone will do it! Perseverance and hard work are what allow you to grow both as a person and as a musician, so remember that all the effort you put in will be worth it.

Evan MacDonald: What I value most about playing music is the ability to express emotion through something other than words. Advice to young musicians: Play in a chamber group. There's something about playing with just a few friends, who each has a part that fits uniquely into the whole piece; that really renewed my love of music when I started it.

Drew Mincey: I love sharing the experience of performing with others. For this reason, chamber music is one of my favorite ways to perform. At DUSS, we are a family, so even in a full symphony orchestra it feels like chamber music. Advice to young musicians: Find a good balance of practicing your fundamentals and skills and practicing music that you love.

Kathryn O'Loughlin: I value being able to produce music that an audience can enjoy but also I love playing for myself because it brings me happiness too. Advice to young musicians: If you enjoy playing music, never stop or give up; because even if it's difficult, music is worth keeping in your life.





Peter and the Wolf fundraiser

Tim Rinehart: My favorite thing about playing music is the feeling I get when playing with other musicians. In the moment of playing with an orchestra, I feel everyone coming together, and it feels powerful, emotional, and rewarding. Advice to young musicians: Keep working on your instrument and keep practicing for your lessons and recitals. Having the skills to play an instrument will always be helpful in your life if you choose to pursue music, or if you choose not to.

Adrian Thananopavarn: I like playing in an orchestra above all. Orchestra music is synergistic, as the whole becomes more than the sum of each part. Advice to young musicians: Try to compose music, because it will give you an understanding of the creation and structure of music, so that you can better appreciate the music you play.

Camille Valentine: The thing that I value the most about playing music is having the opportunity to come together with many other musicians and make music together. I don't think I would have played cello this long if I wasn't able to create music with other people. Advice to young musicians: Know what it is that you want and work hard to achieve it. The result may not always be a success but you will always learn something from the process.

Nikhilganeesh Varadarajan: Practicing violin provides me peace and clarity at the beginning of each day. In addition, it gives me the confidence to do things that I would ordinarily find daunting. Advice to young musicians: Listen to lots of types of music, practice as much as you can, perform at every opportunity given to you and go to a lot of concerts.



Olivia White: I prefer piano for actually expressing myself, but there's no sound quite as glorious as a hundred strings ringing in harmony. It's deep, on a tangible and emotional level. Advice to young musicians: Don't feel like you have to do something just because you've started it. Try a new instrument, or a new style, or even a new nonmusical passion, if you can't find any satisfaction in your art. Whatever you end up doing, with or without your instrument, find joy in it. Do something because you love it, because it adds meaning to your life, and because through it, you can enrich the lives of others.



Zoom DUSS teacher meeting



INSTRUMENT SALES

Cello for Sale: Full-size PrimaVera Prima 200 cello; beautiful rich tone; new, teacher-recommended strings; New easy-tune tuning pegs and tailpiece; soft case. We are downsizing to one cello. \$1,000.00 OBO.
Contact Nan de Andrade ndea1956@gmail.com



Cello for Sale: Beautiful 4/4 Heidrich Gill, W3 La Mans solid carved cello in great condition with wonderful sound. \$7000 (Current Replacement Value is \$9200). Please email ahurmston@bellsouth.net for additional information and photos.

DUKE UNIVERSITY STRING SCHOOL SUMMER CAMP

Summer Camp 2020: Canceled at this time

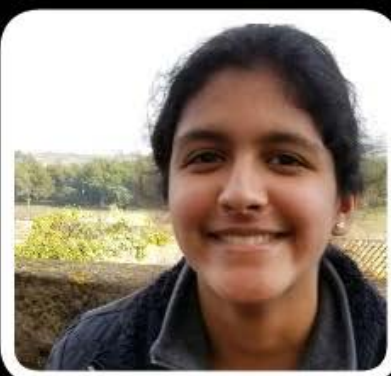
Camp registration for July 20-25 is currently canceled. If circumstances change, we will let you know!

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

Questions? Please contact DUSS Staff Assistant Katharine

Whitmore: katharine.whitmore@duke.edu





2020
DUSS
Seniors

