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Celebrating 30 years, Look how the Music Therapy Institute has grown!

THEN - 1986

- 1 studio in the Soundview Ave. Building.
- 1 Director coordinated onsite and outreach, 2 Music Therapists on faculty.
- Outreach started with 3 partnering agencies.
- Served 200 individuals in the first year.
- Started with a \$5,000 seed grant from the Westchester Community Foundation.

NOW - 2016

- 4 dedicated studios and an observation room.
- 2 Co-Directors coordinating onsite and outreach, 11 Music Therapists on faculty.
- Now partner with 28 agencies in 75 locations weekly.
- Serve more than 2,000 individuals annually.
- Today, honored to have the support of numerous funders, including the following who have contributed \$10,000 or more: ArtsWestchester, ASCAP Foundation, Thomas & Agnes Carvel Foundation, Entergy, Charles A. Frueauff Foundation, Ronald McDonald House Charities, Newman's Own Foundation.
- Programs include Healing Our Heroes (HOH) for military veterans, established in 2013.



"Thirty years & still going strong! We look forward to thirty more."

-Co-directors Lisa Sandagata & Tina Brescia

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Celebrate! Performathon Turns 10

Save the date for the Music Conservatory of Westchester's tenth Performathon event on Saturday, Dec. 10! To celebrate Performathon's 10th anniversary, we'll have games, prizes, a crafts boutique, food, and an all-day musical marathon of fabulous student performances.

Participating kids raise funds to help other kids by getting their family and friends to sponsor their performances, and compete for exciting prizes - including a piano!

This year's proceeds will provide support for the Conservatory's Scholarship Program, and will help jump-start a new electronic keyboard classroom. "It'll kick off our future," Douglas Bish, Dean of Students and Faculty, said.

Designing Our Future

Take a walk down to the lower level of the Conservatory building, turn left, and you'll find yourself in a big open space – our "last frontier." We're excited to be working with architect Hans Knutzen who has designed sound stages, broadcast studios and other acoustically-based projects in the US and internationally.

The collective imaginations of our board, staff, faculty and students have envisioned filling this space with an electronic keyboard classroom, additional large rehearsal space, a recording studio, a new percussion studio, and more space for our growing Music Therapy program.

Executive Director's Desk

In 2016, the Conservatory is thrilled to be the recipient of a Design Study grant from the New York State Council on the Arts, to create architectural plans to turn this dream into reality. The build-out is a key part of our current strategic planning that will create a vision for the future of our school, with new spaces, new programs, and new opportunities for everyone in our community. When we celebrate our 90th anniversary in the fall of 2019, we'll be ready for our next 90 years!



Jean Newton

The Dean's Desk



With almost 6 months "under my belt" as the new Dean of Students and Faculty, I can say without hesitation that I'm excited about expanding our programs and bringing new cutting-edge musical opportunities to our students and their families.

In the past few months, we have doubled the size of our Suzuki violin, viola, cello and guitar faculty, hiring some of the best teachers in the New York Metropolitan area. With a new brochure in the works and a widespread marketing campaign, we expect the Conservatory to become one of New York State's premier destinations for a Suzuki music education.

We have also established important industry contacts which will help us create an electronic music teaching and learning lab. This will allow for greater depth in our teaching of Composition, Music Theory, Songwriting, and Class Piano, as well as enabling us to serve as a center for introducing essential new music teaching software to our area's public school music educators.

Still at the center of it all is our traditional program, whether classical, jazz/rock/pop, or musical theatre. The Conservatory is one of the region's most respected institutions for community music education, and we plan to make our world-class faculty, curriculum, and musical opportunities even stronger and more vibrant as we move into the future. Please stop in and give us a look. I know that you will like what you see and, especially, what you hear.

Douglas Bish

Master Teacher Elizabeth Farnum Joins Faculty

Joining the Conservatory's esteemed vocal music faculty this fall, Elizabeth Farnum has been praised by the New York Times for her "honeyed tone." The award-winning soprano is one of today's most highly sought-after performers in the field of modern music. When asked about her reasons for becoming a teacher here - an institution that reaches out with musical opportunities to all members of the community - she said, "the Conservatory is welcoming to students of all ages, abilities and levels of experience. The only real requirement is a love of music, and I like that a lot!"



