



THE MUSIC SCHOOL  
OF DELAWARE

A CENTURY OF  
**MUSIC**



ANNUAL REPORT 2025

# OUR MUSICAL COMMUNITY



Dear friends,

At The Music School of Delaware, we believe in the power of music to shape lives, strengthen communities, and open doors. Every day, that belief comes to life in extraordinary ways. Since joining the school in 2025, I have been inspired by what I see and hear across our campuses: students realizing untold promise, faculty inspiring creativity at every lesson, and a community that shows up time and again in support of the transformative power of music.

As we reflect on our 2024-25 centennial years, I have to begin by expressing our deepest thanks to Teresa Avery, whose steady leadership as Interim CEO provided stability and guidance during a pivotal period for our school. Teresa ensured that we remained well positioned to welcome a bright future, and she will forever be a part of what makes our community so special.

Our centennial year invited us to celebrate not just where we have been, but where we are going. Through the MSOD@100 concert series and special projects across more than 20 venues statewide, we saw the Music School at its best: connected, visible, and deeply embedded in the fabric of Delaware. From the Delaware Youth Symphony Orchestra's electrifying performance at the Freeman Arts Pavilion to our capstone Centennial Celebration across both campuses, we ignited a statewide celebration of artistry, connection, and the extraordinary impact of music in our lives and communities.

Our next chapter is already in motion, energized by the community that surrounds and sustains us, and driven by a vision to expand access, deepen impact, and bring music to more people in more places across Delaware. Walk through our halls in Wilmington, Milford, or in the spaces we share with our partners across communities, and you'll feel it immediately: studios brimming with energy, curiosity, and the excitement for what's possible.

Thank you for being an essential part of this community and for moving forward with us as we build, grow, and reimagine what is possible through music.

Sincerely,

**David J. Pacific**  
President & CEO

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Dear MSOD Community,

If you're like me, you know that what makes The Music School of Delaware special is the way our school brings people together, all connected through experiences in music you can only have here. One hundred years is a milestone, one that reminds us of just how woven into the fabric of Delaware our school is. It's also a reminder of how far we can go, and our 2024-25 centennial years showcased this brilliantly.

There's a real sense of momentum building. During our centennial years, we found our footing and began walking toward a future that has never been brighter. There are more people than most of us can remember coming through our doors. And, as our partnerships and scholarship opportunities across the state continue to expand, more students are finding their way into lessons and onto stages. Behind it all, there's thoughtful work happening to ensure the school remains strong, sustainable, and ready for the future.

Our school has always been a second home to me. I began here as a Suzuki student, came of age playing in the DYSO, and built friendships and skills that still shape my life today. Now, I have the privilege of watching my own children experience that same journey.

That full-circle story speaks to the profound, multi-generational impact of the Music School. I'm grateful to be part of this extraordinary community and excited for what lies ahead as we continue to grow, evolve, and prepare for the next hundred years of life-changing impact.

Sincerely,



**Chris Stout**  
Board Chair

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# MUSICAL **IMPACT**

The Music School strengthens individuals and the community through music, advancing social betterment, resilience, and cultural vitality. Our mission delivers outstanding music education and experiences for all. Students benefit through health, creativity, connection, and fulfillment. Through instruction, ensembles, performances, and scholarships, our impact becomes measurable in the numbers that follow.



**1,706**

ENROLLMENTS WITH...



**13,530**

TEACHING HOURS



**\$192,717**

TUITION ASSISTANCE FOR...



**191**

STUDENTS



**87**

FACULTY FROM...



**14**

COUNTRIES



**118**

NEW DONORS GAVE...



**\$106,696**

NEW DONATIONS

ABOVE: 12-year-old violin student, Yush B., performed at Delaware Legislative Hall in Dover to celebrate the official Tribute of 100 Years of The Music School of Delaware, June 17 (see story opposite).

# PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

## Delaware Youth Symphony Orchestra (DYSO) at the Freeman Arts Pavillion in Selbyville, Delaware

The DYSO, under the direction of **Maestro Simeone Tartaglione (right)**, was honored to be invited to perform at the state's premier outdoor venue, the Freeman Arts Pavillion, in southern Delaware on June 12, 2025. More than 50 student musicians from the DYSO participated in this memorable event, sharing the stage with the Music School's Nagoya String Quartet and The Music School of Delaware Brass Quintet.

## 100 Years Celebrated at Legislative Hall in Dover, Delaware

**Faculty, board members, students, parents, donors, staff, and volunteers (right)** from all three counties of Delaware—and even a few from Pennsylvania—gathered at Legislative Hall on Tuesday, June 17, to receive a special tribute honoring The Music School of Delaware's 100th anniversary. A highlight of the celebration was a performance in the House chamber by Yush B., a 12-year-old violin student who has studied at the Music School since the age of five. His performance beautifully represented the next generation of musicians shaped by The Music School of Delaware. We are especially grateful to Representative Nnamdi Chukwuocha and Senator David Wilson for sponsoring the Tribute in both the House and Senate. Hearing legislators share personal reflections on the school's impact in their lives and communities was deeply moving. It served as a powerful reminder of music's unique ability to connect people and foster meaningful, lasting relationships.

## Delaware Symphony Orchestra Partnership

The Music School of Delaware is proud to partner with the Delaware Symphony Orchestra (DSO), creating meaningful opportunities for Music School students to learn from world-class artists. Each year, the DSO shares its concerto soloists with the school in a masterclass setting, where these distinguished musicians offer invaluable insight and guidance to selected students. These experiences are vital to a thriving community music school, enriching student learning and helping to distinguish the school's programs. This past year, violinist Melissa White and pianist **Janice Carissa (right)** served as guest clinicians, inspiring students through their artistry and expertise. In addition, the DSO generously provides complimentary tickets to Music School students, faculty, and administrators, expanding access to outstanding live performances and deepening connections to the professional music community.





**ABOVE:** Scotty Horey, percussion faculty, at the MSOD@100 concert One Sound One Mind, February 2025. **BELOW:** The combined Delaware and Cantabile Women's Chorus performed in Slovenia as part of their European tour, June 2025.

## MSOD@100

In 2025, The Music School of Delaware marked its 100th anniversary with innovative concerts and projects celebrating unique and meaningful collaboration, creativity, and community. The centennial programming featured artistic projects, new partnerships, newly commissioned works, recording initiatives, and imaginative performances across the region. We were proud to expand into new venues, including the Latin American Community Center in Wilmington and The Garage Community and Youth Center in Kennett Square, PA, bringing music to broader and more diverse audiences. A new orchestral work was commissioned for the Delaware Youth Symphony Orchestra and the Wilmington Community Orchestra, while a song cycle written for faculty and friends was presented at Hanover Presbyterian Church and on the school's Wilmington campus. Faculty artists also forged exciting new collaborations, including projects with the Copeland String Quartet and colleagues from Delaware State University. The celebration further included two recording initiatives: one highlighting bassoon repertoire and exceptional bassoonists, and another featuring Music School ensembles—the latter submitted for consideration by the Recording Academy for the Grammys.

## The Music School's Women's Choruses Go On Tour To Europe

Members of the Delaware Women's Chorus and Cantabile Women's Chorus traveled to Europe last June for their fifth international concert tour. Beginning in Venice, Italy, the choirs continued through the stunning landscapes of Slovenia and concluded their journey in Croatia, serving as proud American musical ambassadors throughout the region. Performances in historic churches and cathedrals were met with enthusiastic and appreciative audiences, making each concert a memorable experience for singers and listeners alike. Beyond the concerts, the tour offered meaningful opportunities for connection, as members of both choirs deepened relationships with one another while collaborating to create inspiring music together.



# FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY

The Music School of Delaware generated \$3,729,370 in total revenue, with tuition and fees covering less than half (43%) of the true cost of delivering our programs. Additional support came from grants and contributions (17%), investment draw (21%), and other income (3%), alongside \$599,920 (16%) in Employee Retention Tax Credits (ERTC)—a one-time federal payment delayed during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Expenses totaled \$3,261,506, with nearly two-thirds (63%) directly supporting programming, ensuring that the majority of every dollar is invested in teaching, performances, and community impact. Through careful management, we were able to pay off our line of credit entirely, reduce debt, and establish a \$300,000 reserve fund for FY25–26, strengthening our foundation.

As we move forward, sustained support remains essential to expand access, provide scholarships, and ensure that students of all ages from across our state can experience the transformative power of music education for all.

## FY25 FINANCIALS

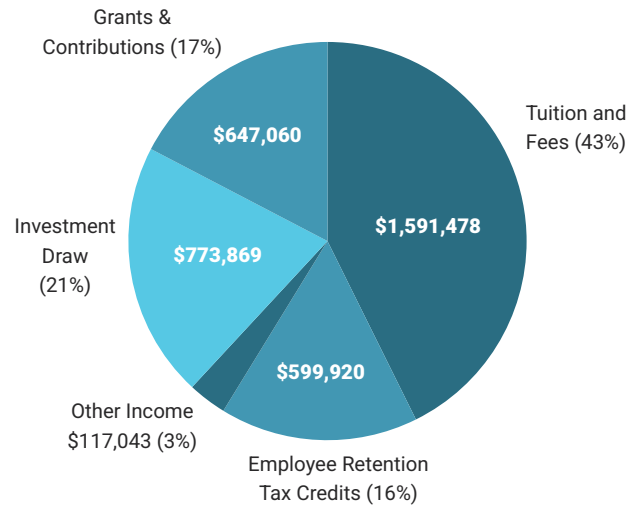
### REVENUE

Tuition and Fees – \$1,591,478  
Grants & Contributions – \$647,060  
Other Income – \$117,043  
Investment Draw – \$773,869  
Employee Retention Tax Credits – \$599,920  
**TOTAL - \$3,729,370**

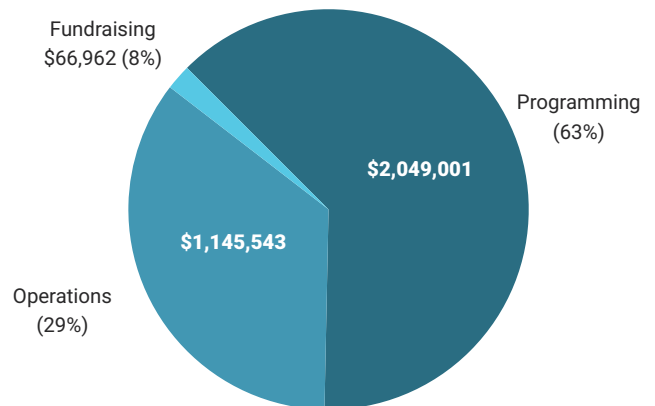
### EXPENSES

Programming – \$2,049,001  
Operations – \$1,145,543  
Fundraising – \$66,962  
**TOTAL: \$3,261,506**

### REVENUE



### EXPENSES



A celebration participant explores the steel drum as part of the scavenger hunt in Wilmington



## CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION

The Music School of Delaware's Centennial Celebration brought together a vibrant, far-reaching community, with more than 400 attendees at the Wilmington campus and 50+ at the Milford campus, creating a statewide moment of connection and pride. Across both campuses, the celebration came alive through performances by student, faculty, and community ensembles, hands-on instrument experiences, and intergenerational participation that embodied the school's mission in real time. The event was not only a celebration of artistry but of relationships: uniting alumni, families, legislators, and community leaders in a shared space where music became a common language. From instrument petting zoos to a full day of performances and a cross-campus livestream, the Centennial captured the energy, accessibility, and excellence that define our school. Together, these celebrations did more than honor 100 years: They powerfully positioned the Music School for its next century of impact.

# CELEBRATING 100 YEARS



Guitar faculty member Michael Raitzyk performing in Milford



Flute faculty member Margaret Swinchoski (right) and friend at the photo booth in Milford



Director of Community and Operations Mary Jane Vanvestraut with Senator Dave Wilson exploring the decades room at Milford



Delaware Symphony Orchestra Music Director Michelle Di Russo browses the decades themed room at Wilmington showcasing 100 years of music excellence

The combined Delaware Women's Chorus and Cantabile Women's Chorus perform on the Wilmington stage, directed by vocal/choral department head Joanne Ward.



# OF MUSIC!



Violin faculty Diane Nuetzling (left) demonstrates the viola at the instrument petting zoo in Milford



President and CEO David Pacific with Delaware State Representative Nnamdi Chukwuocha



Faculty member Lawrence Trice introduces the double bass at the instrument petting zoo in Wilmington



Music School staff, community members, and past and present leadership celebrate the centennial at the photo booth at Wilmington



**TOP: Maxine as a young Suzuki student. RIGHT: Maxine performing with the Wilmington Community Orchestra as a Delaware Concerto Competition for Young Musicians Winner, May 2019.**

## ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

### Maxine Chou

As a student of The Music School of Delaware, I was able to grow up with music. When I first started learning the cello at age 8, I remember seeing and hearing the older students perform and being so intimidated yet amazed. From the perspective of a beginner, it was hard to imagine that I myself might some day be one of the advanced students. As I progressed through the Suzuki program, I was supported and pushed to join ensembles, including chamber music, the Delaware Youth Symphony Orchestra, and eventually the Philadelphia Youth Orchestra. My teacher, Jennifer Stomberg, also challenged me to become a mentor and teacher to other cello students, teaching both private lessons and leading the cello section in the Music School's Youth Strings Camp. When I left MSOD, I wanted to continue growing and being challenged by music. I double-majored in Chemistry and Music in college, was awarded an arts scholarship, and won my university's concerto competition. I thank MSOD for giving me the skills and opportunities that allowed me to succeed in undergrad and now support my endeavors to attend medical school. Music continues to shape who I am and how I interact with the world. Thank you to the amazing MSOD community for such a wonderful gift.



## OUR DEDICATED STAFF

### David J. Pacific, *President and CEO*

#### Program Administration

Cheri Astolfi, *Dean*

#### Registration

Maria Rusu, *Senior Student Services Manager*

Anna Hall, *Billing & Student Services*

*Associate*

Felicia Tyrrell, *Student Services Associate*

#### Business Office

Mary Jane Vanvestraut, *Director of Community & Operations*

Jenna Morris, *Business/HR Manager*

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Bridget Everman, *Development Manager*

Jennifer Marang, *Sr. Manager, Digital Evolution and Special Projects*

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Charles Layton, *Security Officer*

Herbert Poe, *Senior Security Officer*

Jermaine Richardson, *Security Officer*

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Mike Wadsworth, *Front Desk Associate*

WILMINGTON

Creet Vogt, *Lead Front Desk Associate*

Larissa Caputo, *Front Desk Associate*

Keith Kayati, *Front Desk Associate*

Yvette Rudolph, *Front Desk Associate*

**RIGHT: Alumnus and current trumpet faculty member Evan Roberts.**

# OUR EXPERT **FACULTY**

## **Faculty Leadership Team**

### **Melinda Bowman**

Winds, Brass & Percussion DH  
Early Childhood Associate DH

### **Christopher Braddock**

Guitar DH

### **Lotus Cheng**

Keyboard DH, Chamber Music Advisor

### **Ian Jett**

Strings DH

### **Jennifer Lang**

Suzuki Academy DH

### **Melinda Oriani**

Early Childhood DH

### **Jennifer Stomberg**

Chamber Music Coordinator

### **Simeone Tartaglione**

Orchestra DH

### **Lionel Thomas**

Suzuki Academy Associate DH

### **Joanne Ward**

Vocal/Choral DH

Daniel Antonelli, guitar

Cheri Astolfi, horn

Rick Barrantes de Agüero, bassoon

Nicholas Bedway, cello

Donna Mulzet Beech, piano

Paul Boris, piano

Melinda Bowman, flute

Christopher Braddock, guitar

David Brown, piano

Miles Brown, double bass

Giampiero Bugliarello, piano

Jennifer Campbell, piano

Natalie Chang, piano

Lotus Cheng, piano

Juanita Clendaniel, general music

Peyton Cole, Suzuki piano

Axel Dalton, oboe

Chris Devany, percussion

J. Andrew Dickenson, guitar

Nadine DiLorenzo, early childhood

Vladimir Dyo, violin

Stephen Elmy, guitar

Banu Fields, cello

Jonathan Fox Powers, voice

Richard Gangwisch, piano

Paul Gray, guitar

Oksana Grytsai, violin

Eliezer Gutman, violin

Joseph Hodge, WCO music director

Patrick Hoffman, trumpet

Sara Hoffman, horn

Scotty Horey, percussion

Georgiana Ibach, DWC/CWC accomp.

Ian Jett, Suzuki/trad. violin/viola

Jennifer Lang, Suzuki/trad. violin/viola

Vincent Lardear, clinician

Pamela Letts, DYSO coach

Lingchin Liao, violin

Margaret Love, Celtic harp

Heidi Lucas, horn

Genia Maslov, violin

Liliya Maslov, piano

Cheryl Max, piano

Joanna McCoskey Wiltshire, clarinet

Augustine Mercante, voice

Marybeth Miller, voice

Anna Montejo, oboe

Julianne Murphy, Suzuki violin

Paula Nelson, flute

Diane Neutzling, viola

Kelsey Oldland, piano, MT-BC

Ethel Olsen, piano

Melinda Oriani, early childhood

Steven Patchel, piano

Gina Perregrino, clinician

Michelle Peters, violin

Pepron Pilobossian, piano

Ícaro Protásio de Santana, violin

Michael Raitzyk, guitar

Kate Ransom, violin

Joseph Reilly, MT-BC

Tracy Richardson, piano

Evan Roberts, trumpet

Maria Rusu, viola

Gwen Ryan, DYSO assistant conductor

David Schelat, organ (on leave)

Tessa Shaffer, piano

Jay Snyder, clinician

John Sopkanich, low brass

Carol Stinson, clarinet

Jennifer Stomberg, Suzuki/trad. cello

Lawrence Stomberg, cello

Margaret Swinchoski, flute

Simeone Tartaglione, DYSO music director

Lionel Thomas, Suzuki/trad. violin/viola

Stephen Tipping, percussion

Lawrence Trice, double bass

Akiko Turley, accompanist

Mary Jane Vanvestraut, clarinet

Kevin VanSyckle, saxophone

Bonnie Von Duyke, violin

Clarence "Honey" Voshell, drums

Mike Wadsworth, low brass

Joanne Ward, DWC/CWC music director

Hiroko Yamazaki, piano

DH – Department Head

MT-BC – Music Therapist Board Certified

WCO – Wilmington Community Orchestra

DYSO – Delaware Youth Symphony Orchestra

DWC – Delaware Women's Chorus

DWC – Cantabile Women's Chorus



# CELEBRATING STUDENT **ACHIEVEMENT**

## **Early Childhood Graduates**

### **Music Makers, Year I**

Vihaan Barathwaj  
Cole Cowan  
Raphael De Rosa  
Isabella Gao  
Andrew Kopchick  
Sophia Macharia  
Julian Maucher  
Rohan Menon  
Olivia Poplos  
Christopher Sannella  
Liam Smith  
John Teraskiewicz

### **Music Makers, Year II**

Morna Deeney  
Evani Kumar  
Andrea Mathankumar  
Austin Yang

### **Keyboard for Kids, Year I**

Hope Baxter  
Jessalyn Luna  
Dorothy Shu  
Daphne Symonds  
Jack Waski

### **Keyboard for Kids, Year II**

Ani Bostick  
Nora Bostick  
Lars Evers  
Isabel Fuchs  
Nyla Macharia  
Emilia Rincon  
Mohana Sampathu-Woods  
Ever Shelton

## **Suzuki Academy Graduates**

### **Twinkle**

Sydney Jones, violin  
Sia Kim, cello  
Aurora Kongsvik, violin  
Vivien Feng, violin  
Kaelon Fraser, violin  
Hannah Qian, violin

### **Level 1**

Yael Hereford, violin  
Emerie Jiang, cello  
Juan Oh, cello  
Anna Shilkitus, cello  
Danell Dev, violin  
Sanjana Bhattacharjee, violin  
Davide Tamburro, violin  
Vivien Feng, violin

### **Level 2**

Juan Oh, cello  
Anna Shilkitus, cello  
Defne Uygur, violin  
Eve Hereford, violin  
Azalea Gupta, violin  
Ambroise Lustberg-Cardona, violin  
Billy Tucker, violin  
Emma Kim, violin

### **Level 3**

Ariyana Kurpad, violin

### **Level 4**

Nathan Kemerer, cello  
Edward Kim, cello  
Katelyn Drummonds, violin

### **Level 5**

Edward Kim, cello  
Xiaohuan (Jerry) Liang, cello

### **Level 6**

Benjamin Braddock, cello  
Frederick Shilkitus, cello  
Yush Bhandar, violin  
Anna Drummonds, violin  
Milena Moras, violin  
Xiaohuan (Jerry) Liang, cello

### **Level 7**

Frederick Shilkitus, cello  
Jack Noel, violin  
Milena Moras, violin  
Yush Bhandar, violin

### **Level 9**

Laurel Salvin, violin  
Sigrid Evers, violin

### **Level 11**

Ryan Dam, cello

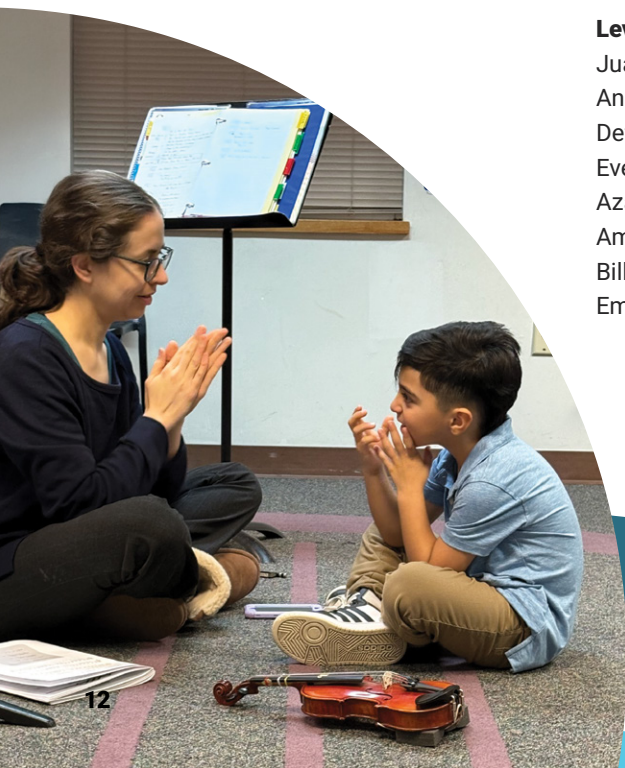
### **Level 12 with High Honors**

Kieran Fake, violin  
Alex Norikane, violin

## **Gala Strings Concerto Competition Winner**

Yiyi Xu, violin

**LEFT: Jenny Lang, Suzuki Academy Department Head, guiding 6-year-old violin student Santi J. through a rhythm exercise, January 2025.**



### **Delaware Youth Symphony Orchestra Concerto Competition Winners**

Roy Hur, piano (David Brown)  
Ethan Xie, violin (Xiang Gao)

### **Delaware Concerto Competition for Young Musicians Winners**

#### **12 and Under Category**

Sophia Zhou, cello

#### **13-15 Category**

Valentina Ramos, piano

#### **16-18 Category**

Adelle Sullivan, violin

### **Honor Awards Scholarship Recipient**

Freya Banzhaf, bassoon (Rick Barrantes)  
The Thomas Edward Ebright Memorial  
Scholarship Fund

Neve Cheung, piano (Liliya Maslov)  
Brandywiners Scholarship Fund

Rhys Dam, piano (Lotus Cheng)  
Alberta Elizabeth Edge Scholarship Fund

Ryan Dam, cello (Jennifer Stomberg)  
Anthony G. Simmons Scholarship Fund

Xiaohuan (Jerry) Liang, cello  
(Jennifer Stomberg)  
Brandywiners Scholarship Fund

Zechariah Lin, piano (Lotus Cheng)  
Maria deVries Music Scholarship Fund

Laurel Salvin, violin (Lionel Thomas)  
Estella Hillersohn Frankel Violin  
Scholarship

Frederick Shilkitus, cello  
(Jennifer Stomberg)  
Alberta Elizabeth Edge Scholarship Fund

Emily Zhou, piano (Lotus Cheng)  
Janet Cohen Piano  
Merit Scholarship for Private Study  
Patricia Burton Memorial Fund

Ethan Zorger, piano (David Brown)  
Chichester DuPont Scholarship Fund

### **Young Composers Competition Winners**

#### **16-18 Age Group**

First Prize and Grand Prize  
Jace Robinson, piano  
(Giampiero Bugliarello)

Second Prize  
Charles Buchta, piano  
(Hiroko Yamazaki)

### **Piano Competition Winners**

#### **Category I: Ages 7-9**

First Prize: Zoey Zheng  
Second Prize: Edward Quo

#### **Category II: Ages 10-12**

First Prize: Rongxi Pan  
Second Prize: Patrick Shilkitus

#### **Category III: Ages 13-15**

First Prize: Caiden Sun  
Second Prize: Grace Zhang

#### **Category III: Ages 13-15**

Third Prize: Soyeon Park

#### **Category IV: Ages 16-18**

Second Prize: Alicia Zhang  
Third Prize: George Buchta

#### **Janet Cohen Summer**

#### **Piano Institute Prize**

George Buchta

# CELEBRATING OUR **DONORS**

Our sincere thanks to all who are listed on these pages. Donors and sponsors are recognized for their generous support from July 2014 through June 2025. We have made every effort to be as accurate as possible. If an error comes to your attention, please contact our Development Office at (302) 762-1132 x110. Thank you.

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Delaware Division of the Arts

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Ann and David Hamilton  
Elizabeth Homsey  
Jennie Hudgins



Our Rising Stars advanced Music School students performed for Kendal at Longwood residents, June 2025. Left to right: Freya Banzhaf, bassoon (R. Barrantes); Tyler Selden, piano (L. Cheng); Rhys Dam, piano (L. Cheng); Ethan Zorger, piano (D. Brown); Cory Chen, flute (P. Nelson); and Frederick Shilkitus, cello (J. Stomberg).

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Sujin Lee  
Karen Marinelli  
Charles McDowell  
Sheren and J. Wayne Merritt  
Elizabeth and Bruce Monroe  
Sandra Pace  
Michelle Poulin  
Joan and Phillip Spiegelman  
Michelle Woods

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Melody Bernhardt  
Janis and Donald Bond  
Eleanor Brown  
Kennard Brown  
John Browne  
Martha and  
Senator Thomas Carper  
Hillary Cohen  
William Collins  
Andrew\* and Rosalie Corbett  
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Gerald Sparrow  
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**Giampiero Bugliarello,**  
piano faculty, with Young  
Composers Competition  
winner Jace Robinson at the  
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Adult student and donor Irene Solé enjoys exploring the guitar at the Centennial Celebration instrument petting zoo in Milford



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COVER TOP PHOTO: Faculty member Banu Fields introduces the cello to a young community member as part of the Centennial Celebration. BOTTOM: Members of the Wilmington Music School Orchestra from the 1920s.

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