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THE CONDUCTORS

Christopher Hisey

Principal Orchestra Conductor

Music Director and Alumnus of the Greater Connecticut Youth Orchestras (GCTYO), Christopher James Hisey has conducted concerts throughout the United States, Europe, Mexico, and China with such notable musicians as Sir James Galway, Tim Janis, Jackie Evancho, James Dunham, Chris Finckel, and Deborah Wong.

In addition to his duties with GCTYO, Maestro Hisey serves as Music Director of the American Chamber Orchestra and is Co-founder and Music Director of the Connecticut Philharmonic. He has also served as Music Director of the Civic Orchestra of New Haven, Connecticut Valley Chamber Orchestra, Troupers Light Opera Company, and Perrysburg Symphony Chorale, and as Associate Conductor of the Perrysburg Symphony, Bowling Green Philharmonia, and Opera Theater Orchestras.

Maestro Hisey has been a guest and cover conductor of the Greater Bridgeport Symphony and has made appearances with the Ruse Philharmonic and Pleven Philharmonic in Bulgaria, and the St. Petersburg “Klassika” Symphony, formerly the Leningrad State Philharmonic, in St. Petersburg, Russia.

A champion of new music, Maestro Hisey frequently premieres new works. Emmy award-winning composer Rex Cadwallader says of Maestro Hisey’s work, “He is an advocate for new music, and a caring and careful medium through whom my music has been brought gracefully and powerfully to life.”

A passionate and sought-after music educator, Maestro Hisey frequently appears as guest adjudicator and clinician at schools and festivals throughout the region. His student orchestras have won top prizes in competition and have been invited to appear at Carnegie Hall, NAFME Eastern Music Festival and other festivals and concerts in the United States and abroad. He has served as Professor of Conducting, Orchestration and Music Director of the Orchestra at Manhattanville College and Professor of Conducting and Music Director of the Orchestra at Fairfield University. Maestro Hisey has been Director of Orchestras and Chamber Music at Greens Farm Academy in Westport for more than 20 years and was recently appointed Chairman of the Performing Arts Department there. He holds a bachelor’s degree in Viola Performance from the Eastman School of Music and master’s degree in Conducting from Bowling Green State University. He has been fortunate

to study conducting with Emily Freeman Brown, David Effron, Gustav Meier, Donald Portnoy, and Donald Hunsberger.

Polina Nazaykinskaya

Philharmonic Orchestra Conductor

Polina Nazaykinskaya has been studying music since the age of four. She composed her first large-scale work at fourteen. Ms. Nazaykinskaya is an Adjunct Lecturer of Composition at Brooklyn College Conservatory and a Teaching Artist at the Educational Center for the Arts in New Haven. She has taught at various schools and universities throughout the United States, Europe, and China, including Yale University and the Moscow Conservatory.

In addition to her work as a conductor and educator, Ms. Nazaykinskaya is an award-winning composer. Her commissions include works for both chamber and full orchestras, as well as art songs, operas, and ballets. Ms. Nazaykinskaya’s collaborators include internationally renowned choreographers Pascal Rioult, Jonah Bokaer and Yuri Possokhov. She works closely with the world’s leading conductors, such as Osmo Vänskä, Teodor Currentzis, Fabio Mastrangelo, Sarah Hicks, Toshiyuki Shimada, Lawrence Loh, and Hannu Lintu. Her compositions have been performed by internationally acclaimed soloists such as trombonist R. Douglas Wright, violinist Elena Korzhenevich, and pianist Anton Nel. In the 2022-23 season her orchestral music will be performed by the Minnesota Orchestra, Pensacola Symphony, Brooklyn Chamber Orchestra and New Britain Symphony Orchestra. In April, 2023 Ms. Nazaykinskaya’s new ballet “They Shut Me Up in Prose” will be premiered at the Gerald Lynch Theater in New York. In July, 2023 her new chamber opera, “Her New Home,” will be premiered at the Garth Newel Center. 2021-2022 season highlights included the premiere of her two new ballets “The Rising” and “Encounters,” performed by the San Francisco Ballet and MorDance in New York City.

Ms. Nazaykinskaya has received many national and international awards, including the Charles Ives Scholarship from The American Academy of Arts and Letters, and the Paul & Daisy Soros Fellowship for New Americans. Her musical language embodies the diversity of multicultural education. She graduated from the Tchaikovsky Conservatory College in Moscow as a composition/violin double major, studying with Konstantin Batashov and Vladimir Ivanov. She earned her Masters’ and Artist Diploma in composition at the Yale School of Music with Christopher Theofanidis and Ezra Laderman. Currently, she is a Doctorate Candidate at The Graduate Center CUNY under the mentorship of Tania León.

Britney Alcine
Virtuosi Orchestra Conductor

Britney Alcine has had a passion for conducting and music education since the age of sixteen. Currently a doctoral student studying Instrumental Conducting with conductor Edward Cumming at The Hartt School, Ms. Alcine conducts the Hartt Symphony Orchestra and Foot in the Door new music ensemble. She earned her Master of Music in Orchestral Conducting from the University of Massachusetts Amherst, where she conducted the UMass Symphony and All-University Orchestras and assisted in teaching the undergraduate conducting course and the UMass Marching Band. Ms. Alcine is also the assistant conductor with the Eureka Ensemble in Cambridge, Massachusetts, where she has created programming for concerts, community outreach, and student classes with the Midori and Friends organization. In 2015, Ms. Alcine earned the appointment of Conducting Apprentice with the New York Youth Symphony where she studied with conductor Joshua Gersen and premiered works for chamber orchestra in concert. She has also worked in collaboration with musicians and singers when she was the conductor for Avatar, The Last Airbender: The Musical in 2017. Ms. Alcine holds a Bachelor of Music in Instrumental Music Education from Rutgers University. She began her music directing efforts in her music education career as an elementary school music director of chorus and recorder ensemble in the Elizabeth Public schools from 2017-2019.

A native of New Jersey, Ms. Alcine has always lived a life involved with music. She grew up performing in many different ensembles and taking on any necessary roles. Although primarily a violist, Ms. Alcine considers herself a multi-instrumentalist and multi-faceted musician, having played not only the viola but instruments of the brass family, flute, percussion, and voice for ensembles that span from the pit orchestra to the marching band to the choir. Ms. Alcine is delighted to be joining GCTYO for her second year, sharing the culture of the orchestra and fostering a love for different styles of music in her students.

Gjorgj Kroqi
Sinfonia Orchestra Conductor

Gjorgj Kroqi started playing cello at the age of six. He attended the music school “Prek Jakova” in his native town of Shkoder, Albania. Mr. Kroqi earned his degree in cello performance and teaching from the “Academy of Fine Arts” in Tirana, Albania. From 1994-1998, he studied in Graz, Austria. During that time, he was an active performer with various groups in the region including the orchestra of the Cathedral of Graz. Since

arriving in Connecticut, Mr. Kroqi has performed with many orchestras including Waterbury Symphony, Bridgeport Symphony, Wallingford Symphony, New Britain Symphony, and many other groups. From 2001-2016, Mr. Kroqi was the Music Director, Chamber Orchestra Conductor and Cello Coach of the Greater Waterbury Youth Symphony. Currently Mr. Kroqi is the orchestra director at Roger Ludlowe Middle School in Fairfield. He is also the cello teacher at The Taft School in Watertown, CT, and he teaches cello privately in the Fairfield and Cheshire areas. He joined GCTYO in the 2018-19 season as a String Coach, then taught Bravura Orchestra for 2 years before becoming conductor for Sinfonia Orchestra.

Peyton Johnson
Wind Orchestra Conductor

Trumpeter Peyton Johnson has enjoyed a varied career as a solo performer, chamber musician, and orchestral musician. He has also been an active educator in the public school and private studio realms. Mr. Johnson began his studies on the trumpet at the age of 11. As a high school student, Mr. Johnson was awarded placements in All County, All Region, and All State Bands. He also participated in the All County Orchestra and the Carolina Youth Symphony in Greenville, SC. Mr. Johnson completed his undergraduate studies as double major in Trumpet Performance and Music Teaching and Learning at the Eastman School of Music, studying with James Thompson, retired principal trumpet of the Montreal and Atlanta Symphonies. During his time at Eastman, he performed with the Eastman School Symphony Orchestra, Eastman Wind Orchestra, and the Eastman New Jazz Ensemble. He was a member of an Eastman Trumpet Ensemble that went to the Large Ensemble Division of the National Trumpet Competition. Mr. Johnson has also recorded with the world-renowned Eastman Wind Ensemble and Eastman Philharmonia Chamber Orchestra as principal trumpet. During the summer of 2016, he was a participant in the Eastern Music Festival. Mr. Johnson recently finished his Master of Music degree in Trumpet Performance at The Hartt School in Hartford, CT, studying with Professor Phil Snedecor. At the Hartt School, he performed with the Hartt Wind Ensemble and Orchestra and has been a featured soloist with the Hartt Brass Ensemble. Since completing his Master’s degree, he has been active in the area performing musicals, brass quintets, and working with the Waterbury Symphony Orchestra.

Bruce Sloat
String Orchestra Conductor

Bruce Sloat, a GCTYO alumnus, graduated from Western Connecticut State University with a Bachelor of Music Degree in Viola Performance. There he was a recipient of the James Furman Memorial Chamber Music Award. Mr. Sloat is a violinist in the Donn Trenner Orchestra and has performed at Mohegan Sun with Josh Groban, Celtic Woman, and Earth, Wind & Fire. He currently performs in the Danbury Symphony where he has served as Principal Violinist and Principal Violist. He is also a member of the Ives Festival Orchestra and American Chamber Orchestra. As the violist of the Barber String Quartet, he performed concerts throughout Poland on a U.S. Embassy endorsed tour. An active chamber musician, Mr. Sloat is a member of Trio Dolce and the Ives Chamber Players. He has performed regularly throughout New York and Connecticut, including venues such as St. Patrick's Cathedral, Stamford's Rich Forum, Danbury Music Centre and benefit performances for OXFAM and the Kosciusko Foundation. Mr. Sloat has taught in the Fairfield County area for nearly 20 years, and currently serves on the string faculties of Fairfield University, Greens Farms Academy, Westport School of Music, Enchanted Garden and Music & Arts. He has also served as a strings coach for the Western Connecticut State University Summer Strings Camp and conducted at the Monroe Music Enrichment Program.

Aimee Toner
Woodwind Orchestra Conductor

Aimee Toner is dedicated to relationship-building through music-making and expanding the scope and accessibility of the musical arts.

As a Northeastern nomad, Ms. Toner thrives in regular transit between Boston, Providence, New York City, and New Haven for her performance and teaching endeavors.

Ms. Toner serves on the Artist Roster for the Lyric Chamber Music Society of New York. Her performance experience has involved serving as the principal flutist and piccolo player in orchestras including the Enigma Chamber Opera Orchestra, the New Amsterdam Opera, the Du Bois Symphony, and the New York Youth Symphony, and collaborating in chamber groups that have ranged from jazz trios in Italian restaurants to wind quintets on stage at Carnegie Hall. Ms. Toner made her solo debut with the Columbia University Orchestra in April of 2019, where she performed "Poem" for flute and orchestra as the winner of the 2018 concerto competition. She then headlined a contracted solo recital series

along the East Coast before the onset of COVID, where she performed in St Simons, Georgia and Jamestown, NY.

Ms. Toner is a recent graduate with a Master's of Music from the New England Conservatory, where she studied with Cynthia Meyers of the Boston Symphony Orchestra and obtained a concentration in Music in Education. Ms. Toner is also a graduate of Barnard College of Columbia University (Phi Beta Kappa), where she majored in Ethnomusicology and Economics. In line with her performance values, Ms. Toner is dedicated to the accessibility of classical music, and has expressed this passion through her work as faculty at the Rhode Island Philharmonic Music School, founder of the "Music in Motion" chamber series and "Virtual School Song" project, and as the Manager of the Brockton Symphony Orchestra's Marketing and Fundraising initiatives. Read more at aimeetoner.com

Jim Clark
Saxophone Orchestra Conductor

Jim Clark is a world-class saxophonist and multi-instrumentalist. He studied jazz with Warne Marsh, composition and theory at The Juilliard School of Music, and is an associate Fellow at Yale University Davenport College. Mr. Clark is the first artist to be contracted to arrange, perform, and record horn sections (saxophones, flute, trumpet, flugelhorn) for Band-in-a-Box®, a long-established software product by PG Music Inc. that provides intelligent, musical auto-accompaniment for musicians. He is an award-winning composer, having scored soundtracks in a wide variety of styles for numerous corporate clients. His most recent scoring project for strings and brass was "Christmas on Broadway" with CeCe Winans (Dec. 2021).

Mr. Clark's passion for the saxophone and jazz has led him to create numerous themed multimedia programs, including "From Sea to Shining Sea – A Musical Journey Across America," "Top Ten African American Jazz Saxophonists," and "What is Jazz?" to entertain and educate his audiences. During the isolation of 2021, he was able to perform for live audiences virtually by converting his audio studio to include video broadcast and greenscreen capabilities. Mr. Clark has an ongoing private music practice. Whether in the recording studio, performing in a local venue, or on stage at Carnegie Hall, his goal is the same – play from the heart with the highest level of musical excellence.

Jim Royle and Brian Ente
Percussion Orchestra Directors

The Jim Royle Drum Studio Faculty is made up entirely of former students from the Drum Studio with college degrees in music performance or education. They all share the same philosophies and curriculum that have been passed down to them, continuing a 30-year tradition of excellence.

Brian Ente
Percussion Orchestra Conductor

Brian Ente, a GCTYO alumnus, is a musician and composer who studied at Ithaca College with Gordon Stout and Conrad Alexander. A Connecticut native, he is a former vice president of the state's chapter of the Percussive Arts Society, and works to improve the performance standards and education of percussion both in his local area of Bridgeport/Fairfield, and across the state, taking part as a composer and judge for the Western Region Music Festival on both the middle school and high school levels. Mr. Ente coaches the GCTYO Percussion Ensemble at weekly rehearsals and conducts at concerts. He also teaches at the Jim Royle Drum Studio, works with the KEYS organization in Bridgeport, and is an active performer.

Jim Royle
Steel Pan Orchestras Conductor

Mr. Royle is a native of Connecticut and former president of the state chapter of the Percussive Arts Society for sixteen years. He was 2000 Chapter President of the Year. Mr. Royle attended the University of Bridgeport as a percussion and education major under the direction of Howard Zwickler, Arthur Lipner, and Bill Finegan. He has also studied various aspects of percussion with world recognized masters such as Max Roach, Alan Dawson, Keith Copeland, Akira Tana, Norbert Goldberg, Vernal Fournier, and Pan Master Professor Philmore. Although Mr. Royle enjoys his own performance career, his love of music and the pleasure of passing this love on to future musicians are equally important to him. His studio, founded more than 35 years ago, is well known for turning out remarkable performers, and all of his students are exposed to many aspects of percussion. Mr. Royle debuted the GCTYO Steel Pan program in Spring 2021 with 8 students. There are now 3 Steel Pan Orchestras with 24 students participating.

Glenn Alexander II
Conducting Fellow

A versatile young conductor and pianist whose musicality crosses many genres, Glenn Alexander II is known for his unique and passionate interpretations of the orchestral repertoire.

Mr. Alexander made his Carnegie Hall debut this 2022-23 season conducting Academy Award winning composer Jon Batiste's premiere of "American Symphony." He is concurrently a Project Inclusion Conducting Freeman Fellow with the Chicago Sinfonietta and a Conducting Fellow with the Greater Connecticut Youth Orchestras. Mr. Alexander also serves as a cover conductor at the Manhattan School of Music.

His recent collaborations have included the acclaimed dining franchise, Waffle House, Academy Award winning composer, Jon Batiste, and Teachers College at Columbia University. Beyond classical music, Mr. Alexander recently co-produced a nationally renowned EP, "Kim Cruse." He is also an accomplished gospel musician, having served as a pianist and organist for many congregations.

Mr. Alexander holds a Professional Studies Certificate from the Manhattan School of Music, a Master of Music in Orchestral Conducting from the Bard College Conservatory of Music, and a Bachelor of Arts in Music from Prairie View A&M University. His teachers and mentors include George Manahan, James Bagwell, Damien Sneed, and Dr. Vicki A. Seldon. He is a brother of both Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Inc. and Phi Mu Alpha Sinfonia Fraternity of America. He currently resides in New York City.

Damali Willingham
Conducting Fellow

Propelled by the joys of creating and experiencing noise, Damali's artistry is one that takes an audience through individual and collective emotional journeys. Born and raised on Muskogee and Creek lands (Atlanta, GA), Damali Willingham (they/them/theirs) has been a musical creator for as long as they can remember. They recently graduated from the Berklee College of Music with a B.M. in Music Composition and minor in Conducting, but their passion and talents for both conducting and composing were evident long before then. Damali had many notable achievements including an orchestral premiere at Northwestern University and a Georgia High School Musical Theater Award Nomination for Best Orchestra, all before the age of 18.

While at Berklee, Damali made an impression serving as musical director

and guest conductor of various ensembles including the Berklee Musical Theater Orchestra, Berklee Symphonic Winds, Film Scoring Session Orchestra, and the Berklee Motion Picture Orchestra, the school's largest student-run ensemble. Damali was chosen as the youngest fellow for the inaugural Girls Who Conduct and Georgia Symphony Orchestra conducting fellowship, and they have studied with renowned conductors of many styles including Francisco Noya, Eric Stern, and Tamara Dworetz. As a composer, Damali recently premiered a new wind ensemble orchestration of Gena Branscombe's A Festival Prelude, and completed a new work for solo bassoon, reclamation, commissioned for an upcoming recording project headed by Dr. Amy Pollard. They currently serve as Conducting Fellow for Greater Connecticut Youth Orchestras.

Dr. Rex Cadwallader

Jazz Program Director/Jazz Orchestra I Conductor

Dr. Cadwallader is one of the most respected jazz instructors in the area. He also performs as a jazz pianist and composes music. Several of his compositions have been performed by Greater Connecticut Youth Orchestras.

Currently Director of Bands in the Performing Arts Department at Greens Farms Academy in Westport. Dr. Cadwallader has served as Assistant Director of Jazz Studies at the University of Texas in Arlington and Associate Director of Jazz Studies at the University of Northern Colorado. He has taught at the Royal Academy of Music in London, England, Marlborough College in Marlborough, England, Southern Connecticut State University, and the Neighborhood Music School in New Haven. He received his Doctor of Arts Degree in Composition and Music Theory from the University of Northern Colorado in Greeley, and his Bachelor of Music Education and Master of Music in Composition degrees from the University of Nebraska in Lincoln.

Dr. Cadwallader has played with such jazz luminaries as Rufus Reid, Bob Mintzer, Eddie Daniels, Ed Shaunessey, Bill Watrous, Don Menza, Clark Terry, Ali Ryerson, Joe Beck, Giacomo Gates, and many others. He appears as performer or composer on over twenty-five albums including "A Balm in Gilead," featuring Tiffany Jackson. That was preceded by "Sweet Perfume In An Alabaster Jar," and "Quicker Than The Eye," with bassist Mike Asetta and drummer Artie Dixson and "Broadway – West Side Story," with flutist Ali Ryerson, bassist Mike Asetta and drummer Artie Dixson. A CD of original contemporary jazz with drummer Rich MacDonald entitled "The Cadwallader/MacDonald Project – YOUR

SMILE" was released in 1998 on Jaybird Records. Two other recordings, "Christmas In The Neighborhood" with bassist Mike Asetta, and "In A Mellow Tone," a tribute to the music of Duke Ellington, were released in 2002 and 2003, respectively. Dr. Cadwallader has also composed several works that have been debuted by the Greater Connecticut Youth Orchestras under the baton of Christopher Hisey, including "Citizen" in March 2018 and "There Will Be Dancing" in November 2022.

Dr. Cadwallader's compositions for jazz band have been performed and recorded worldwide. With more than 100 published in the U.S., Japan and England, he is the recipient of awards from downbeat magazine, the NEA and the NEH.

Geoffrey Brookes

Jazz Orchestra II Conductor

Mr. Brookes is celebrating his fifth season as the conductor of Jazz Orchestra II this year. He has been directing both middle school and high school level jazz ensembles since 2006. He is passionate about teaching young musicians to develop their creativity through the jazz idiom.

Mr. Brookes completed his undergraduate studies in music education at the University of Connecticut in 2006, receiving a BA in Music and a BS in Education. At UConn, he studied jazz with Earl MacDonald and Kenny Davis, as well as trumpet with James Ackley. He earned an MA in conducting through the American Band College of Sam Houston State University in 2013. Mr. Brookes started his music education career in public schools in 2006. He enjoys his role as the music director at Derby High School, where he directs the choir, band, and jazz band.

THE COACHES

Angelica Jara, String Coach

Angelica Jara is a violinist with a B.A in Music from Western Connecticut State University and a Masters from the University of Bridgeport. Ms. Jara started her teaching career at a charter school in Waterbury, CT, co-instructing 2nd-7th grade orchestra, which opened her eyes to the importance of differentiation and inclusion. That propelled her to shift her focus and pursue a teaching certificate through ARC (Alternative Teaching Certification). She then migrated to Wilton, CT, where she currently teaches middle and high school orchestra plus middle school general music. During her free time, Ms. Jara likes to join jams and hop in some Bluegrass bands performing in the CT and NY area.

Enkelejda Nani, String Coach

Ms. Nani was born in Fier, Albania. She attended the Academy of Art in Fier, where she began studying cello. She subsequently studied at the conservatory in Tirana, the capital of Albania, where she received a diploma in cello performance, equivalent to a Bachelor's degree in the United States. Ms. Nani has performed with numerous chamber ensembles in Albania and was a member of the Opera Tirana Orchestra. She is currently the Cello and Bass Coach for the GCTYO Philharmonic and Virtuosi Orchestras, and she teaches privately.

Sarah Shreder, String Coach

Cellist Sarah Shreder has performed throughout the United States, Canada, and Europe, capturing audiences with her energy and passion. She currently performs with the Bridgeport, Ridgefield, and Wallingford Symphonies, and she is the professor of cello at the University of Bridgeport. Ms. Shreder has performed as a soloist at the Domaine Forget International Music Festival in Quebec and with the Seven Hills Symphony and has concertized extensively in various chamber music settings, performing at the Quietside Festival and the International Musical Arts Institute in Maine, as well as the American Institute of Musical Studies in Graz, Austria. Ms. Shreder received a Bachelor degree in both Cello Performance and Fine Arts Management from the University of Illinois and a Master degree in Cello Performance from the University of Connecticut, where she studied with Kangho Lee. She currently lives in Stratford, Connecticut with her husband and two young children.

Hafez Taghavi, String Coach

Hafez Taghavi is a violinist and teacher in Connecticut and New York. He attended Western Connecticut State University and earned a Bachelor of Music degree in violin performance. Before entering college, Mr. Taghavi enjoyed a widespread performing career which included concerts at the Kennedy Center, Strathmore Hall, Constitution Hall, and three cities in Bolivia. While studying at WCSU, Mr. Taghavi was concertmaster of both the Symphony Orchestra and Opera Ensemble for four years. He went on to complete a Master of Music degree at the conservatory at Purchase College. While pursuing both of his music degrees, he received extensive chamber music coaching from the Manhattan String Quartet and has performed chamber music in New York City and internationally. Mr. Taghavi has performed with the Ives Festival Symphony orchestra as Principal 2nd and Associate Concertmaster. As a soloist, he has performed concerti at

Yale University with the Civic Orchestra of New Haven, the WCSU Symphony Orchestra, and other local ensembles. After his performance with the WCSU Orchestra, the Danbury News Times described him as a "... promising, talented soloist." In addition to classical music, Mr. Taghavi actively plays in a wide variety of other genres. This includes performances with the band Lez Zeppelin, country recording artist Ashton Shepherd, Moroccan folk singer Saida Fikri, and a live performance on Connecticut's i95 rock station. He can also be heard on the soundtrack to the documentary, Enquiring Minds, and on a trailer for the critically acclaimed computer game, World of Warcraft. Mr. Taghavi was adjunct professor of violin and chamber music at WCSU and is Director of Orchestra and Chamber Music at the Canterbury School. He serves as an artist faculty member at the Interharmony International Music Festival in Italy, maintains a private studio in Danbury, CT, and is a member of the Lotus Chamber Music Collective and the Deming Quartet. Mr. Taghavi is active with non-profits and serves as a board member for Families United in Newtown. He plays on a contemporary Italian violin by Laura Vigato and uses an antique French bow by Eugene Sartory.

Jennifer Trahan, String Coach

Jennifer Trahan has a life-long history of violin playing and teaching. She began her violin studies at the age of 5 in the Suzuki program in Columbus, Ohio. She has a Bachelor's degree in Violin Performance from Ohio University, under the tutelage of Howard Beebe, graduating with the honors of summa cum laude, second in her class, and Most Outstanding Performer. Ms. Trahan also began her teaching career at Ohio University, teaching Suzuki in the Athens Community Music School. She then went on to the Manhattan School of Music, where she received a Master's of Music in Violin Performance, under the tutelage of Patinka Kopec. Ms. Trahan began teaching at the Suzuki Music School of Westport in 1999, where she was the Assistant Music Director. In 2005, she left SMSW to create the Talent Education Suzuki School in Norwalk, where she taught all ages and levels, with a focus on developing her teaching philosophy for the advanced student. She currently has a private studio in Milford, Ms. Jen's Violin Studio, and is a sectional coach with the Greater Connecticut Youth Orchestras. During the Spring 2021 cycle, Ms. Trahan took up the baton to conduct both Symphony and Concert Orchestras. In addition to teaching privately, Ms. Trahan developed and directed a school strings program for elementary and middle school students. Her students have gone on to study violin and music in pre-conservatory programs as well as colleges, such as Manhattan School of Music, University of Maryland, American University, UCONN, Northwestern

University, University of Rochester and Wake Forest. Ms. Trahan performs with the Norwalk Symphony, Eastern Connecticut Symphony Orchestra, Bridgeport Symphony, Wallingford Symphony, and Orchestra New England. She is the violinist for the Archdiocese of Bridgeport, is a member of the Magnolia String Quartet, and freelances throughout Connecticut.

Jennifer Trahan
Violinist & Instructor

Ms. Jen's Violin Studio
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Greater Connecticut Youth Orchestras
is proud to announce it is the recipient of a three-year,
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A Message from Music Director Christopher Hisey

For the last several weeks, I have been asking my Principal Orchestra students to share “one good thing” at the beginning of rehearsal. Usually, 3 or 4 students will share something like a sports victory, passing their drivers test, or another personal accomplishment that has happened throughout the week.

My favorite, though, is when someone shares that they did well on a test or a quiz. More than the other responses, those reports receive extra enthusiasm from the other students in the orchestra. Academic achievement and making good grades in school is “cool” at GCTYO.

Music education is vital for our students. It encourages the kind of discipline, positive attitude, and patience that allows kids to achieve academically as well as on stage and the sports field. Music also contributes to their social-emotional health by giving them the means to connect to something beautiful that’s bigger than any individual.

When I started as a student in GCTYO, then the GBSYO (Greater Bridgeport Symphony Youth Orchestra), I was in 6th grade. I was a kid who felt out of place at school. I didn’t seem to fit in anywhere and I was teased. The few friends I did have were in school orchestra with me. Then I auditioned for GCTYO. I arrived at the first rehearsal on Saturday and realized I had found my people!

I know for many of our students GCTYO is the same. It is a place where they can come to be with like-minded students, who love music, don’t mind getting up on a Saturday morning, and want to be around others who are creative and strive to be successful.

I invite you to sit back, relax and enjoy the music on today’s concerts. Celebrating the accomplishments of these wonderful young musicians is a gift. I really can’t think of any place I’d rather be. GCTYO is still my people.

-Chris

Jack Lawrence – Songwriter

Jack Lawrence, though not a household name, was one of the most influential songwriters of all time. His biggest hits include:

- “If I Didn’t Care”
- “All or Nothing at All”
- “Linda”
- “Tenderly”
- “Never Smile at a Crocodile”
- “Once Upon a Dream”

Mr. Lawrence also wrote “Beyond the Sea” based on a French song, which was made popular by Bobby Darin in 1959, and which Principal Orchestra is performing today. That hit was followed in 1954 with the Academy Award nominated, “Hold My Hand.” Mr. Lawrence was inducted into the Songwriters Hall of Fame in 1975.

In addition, Mr. Lawrence wrote the official song of the Maritime Service and Merchant Marines, “Heave Ho! My Lads, Heave Ho!”

Mr. Lawrence was a gay man who was open about his sexuality later in life. He and his partner made a sizable art donation in 1968 to the Israel Museum. The gift was noted in an interview with the couple in The New York Times that made clear the two were a couple who lived together and were making the donation together, an unusual and brave admission for gay men during that time.

Greater Connecticut Youth Orchestras is honored to be a beneficiary of the Jack Lawrence Charitable Trust, which aims to improve the lives of children through music.

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YOUTH ORCHESTRAS
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THE PROGRAM

CONCERT 1, 1:00 PM

Steel Pan Orchestras *Jim Royle, Conductor*

Future Stars

Island Jump Jamie Shores
Kosa Soca Jim Royle

Junior Stars

Trini Time Brad Shores
Iko Iko James Crawford, arr. Brian Ente

Woodwind Orchestra *Aimee Toner, Conductor*

Gymnopedie #1 Erik Satie, arr. David Marlatt
Let's Go Band! Andrew Balent

Wind Orchestra *Peyton Johnson, Conductor*

Spider-Man: No Way Home Main Theme Michael Giacchino, arr. Johnnie Vinson

Jazz II Orchestra *Geoffrey Brookes, Conductor*

Watermelon Man Herbie Hancock, arr. Geoffrey Brookes
Straight Up Jim Cifelli

String Orchestra *Bruce Sloat, Conductor*

Allegro Molto from Symphony No. 1, K. 16 W.A. Mozart, arr. Anthony Granata
Turbulence William Owens
Orpheus in the Underworld Jacques Offenbach, arr. Sandra Dackow

Virtuosi Orchestra *Britney Alcine, Conductor*

Simple Symphony Benjamin Britten
I. Boisterous Bourrée
March in G minor Franz Schubert, arr. Philip Wilkinson
Suite from Video Games Live Various, arr. Ralph Ford

THE PROGRAM

CONCERT 2, 4:00 PM

Steel Pan Orchestra *Jim Royle, Conductor*

All Stars

Sunset Len Boogie Sharpe
Soca Pressure Mighty Sparrow
25 or 6 to 4 Chicago

Percussion Orchestra *Brian Ente, Conductor*

No Drums Allowed John R. Hearnest
Me Tarzan Chris Crockarell

Saxophone Orchestra *Jim Clark, Conductor*

America from "West Side Story" Leonard Bernstein, arr. Jim Clark
Anitra's Dance from Peer Gynt Suite No. 1, Op. 46 Edvard Grieg, arr. Jim Clark
The Pink Panther Theme Henry Mancini, arr. Jim Clark

Sinfonia Orchestra *Gjorgj Kroqi, Conductor*

Brandenburg Concerto No. 1, Mvt. 1 (Abridged) J. S. Bach,
arr. Vernon F. Leidig
Serenade No. 9 "Posthorn" - Finale W. A. Mozart, arr. Sandra Dackow
Humoresque A. Dvorak, arr. Robert Longfield
Music from "Frozen" Kristen Anderson-Lopez and Robert Lopez,
arr. Robert Longfield

Philharmonic Orchestra *Polina Nazaykinskaya, Conductor*

Artsakh Ara Gevorgian
Dr. Nuné Melik, Violin
Violin Concerto No. 1
I. *Vorspiel; Allegro moderato* Max Bruch
Dr. Nuné Melik, Violin
Symphony No. 8
I. *Allegro con brio* Antonín Dvořák

THE PROGRAM

CONCERT 3, 6:30 PM

Jazz I Orchestra *Rex Cadwallader, Conductor*

Teaneck	Nat Adderly, arr. Mark Dana
Tenderly	Walter Gross & Jack Lawrence, arr. Mark Taylor
Sky Dive	Freddie Hubbard, arr. Erik Morales
Haven't Met You Yet	Buble, Chang & Foster, arr. Scott Ragsdale
	<i>Virginia Grabovsky, Vocals</i>
Amazing Grace	Traditional, arr. Dave Rivello

Principal Orchestra *Christopher Hisey, Conductor*

Overture to Candide	Leonard Bernstein
	<i>Conducted by Glenn Alexander II</i>
Beyond the Sea	Albert Lasry, Jack Lawrence, Charles Trenet, arr. Kevin Riley
	<i>Conducted by Damali Willingham</i>
There Will Be Dancing	Rex Cadwallader
	<i>Christian Sands, Piano</i>

INTERMISSION

Symphony No. 5 in C minor, Op. 67	Ludwig van Beethoven
I. <i>Allegro Con Brio</i>	
II. <i>Andante Con Moto</i>	
III. <i>Scherzo: Allegro</i>	
IV. <i>Allegro</i>	

Scan the QR code to read more about the pieces on the program.



“There Will Be Dancing” by Rex Cadwallader

Program Notes

Sometimes life deals you a perfect hand. Mine came in 1996 when a seven-year-old pianist named Christian Sands and his parents walked through my studio door at Neighborhood Music School in New Haven. He wanted to play jazz, he said, and so we just started. I offered up a few basic exercises that he quickly mastered, and for the next ten or eleven years we worked together. His lessons were the bright spot in my week, and I felt lucky that fate had led him to me.

I still feel fortunate to be his friend, and now, with this new piece, his colleague and collaborator. I proposed the idea to have Christian play with the GCTYO Principal Orchestra to Chris Hisey in spring of 2021, and he jumped at the opportunity. I then got in touch with Christian to see if he'd be up for working together on a musical project for jazz piano and orchestra. I was happy when he said, “Yes,” and we were off and running.

Like other pieces I've written for GCTYO – “A Bridgeport Fantasy” in 2010, “Citizen” in 2017 – “There Will Be Dancing” travels through a variety of musical styles. Jazz is not just one thing, but an amalgam of music from many different cultures. I've touched on just a few of them: you'll hear blues, Latin, fusion, contemporary jazz that is still nameless, a lovely ballad, and throughout, sections that allow Christian and his trio opportunities to put their unique stamps on the musical envelope.

The piece was written over the summer of 2022, sandwiched between the GCTYO trip to Spain and Portugal and other travel, and the final notes were written just before Labor Day. My task throughout the project has been to give Christian a big canvas on which to work his magic. Just as all those years ago when we were teacher and student, I have tried mostly to stay out of the way of his remarkable genius.

I chose the title simply because when Christian plays, there WILL be dancing.



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Vyom Dhir, Trumbull
William Dina, Stratford
Jude Jacob, Trumbull

Eduardo Lucero, Stamford
Niko Perez, Bridgeport
Walter Pineda, Bridgeport
Kaia Price, Fairfield
Joan Sebastian Sotelo, Bridgeport

Steel Pan Orchestra Junior Stars

Hali Alcocer, Bridgeport
Ella Bienstock, Westport
Max Jessee, Milford
Evan Nani, Easton
Nathali Reyes, Stratford

Benjamin Solano, Monroe
Isaiah Solano, Monroe
Susana Velasquez, Stamford
Rhys Weismann, Westport

Steel Pan Orchestra All Stars

Alexander Cunningham, Fairfield
Yohann Domingue, Bridgeport
Conor Glynn, Trumbull

Rhys Rader, Stratford
Jorge Sena, Stamford

Woodwind Orchestra

Flute

Aurora Aden, Orange
Antonia Cid Leon, Fairfield
Kennedy James, Stratford

Saxophone - Alto

Enrique Arango, Stamford
Diego Bars, Trumbull
Zephaniah Denu, New Canaan

Clarinet

Isabel Mejia Flores, Stamford
Giulia Rollo, Stratford

Wind Orchestra

Flute

Ailyn Martinez-Ocampo, Stamford
Nika Stepanov, Stamford

Oboe

Emma Greenhut, New Canaan

Clarinet

Joshua Alexandre, Stamford
William Gibson, New Haven
Aiden Klein, Stratford

Trumpet

Emily Barreto, Fairfield
Gavin Bayers, Fairfield
Harry Chase, Trumbull
Zachary Guttsenok, Wilton
A'meara Shelley-Barbier, Stamford

Trombone

Chloe Chang, Orange
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Jazz II Orchestra

Flute

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Clarinet

Joshua Alexandre, Stamford
Nathaly Barreto, Fairfield
Daniela Carias, Stamford

Saxophone - Alto

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Sumanyu Pinjala, Fairfield

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Gemma Panarese, Fairfield

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String Orchestra

Violin I

Rachel Yong, Southbury –
Concertmaster
Claire Bailey-Gates, Fairfield
Anjali Bandari, Fairfield
Emmy Bernheim, Weston
William Curran, Old Saybrook
Taleeda Hantash, Trumbull
Andrew Jacob, Orange
Reva Kulkarni, Trumbull
Mallory MacIlvain, Fairfield
Edie McDonald, Fairfield
Ryan Oh, Wilton
Nilay Parmar, Orange
Dinuka Periyapperuma, Westport
Janani Periyapperuma, Westport
Adrian Rebello, Westport
SiYi Robifker, Monroe
Jimmy Wu, Trumbull
Joseph Yong, Southbury

Violin II

Oliver Chen, Fairfield –
Principal
Aman Berhe, Trumbull
Kimberly Cabello, Stratford
Jay Cao, Fairfield
Vincent Cao, Fairfield
Carrie Chang, Orange
Graham Choi, Fairfield
Kai Coffin, Fairfield
William Cruz, Norwalk
Alexander Cunningham, Fairfield
Aarith D'costa, Fairfield
Yohann Domingue, Bridgeport

Carolyn Donovan, Milford
Jake Jacob, Trumbull
Savannah Lang, Bridgeport
Manasvi Madala, Trumbull
Parnavi Madala, Trumbull
Jeein Na, Fairfield
Claire Nam, Shelton
Luke Palisi, Fairfield
Sofia Palisi, Fairfield
Liam Putnam, Milford
Sambit Sharma, Trumbull
Bryce Taylor, Newtown

Viola

Luke Shalhoub, Fairfield –
Principal
Danielle Ajayi, Southbury
Laila Matmati, Monroe
Sloane Shalhoub, Fairfield
Skylar Valliere, Riverside

Cello

Lyam Seguinot, Woodbury –
Principal
Milan Chiravuri, Bridgeport
Ayla Elkins, Shelton
Audrey English, Fairfield
Rohan Gowthaman, Westport
Zachary Hamilton, Trumbull
Evan Nani, Easton
Ian Perry, Ridgefield
Antonella Polo de la Piedra, Stamford
Jonah Putnam, Milford
Wesley Steese, Fairfield
Rhys Weismann, Westport

Virtuosi Orchestra

Violin I

Vaanya Dhir, Trumbull –
Concertmaster
Luke Bergman, Salem
Gabriella Gonzalez, Milford
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Violin II

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Oboe

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Principal

Clarinet

Nathaly Barreto, Fairfield –
Principal
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French Horn

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Principal

Trumpet I

Ronak Parmar, Orange –
Principal

Trombone

Maadhav Subramanian, Westport –
Principal
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Anna Martino, Stratford
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Saxophone Orchestra

Saxophone - Alto

Eleri Aronson, Weston
Francisco Espina, Stamford
Sumanyu Pinjala, Fairfield
Ivan Stepanov, Stamford
Allison Stiles, New Canaan

Saxophone - Tenor

Gemma Panarese, Fairfield
Christian Seoane, Weston

Saxophone - Baritone

Bodhi Chiravuri, Bridgeport

Sinfonia Orchestra

Violin I

Claire D'Souza, Trumbull –
Concertmaster
Tamanna Aravind, Bethel
Zachary Feuer, Wilton
Kelsi Fleischer, Milford
Kirthana Gowthaman, Westport
Duncan Kolb, Newtown
Caroline Louie, Fairfield
Anamika Martins, Southport
Riya Patel, Orange
En Qiao, Trumbull
Peyton Schleaf, Weston
Susana Sebourne, Bridgeport
Erin Song, Fairfield
Trisha Srikanth, Monroe

Violin II

Eric Ross, Fairfield –
Principal
Owen Boberski, Westport
Emily Cheng, Westport
Joelyne Domingue, Bridgeport
Meghan Elterich, Fairfield
Ali Hassan, Bridgeport
Jin Huh, East Lyme
Camryn Irby, Milford
Dumeto Oraedu, Trumbull
Jayden Zhang, Fairfield

Viola

Madeleine Stiber, Westport –
Principal
Jasmine Cabello, Stratford
Eloise Healy, Fairfield
Krystal Sakal, Monroe

Cello

Daniel Guerreiro, Fairfield –
Principal
Henry Bailey-Gates, Fairfield
Tyler Chen, Fairfield
Andriana Elkins, Trumbull
Marcel Katz, Westport
Parker Lim, Fairfield
Sean Lu, Milford
Graidy McGuire, Old Saybrook
Mauricio Quintana, Fairfield
Cooper Straza, Fairfield

Bass

Lydia Buzbee, Stratford –
Principal
Max Weaver, Fairfield

Philharmonic Orchestra

Violin I

Isabel Jo, Westport –
Concertmaster
Victoria Beniston, Fairfield
Aditi Bhattamishra, Orange
Anaya D'Souza, Fairfield
Ashanti English, Fairfield
Isabelle Li, Weston
Prithvi Mahesh, Fairfield
Eva Ortiz, Stratford
Jiayue Sun, Woodbridge
Andrew Vongsouvanh, Middlebury
Jennifer Yin, Riverside
Eve Zinkerman, Fairfield

Violin II

Conor Glynn, Trumbull –
Principal
Saanvi Chintapalli, Trumbull
Anne Codd, Trumbull
Charlotte Cooper, New Canaan
Grace English, Fairfield
Anthony Feng, Orange
Kyleigh Higgins, Stratford
Nathaniel Thomas, Fairfield

Viola

Peter Adams, Wilton –
Principal
Gemma Byrne, Stratford
Khushi Haria, Fairfield
Pranav Quarve, Fairfield

Cello

Shivali Kanthan, Westport –
Principal
Jasper Gallas, Fairfield
Ryan Herlyn, Westport
Jun Huh, East Lyme
Elias Kolb, Newtown
Ochmunkh Otgonbayar, Fairfield
Kazuho Yasuno, Orange

Bass

Shivani Anand, Monroe –
Principal

Flute

Anusha Ragupathy, Trumbull –
Principal
Emily Iniguez, Stamford
Macayla Martinez, Bridgeport
Maya Raggio, Bantam
Julia Van Der Aue, Westport

Oboe

Natalie Cunningham, Fairfield –
Principal

Clarinet

Gabriel Espada, Bridgeport –
Principal
Tara Saraf, Old Greenwich
Sara Velasquez, Stamford

Bassoon

Bennett Gerhart, Redding –
Principal

Trumpet

Hilton Rodriguez, Norwalk –
Principal
Blake O'Looney, Westport
Mason Yeoh, Fairfield

Trombone

Kevin McGuire, Derby –
Principal

Percussion

Danny Cho, Fairfield –
Principal
Shrey Bandari, Fairfield
Anna Martino, Stratford

Jazz I Orchestra

Flute

Maya Raggio, Bantam

Saxophone - Alto

Tara Saraf, Old Greenwich
Bennett Gerhart, Redding
Eleri Aronson, Weston

Saxophone - Tenor

Oliver Harrigan, Milford
Christian Seoane, Weston

Saxophone - Baritone

Bodhi Chiravuri, Bridgeport

Trumpet

Tommy Linn, Westport
William Keenan, Orange
Delaney McGee, Westport
Hilton Rodriguez, Norwalk
Mason Yeoh, Fairfield

Trombone

Shaquille Kenion, Stamford
Maadhav Subramanian, Westport

Piano

Katie Friedman, Fairfield

Bass & Vocals

Virginia Grabovsky, Monroe

Guitar

Elliott Schunk, Fairfield

Drums

Jackson Henrich, Fairfield

Principal Orchestra

Violin I

Julia Herlyn, Westport –
Concertmaster
Cristian Rodriguez, Monroe
Kate Friedman, Fairfield
Marshall Franz, Trumbull
Peyton Chiriatti, Newtown
Amy Chervansky, Fairfield
Michael Sigal, Southport
Ella Woodbury, Darien
Alexia Ninios, Westport
Lydia Wilson-Taylor, Fairfield
April Park, Trumbull
Katerin Pineda, Bridgeport

Violin II

Claire Holcombe, New Canaan –
Principal
Som Nene, Fairfield
Anya Mahajan, Woodbridge
Gayathri Sarath, Wilton
Alicia Cheng, Orange
Landon Smith, Woodbridge
Josh Gibson, Bridgeport
Maria Stiber, Westport

Stephanie Jiang, Darien
Isaiah Johnson, Stratford
Evan Grzeda, Fairfield
Veronica Yi, Stratford
Jennifer Li, Orange
Emily Walsh, Fairfield
Nicholas Ramos, Bridgeport
Sophia Ayoub, Milford
Brendan Li, East Lyme
Manushri Anand, Monroe

Viola

Mark Jalkut, Fairfield –
Principal
Emma Grimsey, Waterford
William Hanington, Fairfield
Jessica Vora, Fairfield
Ariston Liu, Westport
Hannah Kwok, Fairfield
Matthew Pan, Sandy Hook
Rohan Quarve, Fairfield
Sreya Mothukuri, Fairfield
Logan Johnson, Newtown
Chaitanya Pinjala, Fairfield

Principal Orchestra (cont.)

Cello

Sophia Vellotti, Westport –
Principal
Alexander Parent, Fairfield
Jessica Zhang, Sandy Hook
Brian Li, East Lyme
Kyra Brown, New Milford
Sara Dombroski, Waterford
Grace Chiriatti, Newtown
Virginia Grabovsky, Monroe
Kyela McGuire, Old Saybrook
Julia Plager, Fairfield
McKenna Mercurio Morse, Fairfield
Ryan Kaufman, Greenwich
Ava Scholl, Milford
Nikhil Kanthan, Westport

Bass

Lilah Weinstein, Fairfield –
Principal
Evan Betancourt, Milford

Flute

Madison Chueka, Southport –
Principal
Daphne Chao, Woodbridge
Carsen Schick, Easton
Mallika Subramanian, Westport
Ella Tibbals, Stratford

Oboe

Nolan Medalla, Wilton –
Principal
Samuel Dina, Stratford
McKenzie Forte, Milford
Maytal Meskin, Fairfield

Clarinet

Noah Lafond, Trumbull –
Principal

Oliver Harrigan, Milford
Dylan Ross, Fairfield
Grace Coyne, Fairfield

Bass Clarinet

Grace Coyne, Fairfield –
Principal

Bassoon

Evan Marshall, Fairfield –
Principal

French Horn

Elliott Schunk, Fairfield –
Principal
Vedanth Krishnan, Greenwich
Chip Chase, Trumbull

Trumpet

Theo Pollex, Fairfield –
Principal
Tommy Linn, Westport
Delaney McGee, Westport
William Keenan, Orange

Trombone

Shaquille Kenion, Stamford –
Principal

Saxophone

Noah Lafond, Trumbull (Alto)
Oliver Harrigan, Milford (Tenor)

Percussion

Jackson Henrich, Fairfield –
Principal
Sarah Lacugna, Fairfield



Congratulations to the 2022-23 recipients of the **KUBTEC Bob & Dorothy Genualdi Scholarships**

These scholarships honor the memory of Bob & Dorothy, who taught music to children irrespective of their ability to pay for lessons. Instead, Bob & Dorothy chose students who, like they did, demonstrated a profound love and passion for music.

These GCTYO musicians were chosen for their love and passion for music:

- Emily Barreto**
- Nathaly Barreto**
- William Cruz**
- Yohann Domingue**
- Joelyne Domingue**
- William Gibson**
- Ali Hassan**
- Emily Iniguez**
- Joseph Yong**
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Congratulations to the five 2022-23 recipients of the **VINCENT J. PEZZELLA SCHOLARSHIP**

These scholarships honor the memory of Vincent J. Pezzella, who was passionate about music and made it a major part of his life. Vincent studied music in high school and college. He was a member of the Trumbull Marching Band and Winter Percussion, and he minored in Music at Hofstra University. He enjoyed listening to and playing music and shared his passion with others. He would be very proud to know that his name is being carried on and helping others to achieve their dreams.




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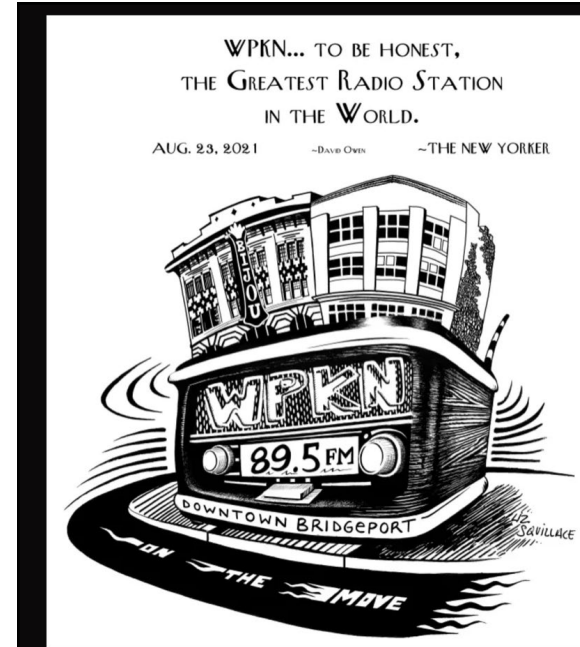
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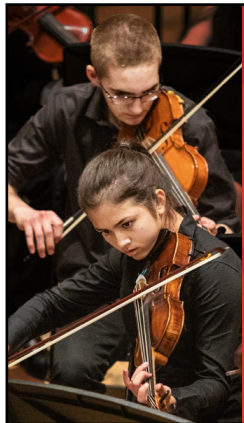
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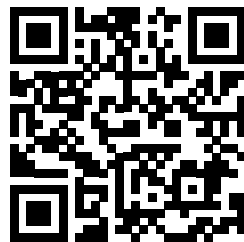
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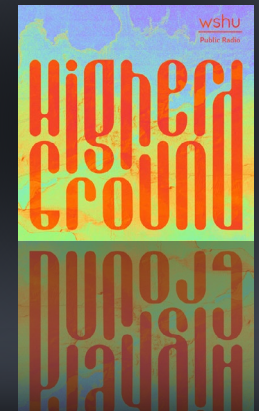
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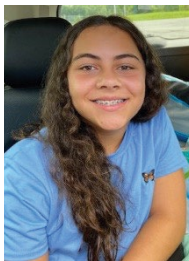
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We wish you nothing but the best.
Love, Mom, Dad, Gandy, and Nate

Gavin,
We are so proud of your hard work as a musician. Your passion for music brings joy to your whole family.

Love,
Mom, Dad and Matthew



Rhys,
Congratulations on joining GCTYO!
We are so proud of your dedication and hard work.
We can't wait to see you perform today!
Love, Mom, Dad, Owen, Aidan & Hank



Laney, you have done such an amazing job with your musical endeavors. You show such perseverance and we are so proud of your accomplishments.
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