Farnum has presented modern vocal works in venues such as Lincoln Center, the Library of Congress, London's Institute for Contemporary Art, the American Academy in Rome, and the Concertgebouw in Amsterdam. She has performed on Broadway, at the Metropolitan Opera, and toured five continents with diverse ensembles. A prolific studio artist, she has also been featured on over 30 recordings, four of which were nominated for Grammy Awards.

Dean Douglas Bish said, "We couldn't be more excited about having Elizabeth join our team of world-class professional musicians and teachers here at the Conservatory. She brings immense pedagogical skills, unimpeachable vocal ability, and she is the very model of someone who has created a highly successful career as a performer and teacher. Just as important, she has done all of this with a grace and humility that elevates our institution and everyone with whom she works." Welcome, Elizabeth!

Conservatory Student Rocks Broadway



Rachel 5th from left in black with "68" shirt
photo by Jenny Anderson

We are thrilled to announce that Rachel Katzke, who studies electric bass with Al Renino, has been cast in the role of "Katie" in Andrew Lloyd Webber's "School of Rock-The Musical," at the Winter Garden Theater on Broadway! She debuted on Nov. 7, 2016.

"This role is unique in that it also requires her to play the electric bass live in an on-stage rock group," said Renino. "Rachel came to us last year specifically with the goal of auditioning for this role, never having previously played or owned a bass. She worked incredibly hard, and I am extremely proud of her!"

Joel Breitkopf Leads Board of Trustees

Our new President Joel Breitkopf, elected at the June meeting of the Conservatory's Board of Trustees, succeeds Rodd Berro who held the post for five years.

Breitkopf, a Principal of Alchemy Properties in NYC, joined the board in 2013 and served as its Vice President the last two years. He is the founding sponsor of *Healing Our Heroes*, a tuition-free program of music therapy and music instruction for military veterans. Launched in September 2013 and the newest component of the Conservatory's Music Therapy Institute, *Healing Our Heroes* serves veterans in the tristate area who are returning home with a variety of physical and psychological injuries sustained while on active duty.

"I am honored and thrilled to become the President of the Board of Trustees for such a great community organization that dates back to 1929," said Breitkopf. "The depth and breadth of the organization helps children, veterans, adults and the elderly connect to themselves, their peers and their communities through the universal language of music that we all share."

He continued, "I look forward to working with a very experienced and sophisticated board as well as an amazing staff of music teachers and administrators as we continue to grow the organization."



Welcome New Board Members



Midhat Serbagi has spent over a decade working in real estate building and development, completing over 2 million square feet of construction in the New York City Metro Area. Notable clients include El AD Group, Macklowe Properties, Naftali Group and Meadow Partners. Mr. Serbagi grew up with music - his parents, both violinists, were members of the Metropolitan Opera and New York City Ballet orchestras. He holds a Bachelor's degree from the University of Wisconsin-Madison and Master's in Real Estate from NYU.

Andrea Taber is currently the Executive Director of Orchestra of Our Time, a not-for-profit organization dedicated to performing the music of living composers. She is a member of the New Choral Society, and the Westchester Reform Temple adult choir. She is also a pianist and a composer of liturgical music. Andrea received her B.A. from Mount Holyoke College, her J.D. from NYU School of Law, and a Master of Music from the Conservatory at Purchase College.



All That Jazz!



The Larchmont Shore Club was swinging to the sounds of the Tim Armacost Quartet at the Conservatory's Jazz Brunch on Oct. 23, an intimate, exclusive event benefitting our scholarship program.

Armacost was joined by fellow Westchester residents Jason Tiemann on drums and Jay Azzolina on guitar, as well as bassist Harvie S who hails from NYC. A Grammy-nominated saxophonist who has recorded 14 albums, Armacost has composed for Wynton Marsalis and the Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra.