2015

The Perfect Pitch 2015

WMU School of Music

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In 2013, the School of Music celebrated its 100th anniversary, and it is worth reviewing the 2012 and 2013 issues of The Perfect Pitch posted on our website (wmich.edu/music/about/newsletters) for articles on the Centennial Celebration. As we move forward into our second century, we continue our mission of preparing students for an ever-changing professional world. To accomplish this, we will continue to build on the things that we have always done well – performance and our core curriculum – while also incorporating innovation and technology into our program in order to offer our students the best professional training possible. Tradition and Innovation is our focus for the future, and our focus for this issue of The Perfect Pitch.

I have asked the faculty to write about some of the highlights of their respective programs, which you will read about in the feature article. Since I don’t need to duplicate any of that information, I will just say that I am extremely proud of our accomplishments and excited for the future.

After more than 30 years of teaching in the clarinet studio, I was prepared for a different perspective on the School of Music as I transitioned into the position of Director. As I mark my one-year anniversary as Director, however, I am a little surprised at how very different it is. I now take even greater pride in the accomplishments of our remarkable faculty, and there were several times this past year that student performances moved me to tears. I am grateful for the artistry, the scholarship, and the industry of both the students and the faculty, and I am deeply appreciative of the work of the School of Music support staff, who provide critical and necessary support for the many activities you will read about in this newsletter. I would also like to acknowledge the work of my predecessor, Dr. David Colson, who provided excellent leadership and vision for the program, including these newsletters.

I am immensely proud of the feedback we continue to receive that these have been among the very best publications of their type in the six years he produced them.

I am asking for your help with our future. With funds becoming increasingly more difficult to come by, we rely on your help to not only sustain but to build on our creativity, to move forward with our mission and our vision. Any gift you are able to make helps us to achieve the things that you will read about in this newsletter, and if you have a particular area that you would like to support, we will be sure the funds are specifically routed to that. Please contact me directly if I can help or if you have anything you would like to discuss. I can be reached at bradley.wong@wmich.edu or by phone at (269) 387-4671. Gifts can also be made online at wmich.edu/music/giving, or contact me for more information. We also appreciate your support in non-financial ways – attending our programs, promoting the school to prospective students, comments on social media, etc. All of these gestures have an impact on what we do – so thank you, on behalf of the students, faculty, and staff of the School of Music.

Sincerely,

Bradley Wong

Bradley A. Wong, Director
ENSEMBLE ACTIVITIES

Choral Activities
Twenty-four students from the WMU chapter of the American Choral Directors Association (ACDA) traveled to Salt Lake City, Utah, for the biennial national convention. The students attended concerts, workshops, lectures, and reading sessions — and connected with alumni from around the country.

In spring 2015, the choral program hosted Andrew Megill, Director of Choral Activities at the University of Illinois, for a three-day residency that culminated with Megill guest conducting at the Southwestern Michigan Vocal Festival. During the residency, Megill gave several conducting master classes, choral workshops, and private coaching sessions.

In February 2015, choral conductor Mollie Stone came to campus through the Visiting Scholars and Artists Program. Stone gave choral workshops about South African and Georgian song, and also gave a conducting master class to the choral conducting class.

In March 2015, the choral program hosted Swedish choral conductor Gisela Hök Ternström, who gave workshops in Swedish choral diction and Swedish choral tone to the University Chorale and Collegiate Singers. She also gave a guest lecture to the Choral Methods class.

In December 2014, the orchestra performed Tchaikovsky’s ballet, The Nutcracker, with the famed Moscow Ballet at Miller Auditorium to a packed and appreciative audience.

In 2013, the School of Music celebrated its 100-year anniversary. As we move forward into our second century, we continue to fulfill our mission of preparing students for an ever-changing professional world through rigorous study, research, performance, and application. The productivity of our students and faculty remains at an extraordinary level, but we will remain diligent in our efforts to incorporate new technology and innovative curricula to maintain our standing as an internationally recognized leader in the musical arts.

The many notable accomplishments of our undergraduate and graduate student performance majors, performance faculty, and faculty ensembles-in-residence are well documented in other sections of this issue of The Perfect Pitch. Here are some items of note from student and faculty in other areas in the School of Music.

Band Activities
The Bronco Marching Band traveled to Boise, Idaho, in December to perform at the Famous Idaho Potato Bowl, supporting our successful football team.

The University Band Program hosted world renowned composer Dana Wilson for its 47th annual Spring Conference on Wind and Percussion Music. Over 100 high school musicians combined to form the Dana Wilson All-Star Band. Our University Symphonic Band performed music by Wilson and Scott Boerma and featured WMU horn professor Lin Foulk as soloist.

The annual three day University Symphonic Band tour took the ensemble to several Michigan high schools (Grand Ledge, Charlotte, Eaton Rapids, and Lakewood) to perform for and with their students. WMU horn professor Lin Foulk highlighted the concerts with thrilling performances of Scott Boerma’s Zirk.

The graduate student brass and wind quintets also performed and taught master classes for the high school musicians.

In December 2014, the orchestra presented a “Christmas Card for the Community” holiday concert in Miller Auditorium.

Orchestra Activities
The University Symphony Orchestra collaborated with the Stulberg International String Competition to feature 15 year old Canadian violinist Emma Meinrenken, the 2014 Stulberg Competition Silver Medalist, as soloist at Chenery Auditorium in October 2014.

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MUSIC EDUCATION

The Pioneer Arts Education Symposium in Music Education 2015
by John Lychner, Professor, Music Education

This spring, the School of Music hosted its fifth Pioneer Music Educator and Visiting Scholar Symposium. The event featured Dr. Robert Duke from The University of Texas at Austin as the Visiting Scholar, and we honored Dr. Richard O’Hearn, Professor and Director Emeritus of the School of Music, as the Pioneer Music Educator for 2015. The Symposium was held on Monday, March 16 and Tuesday, March 17, 2015.

Dr. Robert Duke

He also directs the Psychology of Learning program at the Colburn Conservatory of Music in Los Angeles. His research on human learning and behavior spans multiple disciplines, including motor skill learning, cognitive psychology, and neuroscience. Duke prefers the concept of music learning rather than music education because it helps people to focus on what we are actually doing: learning music. Duke’s presentations addressed a variety of topics including transitioning from student to teacher, research tools in music learning, and inspired musical performance for all learners. He spoke to classes, was the featured speaker for Convocation, presented the keynote address for the Symposium, and met with faculty and administrators in the School of Music, the College of Fine Arts, and beyond.

Dr. Richard O’Hearn

We honored Dr. Richard O’Hearn, Director and Professor Emeritus from the WMU School of Music, as our 2015 Pioneer Music Educator and were inspired by stories from his career and tributes from his colleagues and friends. O’Hearn came to WMU at a time when the School of Music was growing, and he brought truly pioneering approaches to music education, transforming the program. A prime example of O’Hearn’s legacy is our current, field-based methods classes that took the standard 40 hours of observation required by the College of Education and incorporated them into those classes, making the experience interactive rather than solely observational. He also established the innovative four-summer master’s program in music education, a model that has been copied by universities across the country. In addition, he was active in numerous professional organizations and worked with a number of local schools on curriculum development. He discussed his career and activities in a presentation for music education students and encouraged everyone to believe in possibilities in spite of difficulties. We were allowed a glimpse into both his professional life and his personal life via pictures, presentations, and quotes at the Award Ceremony on Monday evening in the Dalton Center Lecture Hall, which was followed by Duke’s keynote address and a public reception.

Dr. Robert Duke & Dr. Richard O’Hearn

We were pleased to have alumni and local music educators join us for this Symposium, which was well attended by WMU students, faculty, and administrators. Attendees continue to report that they were inspired by what they experienced and are applying what they learned to their professional lives.
In the summer of 1990, Western Michigan University became one of the first in the area to offer a graduate degree in music education which could be completed entirely through four consecutive summers of graduate coursework. Still continuing today, coursework in the summer graduate music education program focuses on the application of theory to practice, in relation to foundational courses in music education, supporting courses in music history and music theory, and workshop or direct application experiences.

This summer, an intensive workshop in entrepreneurship for music educators begins the programming in late June, with five-week courses in philosophy, assessment and evaluation, and music theory ending during the first week of August. The trademark Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday class schedule during the five-week classes allows for long weekends to either catch up on homework or take a quick vacation. Degree completion ranges from two summers with coursework during the academic year for those who are highly motivated to finish, to six summers for those who wish a more leisurely pace.

A welcome addition to the summer program for many students has been the availability of scholarships specifically allocated for in-service music educators. Since the summer of 2007, an endowment established by the estate of Elsie Kohlenstein Watson has provided need-based scholarships to graduate music education students, with over $100,000 in Watson Scholarships being awarded to date. This summer, seven students received awards totaling $25,000. While Watson Scholarship funds have allowed many recipients to complete Master of Music in music education degrees, others have used the graduate coursework credits earned with Watson Scholarships for recertification purposes.

If you or someone you know is in the market for summer professional development coursework in music education, you may find that WMU has just what you’re looking for. If you would like more information about the WMU Summer Graduate Music Education program, or Watson Scholarships, contact Dr. David Smith, Graduate Music Education Advisor (david.s.smith@wmich.edu).

SATURDAY MUSIC LAB
by David S. Smith, Professor, Music Education

Participating in Saturday Music Lab has become an ideal means for students who intend to major in music education, but who haven’t been admitted to the upper level methods courses, to gain experience with children and music education. Over the five years that this program has been in existence, assisting the Saturday Music Lab master teachers has helped many early career students to decide that they’re on the right path with music education. It’s so beneficial that involvement in Saturday Music Lab is now a curricular requirement for students in MUS 1800: Experiencing Music Education and MUS 2480: Teaching and Learning in Music.

This past year, over 200 children in kindergarten through sixth grade participated in singing, moving, drumming, and playing Orff instrument classes, with a pop combo instruments class added this year for children in the fifth and sixth grades. Brandon Matteun (WM’10 in music education), elementary general music specialist at Water-Viet, agreed to serve as master teacher for this class, joining other WMU School of Music alumni Kim Licavoli (BM’81 in music education), Stephanie Measurros (BM’94 in music therapy, MM’11 in music education), and Carolyn Koebel (BM’97 in music therapy/performance), along with Marcia Working in providing not only enrichment for area children, but also mentoring to the WMU music education students who assisted them.

During opening and closing times, all of the children participated in large group experiences coordinated by the master teachers. A few of the favorite activities were dancing to “Great Big House,” participating in a whack-a-doodle passing game, moving to “The Moldau,” celebrating the Chinese New Year with drummers, recorder players, and Lion dancers, and singing along with “Thinking Out Loud” performed by the Pop Combo group.

Community interest in the Saturday Music Lab is growing, with reports about the Lab appearing in the Michigan Music Educator, Kalamazoo Gazette, and online in WMU Alumni Stories. It has also become a destination of choice on Saturday mornings for school friends, Girl Scouts, and area homeschoolers. It’s not always easy finding space in Dalton Center for our expanding program, but it’s a good problem to have!
COMPOSITION
by Lisa R. Coons, Assistant Professor, Composition

The 2014–15 academic year was one marked by a number of exciting composition studio guests and collaborators. Two internationally renowned ensembles visited WMU as part of the New Sounds Festival and the Bullock Performance Institute (BPI). Ensemble Dal Niente, referred to as “super musicians” and “some of the best newmusic virtuosos around” by the Chicago Tribune, and the Mivos Quartet, heralded as “one of America’s most daring and ferocious new-music ensembles” by the Chicago Reader, both performed concerts, led master classes, and read through works by student composers. In addition to these New Sounds Festival headliners, an impressive group of guests offered concerts, collaborations, lessons to composers, and other events through Composition Seminar, including composer and Irritable Hedgehog record label founder David D. McIntire, composer Bruce Trinkley of the Penn State School of Music, composer Dana Wilson of Ithaca College, new music pianist Kari Johnson, Chicago-based harpist Ben Melsky, and the trumpet and cello duo known as Kludge. Three student composers – Matthew Fountain, Nathan Hoering, and Eric Hester – collaborated with Emmy Award-winning musician Van Anh Vanessa Vo on new works for traditional Vietnamese instruments for a BPI concert in February 2015.

Several composition students presented their work professionally, including Douglas Osmun, who was accepted to the highSCORE Festival in Pavia, Italy, in August 2015. There he enjoyed a performance of his guitar quartet by festival musicians and two weeks of intensive study with composition faculty from Princeton, Yale, Peabody, and the Verdi Conservatory in Milan. Osmun was also commissioned by American Road Magazine Podcast and received the premiere of his new work for the 2014 Ron Nelson Award by the WMU Symphonic Band. Kevin Kerr’s saxophone quartet was performed at the North American Saxophone Association Region 5 Conference and Bernard Walasavage’s The Grind was published as part of PARMA Recordings’ Anthology of Music. Neal Endicott had new works performed by the ConTempora Ensemble of Macedonia and was commissioned by the Traverse City East Middle School Symphony Band. Eric Hester’s Perplexed Music was performed by the Reeths-Puffer Madrigals, and their performance earned one of only five excellent ratings at this year’s MSVMA District Choral Festival. Hester also presented a poster at the Texas Society for Music Theory Conference titled “Accessibility, Flexibility, and Effectiveness: Applying Dr. Matthew Shaftel’s Analytical Method to Alban Berg’s Wozzeck.” Robert Squiers had performances of his Kyrie by the Battle Creek Men and Boy’s Choir and his Andromeda by the Tecumseh Pops Orchestra.

The composition studio also administered two important internal awards. Senior Eric Hester’s string quartet, Grapeshot, won the 2014–15 Franklin G. Fisk Composition Award for Chamber Music. The award, endowed by the family of the late WMU professor Franklin G. Fisk, was externally adjudicated by composers active in the field, including Chen Yi (University of Missouri–Kansas City), Mark Phillips (Ohio University), and Joo Won Park (Oberlin Conservatory). Master’s student Kevin Kerr was awarded the 2015 WMU Composition Commission for Large Ensemble, which was adjudicated by Oscar Bettison (Peabody Institute of the Johns Hopkins University), Amy Beth Kirsten (also of Peabody), and Robert G. Patterson (Memphis Symphony Orchestra).

Additionally, many of the students were active professionally and academically beyond their composition studies. Maria Paterno received multiple scholarships, including the President’s Scholarship for Study Abroad, for her spring semester in Bonn, Germany. Douglas Osmun was one of three founders of the Audio Engineering Society’s WMU Chapter, serving as Secretary of that organization. Osmun was also chosen as a student representative for the Society of Composers, Inc. Region V. The Western Student Composers Alliance programmed and promoted four concerts exclusively featuring recent compositions by our student composers, and the group was recognized as a Society of Composers, Inc. student chapter.
MUSIC THERAPY

The Music Therapy program continues to grow in enrollment, outreach, and scholarly development. Enrollment for the 2014–15 academic year exceeded 100 students, as it has done for the last several years. Current students in the program are completing internships locally in the Kalamazoo area; regionally, in the Midwest; and nationally, spanning from California to Florida. The program’s graduate and undergraduate students continue to make meaningful contributions to the community through their work in clinical practica and garnered several prestigious awards this year.

INDIVIDUAL HONORS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING.

• Graduate student Donovan Thakur has been selected to receive scholarships from four organizations: the Michigan Music Therapists Memorial Scholarship; the Cheryl Krul Memorial Music Therapy Award (Birmingham Musicale); the Burrell-Upton Music Therapy Award (Michigan Federation of Music Clubs); and the Ima Carey Wilson Music Therapy Scholarship (National Federation of Music Clubs).

• Graduate student and recent alumna Ann Armbruster was awarded a Graduate Student Research Award for her master’s thesis research, titled “The Status of, Teacher Attitudes Towards, and the Impact of Music Therapy Inclusive Music Education in Michigan” (Advisor: Edward Roth).

• Graduate student Jason Keeler also won a Graduate Student Research Award for his master’s thesis research, titled “The Status of, Teacher Attitudes Towards, and the Impact of Music Therapy Inclusive Music Education in Michigan” (Advisor: Edward Roth).

• Graduate student and recent alumna Caitlyn Bodine completed her master’s thesis research, which was a collaboration with Spectrum Hospital in Grand Rapids, Mich., where she and WMU alumna Erin Wegener partnered with Dr. Wendy Magee at Temple University on a study to examine the use of a music therapy-specific assessment for patients with disorders of consciousness.

• Professor Edward Roth received the award for Scholarly Activity from the Great Lakes Region of the American Music Therapy Association at its annual conference in Minneapolis, Minn., in April 2015. Roth has also been a collaborating partner and principal investigator on two studies funded by the Kellogg Foundation: examining the use of music therapy with young children who experience a number of challenges due to issues with dysregulation, and evaluating the outcomes of music and occupational therapies on the ability of mothers and their infants exposed to opiates prenatally.

INNOVATION/TECHNOLOGY

The BRAIN Lab

The Laboratory for Brain Research and Interdisciplinary Neurosciences, otherwise known as the BRAIN Lab, is currently partnering with multiple departments on WMU’s campus and with research teams around the country.

CURRENT PROJECTS INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING.

• Professor Edward Roth has continued his research collaboration through the BRAIN Lab examining the neural correlates of creative and interactive improvisation in children using fMRI with Dr. Charles Limb, formerly of Johns Hopkins Medicine and now the Chief of Otology/Neurotology and Skull Base surgery at the University of California–San Francisco.

• Graduate students Jason Keeler and Brittany Neuser conducted their combined study examining the effects of improvised singing on the production of oxytocin and flow state in the Music Therapy Clinic. Blood samples are being stored and will be analyzed in the neurobiology lab directed by Dr. John Spitsbergen and statistical analyses will be completed in the BRAIN Lab. Specifically, the study seeks to determine the feasibility of studying aesthetic behavior (singing, both from a score and improvised) through neurochemical (oxytocin and adrenocorticotropic hormones) and behavioral means toward developing clinical studies and interventions to better serve individuals who have difficulty with social bonding, trust, and the use of verbal self-expression.

• Other activity in the BRAIN Lab includes the use of physiological measurements such as electrodermal activity and heart rate (measures of arousal) in a project designed to study the effects of hybrid music therapy and occupational therapy interventions to bond mothers to infants who were exposed to opiates prenatally. In a similar study, the lab is participating in a study that includes multiple departments on campus as well as several community agencies examining the effects of separate music therapy and occupational therapy interventions intended to help young children ages 3–6 learn to self-regulate. Both studies are funded by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation’s Racial Healing grant.
Multimedia Arts Technology
by Richard Johnson, Assistant Professor, Multimedia Arts Technology

The 2014–15 academic year marked the first year of the Bachelor in Science in Multimedia Arts Technology at Western. This resulted in an exciting year of innovation at the School of Music as new spaces, new courses, and new opportunities became available for students to work with contemporary digital technologies, create original projects, and collaborate with one another.

Our facilities were expanded and updated to provide students with state-of-the-art workspaces as classrooms and labs. A new student recording lab and classroom was developed, which includes a Whisper Room, a 36-channel mixer, various audio manipulation tools, microphones, and multiple options for recording. This lab functioned as both a workspace and as a classroom for courses in audio engineering. A wide variety of musical genres were represented in the student projects that were recorded, mixed, and mastered in the new space.

Four separate multimedia workstations, including both digital and analog soundboards and two 5.1 stations, were developed and updated to support classes in generative art, video, and programming for media productions. Students studying Electronic Music Aesthetics created projects on these systems that ranged in style from electronic dance music to abstract acousmatic concert music. Students in the new Audio for Video course completed projects in which they recorded Foley (post-production sound effects), provided automatic dialogue replacement, and developed their own multimedia projects. Students in the new MIDI Orchestration course created both original works and realizations of acoustic music using sample libraries including the East West Symphonic Orchestra and Symphonic Choir.

Students in the Advanced Recording II class worked in the recently-renovated Western Sound Studio (WSS). Professional sessions with clients in the WSS this past year included small jazz ensembles, a big band, singer-songwriters, hip-hop artists, and numerous other groups. Students in this class had the opportunity to experience the process and techniques of production for a broad range of musical styles. To expand upon these studio experiences, Ian Gorman of La Luna Recording & Sound provided a guest lecture on mastering.

In the new Sound Reinforcement Practicum course, students had hands-on experience providing live sound reinforcement for concerts held in the Dalton Center Recital Hall. These students provided sound reinforcement for performing artists such as California-based Vietnamese performer Van Anh Vanessa Vo and the Chicago-based contemporary music group Ensemble Dal Niente. Students worked with a variety of loudspeaker configurations throughout the course, from basic stereo configurations to an 8.1 surround sound system for a multimedia concert. MAT students also provided sound reinforcement for Western ensembles such as the internationally-recognized Gold Company.

The 2015–16 academic year will include additional opportunities and experiences for the Multimedia Arts Technology students. Students will exhibit projects from the previous year at a “Best of MAT” event. Additionally, our seniors will be developing their Capstone projects, which are year-long projects that allow students to explore their interests and develop skills to pursue their career goals.
**NEW FACULTY & STAFF**

Barbara Adams graduated Summa Cum Laude from Western Michigan University and the Lee Honors College. She was awarded the James Knauss Senior History Award for a 4.0 GPA in history along with the most history credit hours of all seniors. Her Lee Honors advisor was Dr. Paul Maier, and her paper was on the first century of the Roman Empire from the reign of Nero through Nero. She also received a Secondary Teaching Certificate in History and Political Science. After more than 27 years with the University Bookstore and the WMU Bookstore, Adams joined the staff of the School of Music in September 2014. Her bookstore experience included instructing faculty and students, textbook ordering, internal sales, and financial reporting, among many other tasks. Bark loves all instrumental and choral music, but has no training herself. Various family members have had choral, piano, and flute training. She also has friends who have graduated from the School of Music at WMU and continue to be amazed and impressed by the caliber of the talent demonstrated by its students and faculty.

David Code has been appointed to the position of Associate Director of the School of Music. He will continue to serve as the Graduate Coordinator/Advisor with additional duties including curriculum management, coordinating the membership of non-music faculty overseeing the online admission process, and acting as the advisor for the School of Music Director and the School of Music undergraduate advisor in their absence. He will continue a limited teaching assignment as he assumes his new administrative duties. Code has been a Fulbright Scholar and visiting researcher at the University of Oslo in Norway and the Norwegian Network for Technology, Music, and Art, and has taught previously at Hobart and William Smith Colleges and at the University of Maryland. His undergraduate work was in studio performance, and his master’s degree and doctoral work in music theory. He is the founder and director of KLOrk, the Kalamazoo Laptop Orchestra, and developer of the Groven Piano, a 36-tone interactive piano network which received its premieres in Oslo, Norway and the Gilmore International Keyboard Festival. A vocalist, Code also specializes in the performance of Norwegian folk music and dance, and he has taught at the International Workshops in Strømavik, Norway.


Jennifer Fiore holds a bachelor’s and master’s in music education (music therapy), and a Doctor of Philosophy from the University of Kansas. She has over 10 years of clinical experience working in hospice, oncology, and long-term care. While working in hospice, Fiore started a clinical training site for music therapy practicum students and in university affiliated internship. During her master’s and doctoral studies, she worked as a Graduate Teaching Assistant, teaching music therapy courses and providing weekly supervision to students in a variety of clinical placements (medical, hospice, developmental disabilities, early childhood, long-term care, and mental health). Fiore has served as 1st and 2nd Vice President and Secretary on the Board of Directors for the Midwest Region of the American Music Therapy Association (AMTA), and as a regional delegate to the ANYA Assembly of Delegates. She is a concurrent presenter at the local, regional, and national levels. Her research interests include hospice, bereavement, grief and coping, and oncology.

Patricia Godoy is the Clinical Faculty Specialist and Professor of Music Therapy at Western Michigan University. Godoy draws upon her rich interdisciplinary background as a clinician, having earned her master’s in clinical social work from Florida International University and her Bachelor of Music in music therapy and psychology from the University of Miami. From her teaching at WMU, Godoy worked as a music therapist in several clinical settings with diverse clients in the greater Miami area. Her clinical expertise includes working with populations such as the elderly, bereaved children and adolescents, and individuals with special needs, and complex and challenging problem areas such as mental health and substance abuse, chronic illness, and terminal illness. As a professional clinical social worker, Godoy is interested in the application of music therapy for clinical social work settings, and she is an advocate for education in cultural competency specifically, within Hispanic music and culture. She is also an accomplished vocalist, winning the Sigma Alpha alpha National Triennial Jazz Performance Award in 2009. In her private time, she serves on the Archives Committee of the Orffino Historical Society. Their current project is realizing the Benjamin Drake Homestead on North Drake Road.

Dannielle Sturgeon was hired in May 2015 as the Concerts Assistant in the Doudley Concerts Office. Sturgeon graduated from Western Michigan University in 2011 with a Bachelor of Music in flute performance where she studied with Christine Smith and Martha Cunliff-Hargis. At WMU, she was in the University Orchestra, University Symphonic Band, the contemporary music ensemble Birds on a Wire, and various chamber ensembles and pit orchestras. In 2013, she earned a Master of Music in flute performance from The Ohio State University studying with Katherine Bojan Jones. While at OSU, she performed with the Wind Symphony, Symphony Orchestra, OSU Flute Troupe, as part of the Society of Composers, Inc. Conference, and was a faculty member for the OSU Flute Workshop. Since moving back to Kalamazoo in the fall of 2014, Sturgeon has been performing, subbing for the Battle Creek and Southwest Michigan Symphony Orchestras, and maintaining a small private studio.

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Brian L. Wilson was born in St. Petersburg, Fla., and earned the Bachelor of Music and Master of Music in music therapy from Florida State University. Prior to university teaching, Wilson was an active clinician.

In 1977, the master’s program was started, making WMU one of a select group of universities offering both undergraduate and graduate training in music therapy. In 1979, the department received a three year grant from the state of Michigan to rehab a portion of East Hall in order to open a Music Therapy Clinic as well as hire a second faculty member and office associate. When the grant ended, the funding for the clinic operation and additional staff was absorbed into the university’s base budget. In the early 1980s, Brian helped design the new facilities for the Music Therapy Clinic when the School of Music moved into Dalton Center.

Wilson is a frequent presenter at regional and national therapy associations including serving on the Board of Directors of the American Music Therapy Association (AMTA) for 10 years. He has received numerous accolades, including the Distinguished Service Award from AMTA in 2002 and the Honorary Life Member Award from AMTA in 2007.

In retirement, Brian looks forward to having time to kick back and relax a bit. With Barbara, his wife of 43 years, he plans to do some traveling and spend more time at their vacation home in The Villages, a mega-retirement community near Orlando. Most importantly, he will now have more opportunity to enjoy (and spoil) his two grandchildren who live in Kalamazoo.
STUDENT ACHIEVEMENTS

Ahmed Anzaldúa, graduate assistant choral conductor, was invited as a featured performer and presenter at the 2014 Miguel Bernal Jiménez Symposium. The symposium, organized by Las Rosas Conservatory and the Morelia Music Festival Miguel Bernal Jiménez, brought together 40 scholars and performers from six countries to discuss the music, life, and research of Mexican composer Miguel Bernal Jiménez. Anzaldúa performed the inaugural concert, presenting a recital of Jiménez’s works for solo piano. He also gave a conference regarding the interpretation, influences, and context of Bernal Jiménez’s most significant work for piano, Carteles; participated in panel discussions regarding Jiménez’s choral works and role as choirmaster of Las Rosas Conservatory; and performed in a recital of music for piano and violin.

Amanda Bistolfo (graduate student from Davis, Calif.) was selected to conduct in the Michigan-ACDA Fall Conference Conducting Masterclass with guest clinician Simon Carrington, a founding King’s Singers member and Yale professor emeritus. Alyson Wendzel (junior from WaterValley, Mich.) and Samantha Doorn (senior from Napperville, Ill.) were selected to participate in the undergraduate Conducting Masterclass with Emily Ellsworth, the Artistic Director of Chicago-based ensemble ANIMA and faculty at Northwestern University.

Alyson Wendzel (junior from Watervliet, Mich.) and Samantha Doorn (senior from Naperville, Ill.) were selected to participate in the undergraduate Conducting Masterclass with Emily Ellsworth, the Artistic Director of Chicago-based ensemble ANIMA and faculty at Northwestern University.

Theresa Huiber (senior from Twin Lake, Mich.) accepted the position of music teacher at Walton Charter Academy in Pontiac, Mich., shortly after receiving her bachelor’s degree in music education.

In June, Michael Klepp (junior from Rochester, Mich.) advocated for Music Education in Washington, D.C. He represented the state of Michigan through NAfME (National Association for Music Education) and met with the state representatives of MMEA (Michigan Music Educators Association). The Advocacy Summit was designed to expose students to the world of education policy, especially as it pertains to music education, and prepare them to enter the teaching field with tools, knowledge, and perspective that will contribute to their immediate and future success as educators. Because of the great timing, participants were fortunate to meet with several congressmen face to face as well as their managers to discuss the importance of music education. According to past experience, actually getting to meet with the congressmen is very rare because of their schedules. Klepp ended up being the only collegiate member from the state of Michigan present. Of the experience, Klepp wrote, “Taking everything that I’ve learned at WMU, and sharing my passion for music education at the nation’s capitol was something special. Our main focus was to discuss the (ESEA) proposal, the Every Child Achieves Act of 2015. It retains the core academic subject section from No Child Left Behind and adds music as a core subject! It’s hard to put into words the invaluable professional and personal relationships that I developed this week.”
SONGSMITH COLLECTIVE

The new album of poetry settings by Western Michigan University’s Songsmith Collective is irreverent, and it’s also wonderful. On eight diverse tracks, the group’s 11 members write and play as though they don’t know how hard setting poetry is supposed to be or how hallowed scholars consider the poems they’ve chosen. Whether setting poems by Yeats, Frost, Hughes, or WMU’s own Traci Brimhall, the Collective creates music with an ease and freshness that clearly belongs in the present moment, and their creativity was rewarded with a 4.5 star review of the album in the May issue of Down Beat magazine.

"From the first-bloom briskness of A Dust of Snow to the martial orchestrations of Nolan and the lyrical richness of Wealth-Ardella, the album blossoms with evocation that matches and surpasses the stories in the text. The images, many well worn by time and overuse, are re-energized by the modern soul of the music. This soul is found, in part, in the orchestrations, which feature intriguing touches of muted trumpet, bass clarinet, flute, and rhodes as well as meaty horn harmony backing up singers Brooke Lauritzen and Elliot Weeks, and frequently coming to the forefront for contrapuntal soli. Compelling soloists interject, tackling obscure chord progressions without a hint of fear or reticence, and with a notable respect for their function in uplifting the theme of each piece. The closing setting of Traci Brimhall’s Imagine the Fire is perhaps the farthest ranging piece of the album, starting with an aggressive swing rhythm, and climaxing with a rock-star-energy-level repetition of Brimhall’s memorable line, “Imagine a piano lit on fire and pushed off a roof.” The track, and the album, careen to an end with the sounds of the lowest keys of the piano sliding hopelessly into the abyss. The track is wild, unabashed, youthful, and – yes – irreverent. And – yes – it really works."

– Jeremy Siskind, WMU Professor of Piano

"Sometimes I am asked if I think jazz is dead. I quickly say no. Jazz is alive and well in places like WMU where students from the Advanced Jazz Ensemble made a recording of their compositions this spring. Members generated material – mostly settings of the poetry by Robert Frost, Langston Hughes, Yeats and Traci Brimhall. The use of improvisation and counterpoint as dialogue with the text and the human voice prove very effective, and the ensemble listeners – they play and sing with dynamics and awareness. The work done by these young musicians reflects their curiosity, which jazz is about – the unanswered question, the constant searching. Throughout the recording you hear the intention of the ensemble – conscious of its mission of creativity and expression. The poetry is beautiful and serves to elicit the emotion echoed in the band."

– Luciana Souza, Grammy awarded Brazilian jazz singer and composer

Mas Que Nada, the 11 member Latin Jazz music ensemble, had a week long residency on the Caribbean island of Dominica. The group performed for community events, took part in outreach and cultural sharing opportunities, presented meaningful educational events, and opened the 2015 Jazz and Creole Festival. The group members were particularly touched being able to work with talented and attentive students ranging from middle school through university age. Exchanges included an evening with a traditional Dublanc Flamboyant Group which maintains dance and music traditions from over a century; a session with two leading Dominican musicians, Gregory Rabess and Ras Mo, and perhaps most meaningfully, a workshop with Ophelia Marie. An international performer and prolific songwriter, Marie offered input to each member of the ensemble. She was also visibly touched as it was the first time another ensemble did covers/transcriptions/arrangements of her repertoire to this extent. The tour highlight was opening the Jazz and Creole Festival. MQN was the first U.S. university ensemble to appear on the island, in any capacity, and the only student ensemble invited to the festival. Known as The Nature Island, and quite literally unspoiled since Columbus’ time, Dominica provided the group with a number of adventures including snorkeling, swimming in hot springs, swimming to and off of waterfalls (!), hikes through rain forests, and other points of interest. It was a complete cultural and experiential success for everyone involved.

"Mas Que Nada, Latin Jazz Music Ensemble"

MAS QUE NADA
Latin Jazz Music Ensemble

"Sometimes I am asked if I think jazz is dead. I quickly say no. Jazz is alive and well in places like WMU where students from the Advanced Jazz Ensemble made a recording of their compositions this spring. Members generated material – mostly settings of the poetry by Robert Frost, Langston Hughes, Yeats and Traci Brimhall. The use of improvisation and counterpoint as dialogue with the text and the human voice prove very effective, and the ensemble listeners – they play and sing with dynamics and awareness. The work done by these young musicians reflects their curiosity, which jazz is about – the unanswered question, the constant searching. Throughout the recording you hear the intention of the ensemble – conscious of its mission of creativity and expression. The poetry is beautiful and serves to elicit the emotion echoed in the band."

– Luciana Souza, Grammy awarded Brazilian jazz singer and composer
CONCERTO CONCERT COMPETITION WINNERS

Three outstanding soloists were named winners in the 2015 Concerto Concert Competition and were featured with the University Symphony Orchestra on April 26. They areImpanistr Amber Feltrin, tubist Chance Trottman-Huiet, and flutist Maria Vizcarra.

Awards

Awards

Amber Feltrin

Festival Young Artist Solo Competition in 2013, a featured soloist with the University Symphony Orchestra, and has performed with the University Symphonic Band. She is a member of the University Symphony Orchestra, WMU Percussion Ensemble, and the new music ensemble Birds On A Wire. She has also subbed with the Kalamazoo Symphony Orchestra.

Trottman-Huiet received his bachelor’s from DePauw University (Ind.), where he was awarded the DePauw Music Performance Award and the DePauw Faculty Distinguished Scholar Award. He has performed with the Littleton Symphony Orchestra and subbed for the Boulder Symphony Orchestra. Trottman-Huiet is originally from Berthoud, Colo. His other teachers have included tubist Orcenith Smith and bassist Jack Helsley.

Michigan NATS

Michigan State University

Freshman Women

1st place: Isabel Abbott

3rd place: Hayley Girard

Michigan NATS

November 1, 2014

David Horwath also received the Jon Vickers Award for the most promising young singer.

Amber Feltrin

Percussionist Amber Feltrin is a senior from White Lake, Mich. majoring in percussion performance, studying with Prof. Judy Moenert. Feltrin graduated from Holly High School in Holly, Mich. She is a member of the University Symphony Orchestra, WMU Percussion Ensemble, and the new music ensemble Birds On A Wire. She has also subbed with the Kalamazoo Symphony Orchestra.

Tubist Chance Trottman-Huiet is a master’s student majoring in tuba performance and studying with Dr. Jacob Cameron. Trottman-Huiet currently performs with the Graduate Brass Quintet, Western Winds, University Symphony Orchestra, and University Symphonic Band. He is the president of the WMU Music Graduate Student Organization. Trottman-Huiet received his bachelor’s from DePauw University (Ind.), where he was awarded the DePauw Music Performance Award and the DePauw Faculty Distinguished Scholar Award. He has performed with the Littleton Symphony Orchestra and subbed for the Boulder Symphony Orchestra. Trottman-Huiet is originally from Berthoud, Colo. His other teachers have included tubist Orcenith Smith and bassist Jack Helsley.

Flutist Maria Vizcarra is a sophomore majoring in flute performance, studying with Dr. Martha Counsell-Vargas. Vizcarra is originally from the District of Miraflores in Lima, Peru and has been living in the United States for six years. She is a member of the University Symphony Orchestra and has performed with the University Symphonic Band. She went to Madison Memorial High School in Madison, Wis., and studied flute with Danielle Breesach, a graduate of Western Michigan University. Maria was a first prize winner of the Wisconsin Flute Competition in 2013, a featured soloist in the University of Wisconsin-Madison Summer Music Clinic, and a Philip Sousa Award Recipient in 2013.

VOICE AREA AWARDS

Finalists: Matthew Hazel, Shazina Sanders, Clare Regan, Alicia Renney

1st place: Alicia Renney

Regional NATS

March 7, 2015

Andersson University, Andersson, Indiana

Senior Women

1st place: Bridget Cappel

2nd place: Alicia Renney

3rd place: Maryle Thompson

Graduate Women

3rd place: Valerie Martinez

Freshman Men

1st place: David Horwath

David Horwath also received the Jon Vickers award for the most promising young singer.

GRADUATE AWARDS

Amanda J. Bistolfo

All-University Graduate Teaching Effectiveness Award

School of Music Excellence in Teaching Award

Amanda Bistolfo completed a Master of Music degree in choral conducting. She is a graduate of Mount Holyoke College, the oldest women’s college in the world, where she studied psychology and theatre arts. In the fall of 2011, Amanda became MHC’s Choral Assistant, working under the direction of Lindsay Pope and studying conducting, theory, diction, history, and voice, and teaching aurals skills and voice lessons. During her two years at Western, Amanda studied conducting with Dr. Kimberly Dunn Adams and Dr. Scott Boerma, and voice with Dr. Carl Rataner and Dr. Ken Prewitt. She was a lab instructor for conducting and choral conducting, for which she was selected to receive this award. She has conducted Collegium Musicum, the University Chorale, Collegiate Singers, Cantus Femina, Grand Chorus, and the Opera Chorus, as well as various community ensembles. Amanda plans to teach at the high school or college level, then get a doctoral degree.

Joe Busuito

School of Music Excellence in Leadership and Service Award

Joe Busuito received the Master of Music in wind conducting and was a graduate assistant in the School of Music. As a graduate assistant, he served an integral role in the function and education of the Western Michigan University Athletic Bands. In addition to his responsibilities with the Athletic Bands, Joe has assisted with the Symphonic, Concert, and Campus Bands, instructed courses in undergraduate conducting, and served as a mentor to basic theory students and pre-intern teachers. In August, Joe began a Doctor of Musical Arts in wind conducting at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign.

Zachary J. Boyt

School of Music Excellence in Research and Creative Activities Award

Zachary Boyt holds a Master of Arts degree in music with a thesis on “Gesture-Sensing Technology for Strings” as well as an undergraduate degree in cello performance from Western. He is a cellist, composer, and multimedia artist residing in Eugene, Ore. His work explores the musicality of data-driven instruments and data sonification. His music performance and research have been presented nationally at conferences and venues including EMM (Electronic Music Midwest), SCI (Society of Composers, Inc.), EABD (Electroacoustic Barn Dance), Stetson University, and FMO (Future Music Oregon). Currently, Zachary is pursuing a DMA in data-driven performance at the University of Oregon where he builds, composes for, and performs with new digital instruments. Zachary is also a co-artistic director and co-founder of Ensemble Kalamazoo, a new music ensemble performing works of the late 20th and early 21st centuries.
CONTEMPLATING WEATHER

The University Chorale and new music ensemble Birds on a Wire are featured performers on the newly released Contemplating Weather, an album of works by renowned composer Paul Lansky. The album was released on the Bridge Records label. Contemplating Weather, the title inspiration for the album, is a multi movement work for choir and chamber ensemble by Lansky. It was premiered in 2014 by the University Chorale and Birds on a Wire, and conducted by WMU faculty member Dr. Kimberly Dunn Adams. The piece was subsequently recorded locally on WMU’s campus. In addition to the title work, the album features performances of Lansky’s Travel Diary and It all adds up by the Meehan/Perkins duo and Quattro Mani. Grammy nominated producer and classical guitarist David Starobin produced the album. The album will be distributed internationally and is available for purchase or download through Amazon.com, iTunes, eMusic, Classicsonline.com, and other retailers. Dunn Adams, WMU’s Director of Choral Activities spoke highly of the students in saying, “The work our students did on this album is of the highest caliber. They brought professional level musicianship and discipline to their performance of this piece, which – combined with their energy, enthusiasm, and fresh voices – makes for a truly remarkable recording.”

She added, “It’s not often that college ensembles are featured as performers on commercially distributed albums, backed by a label with the prestige of Bridge Records. This is not only a significant accomplishment but an incredible opportunity for our students.” The University Chorale, directed by Dunn Adams, is Western Michigan University’s flagship chorale ensemble and represents the university at home and throughout the world. The Chorale has long been recognized as a top chorale ensemble on the national and international stage, most recently taking second place in the American Prize Competition. Directed by Dr. David Colson, Birds on a Wire is comprised of graduate and undergraduate students from the School of Music and is dedicated to the performance of contemporary music, collaborating regularly with guest composers. Bridge Records, Inc. is an independent record label based in New Rochelle, N.Y. that specializes in 20th century classical music. This year, Bridge Records topped all classical labels with four Grammy nominations, and a fifth nomination for David Starobin as “Producer of the Year.”

TRAVEL NOTES

The most recent recording by the University Jazz Orchestra received a positive review from allaboutjazz.com. Reviewer Jack Bowers wrote, “Travel Notes, the seventh album by the Western Michigan University Jazz Orchestra, is much like the first half-dozen: big-band jazz whose design and performance are as consistently strong and artisitic as one can envision at any level. Tom Kinic, WMU’s director of jazz studies since 2000, has a keen ear for engaging songs, one of which is his own sunny composition, “That Day in May,” sandwiched nicely between a pair of themes by bassist John Clayton – the tasteful, well-grooved opener, “Blues for Stephanie,” and robust, gospel-flavored “Reverence.”

“Rounding out the impressive studio date are trumpeter Tim Haggans’ “Passing Giants” and a brace of evocative tunes by Israeli-born pianist Alon Yavnai, “Travel Notes” and “Spring Fever.” Solists are sharp and resourceful, especially trumpeter Jon Ailabouni who is showcased on “Reverence” and the pensive “Passing Giants.” Ailabouni, guitarist Bryan Blowers, tenor Blake Cross, and pianist Mark Niskanen strengthen the cause on “Stephanie,” Blowers, bassist Andrew Rose, and tenor Dominic Carachi on “May,” Niskanen, Ailabouni, Carachi (piano), and drummer Christian Euman on “Notes,” alto Michael Hudson-Casanova, baritone Marcus Johnson, and bass trombonist Aaron Buczek on “Fever.”

“Even so, it is the orchestra as a whole that carries the day, showing why it is a three-time winner as Best Big Band in Down Beat magazine’s annual student music competition and has earned 25 consecutive Outstanding Big Band awards at the Notre Dame Intercolligate Jazz Festival. Brass and reeds are remarkably tight and receptive, while the rhythm section never misses a beat. If, as some say, it is the ballads that separate the winners from the also-rans, “Passing Giants” shows clearly why WMU is at the head of its class. “From start to finish, Travel Notes is an explicit model of superior big-band jazz. If there is a downside, it lies in the album’s modest 45 minute playing time. Aside from that, there’s nothing to reprove.”

METRICS

The Advanced Jazz Ensemble premiered a new work by its coach, Dr. Andrew Rathbun, titled Metrics. The Kalamazoo premiere was presented on February 11, and the Chicago premiere was on May 10. Metrics is a five-movement suite composed for a 10 piece ensemble. The idea behind the suite is derived from a variety of impressions of what the word metrics means. In jazz and improvised music, there is a trend towards shifting meters and odd time signatures, and this work makes widespread use of these devices. Metrics also refers to measurement and also the study of meter in poetry. The piece attempts to realize these ideals by formulating both “poetic” melodic statements and various forms which evolve in a measured way. The music is at times incredibly dynamic with a deep rhythmic drive, and at other times is plaintive and restrained. Kirsten Harvey has choreographed an engaging, evocative piece which has a deep connection to the music. Her work has a strong emotional core and has been widely praised as engaging and vibrant. In the same manner as the music, the dancers are asked to both realize ensemble passages and improvise with the musicians. The artists are required to navigate asymmetrical forms and phrases, and reflect these in their movements, and interact with the musicians in real time.
Kimberly Dunn Adams had a busy year filled with performances, workshops, and choral exchanges. Over the summer, she taught at WMU’s SEMINAR and the Blue Lake Fine Arts Camp. At Blue Lake, Adams directed the Chamber Choir and also the Staff Choir & Vocal Ensemble, comprised of music majors from universities around the country. In August, she gave a presentation at MSVMA’s Summer Workshop titled “Interdisciplinary Programming: Creating Interaction Between Your Choir and Other Academic Areas.” In the fall of 2014, Adams was named one of fourteen Conducting Fellows for the 2015 ACDA International Conductors Exchange Program. This fellowship is only available every two years, this exchange will send Adams to Sweden to participate in conferences, residencies, and musical exchanges. In the spring of 2015, she was an invited adjudicator and clinician at several MSVMA District Choral Festivals and the Annual Gold Company Vocal Jazz Invitational. She also hosted workshops on campus at WMU with several high school choirs, including Hastings, Jenison, and Traverse City, and guest conducted at the Forest Hills High School Choral Gala.

Scott Boerma was invited to be the conductor of the Music For All Summer Symposium Honor Band, the KKY/TBS North Central District Intercollegiate Band, the West Genesee (N.Y.) Festival of Bands, and the Mid-Michigan Festival Honor Band. He continued his annual role as conductor of the Detroit Chamber Winds brass holiday concerts. Boerma was invited to serve as a conducting clinician for the Music For All National Concert Band Festival and as an adjudicator/clinician for the Carnegie Hall National Band & Orchestra Festival and the Texas UIL State Marching Band Contest. Locally, he maintained his active schedule adjudicating MSBOA festivals and doing clinics for Michigan high school bands. Boerma was commissioned by the Big Ten chapters of Kappa Kappa Psi to compose a concert band work, which was premiered at a KKY/TBS District Convention. Several of his compositions were performed throughout the nation by university and high school bands and regional and state honor bands. He wrote nearly 50 marching band arrangements for ensembles across the country, many of which were performed in large-scale audience events like the Macy’s Thanksgiving Day Parade, the Cotton Bowl, and several other bowl games and high school state championships. He was recently elected to serve as the president of the Mid-American Conference (MAC) Band Directors Association.

Lisa Renée Coons was selected as Composer-in-Residence for the 2015 Women Composers Festival of Hartford. The festival honored Coons with performances of four of her works by Iktus Percussion Quartet, the New England Guitar Quartet, and emerging ensembles. Coons gave presentations and master classes at the Hart School, the University of Connecticut, Trinity College, the Young Composers Project, and others in her role with the festival. Her piece, Music Painted from Memory, was featured in KRISHA, the short film by Trey Edward Shults that won the SXSW Film Festival Special Jury Award, and she was the string arranger on Ugly, the anticipated release by Anurag Kashyap on DAR Motion Pictures and Phantom Films.

Martha Councell-Vargas traveled to Tegucigalpa, Honduras, in October, where she was the featured guest artist at the Festival Internacional de la Flauta Traversa 2014. She gave master classes to advanced Honduran students and performed selections from her CD, Gran Danzón, with pianist Richard Steinbach. In January, Councell-Vargas traveled to Washington, where she was a guest artist at the Seattle Flute Society’s Flute Festival, taught a master class at Pacific Lutheran University, and adjudicated the Horsfall Young Artist Competition. Guest artists of the WMU flute studio (spring 2015) included Jeff Zook, piccolo (Detroit Symphony Orchestra), and Caen Thomason-Redus, flute. Councell-Vargas’ spring and summer performance and teaching activities took her to Bogotá, Colombia, with the Western Wind Quintet, and Saarburg, Germany, where she participated as a faculty member at the international Saarburg Chamber Music Festival in July.
John Griffin was guest composer at the University of Wisconsin–Eau Claire in October 2014 for the premiere of his work for wind ensemble Lux Luceat. In February 2015, the world premiere of his piece Variations on Barbara Allen was performed at WMU by pianist Phoenix Park.Kim. Griffin performed another of his solo piano pieces, Pudgin Piano, at the College Music Society South Central Regional Conference at Northeastern State University and at the Manchester New Music Festival in North Manchester, Ind. Over the summer, he performed that same piece at the College Music Society International Conference in Scandinavia, for which he is also serving as Chair of the Composition Committee.

Keith Hall held the 9th Annual Keith Hall Summer Drum Intensive and the 5th Annual Keith Hall Drum Choir Experience. He had successful tours with TRIFi throughout the Midwest, Pennsylvania, and New York City and recruiting concerts with the Western Jazz Quartet in Indianapolis, Bloomington, and Cleveland. Hall also performed with vocalist Janis Siegel in Michigan and Indiana. He presented clinics and performances at the Michigan Music Conference, Downriver Day of Percussion, Byron Center High School, Kalamazoo Loy Norrix High School, Northern Illinois University, and the Hastings Thamapple Jazz Festival, as well as a rhythmic improvisation workshop for the management of the Millennium Restaurant Group. Hall continues to produce Jazz Currents on WMUK as well as live, in studio performances and interviews for Let’s Hear It Live!

Tom Knific was Artist-in-Residence at The China Conservatory, Beijing, with Renata Artman Knific. He also was presented in residencies at The Oberlin Conservatory and Cleveland Institute of Music. His quartet performed at Nighttown, Cleveland’s premiere jazz venue, Crooked Tree Arts Council; and with the Blue Lake International Big Band. Knific was a featured artist at the International Society of Bassists convention in Fort Collins, Colo., during which he performed as soloist with the USAF Falcons band and in bass trios with John Clayton and Falconaires bassist Jason Crowe. With the Western Jazz Quartet he released Free Fall, which received a four star review in Down Beat magazine, and presented residencies at Indiana University and Butler University and a featured performance at the Elkhart Jazz Festival. His “Duo No. 2 for Violin and Double Bass: Zhang Song” was published by ISB Editions, and he was commissioned to compose “Duo No. 3 for Violin and Double Bass” by University of Texas professors Martha Walvoord and Jack Unzicker.

John Lychner had two Teacher Resource Guides published in the new Middle School Edition of the popular GIA resource Teaching Music Through Performance in Band, one for 12873465 by Daniel Bukvich and the other for An Australian Sea Ballad by Robert Sheldon. At WMU, Lychner hosted and served as clinician for the East Rockford Middle School Band and the Caledonia High School Symphonic Band and Wind Ensemble. In addition, he was a pre-festival clinician for the Greenfield Middle School Band from Bakersfield, Calif., and teamed with colleague Scott Boerma for a clinic with the Portage Northern High School Wind Ensemble following its performance on a School of Music Convocation.

The Merling Trio (Susan Wiersma Uchimura, Bruce Uchimura, Renata Artman Knific) had a busy year of performance and recruitment activities. In addition to performances in Illinois, Michigan, Tennessee, Colorado, New York, Virginia, Maryland, Pennsylvania, and Indiana, the trio conducted many notable educational outreach presentations. The trio was presented in master class at St. Lawrence University and Hobart and William Smith College in New York, Goshen College, Palm Beach Atlantic University, and Vanderbilt University. February featured an intensive tour to Colorado, with a focus on recruitment at seven notable high school and college programs in the Denver area. The trio now has an extensive online presence on Facebook, YouTube, and through its website at merlingtrio.com.

Silvia Roederer toured Argentina with the Verdehr Trio, performing in five cities in the interior as well as playing in the city of her birth, Buenos Aires. The trio also performed concerts in Oslo, Norway, and Havana, Cuba and worked with Jennifer Muller’s dance company, The Works, for a New York City performance and video project.

University Organist Karl Schrock was approached to serve as Visiting Faculty at The University of Michigan in 2013–14 in addition to his WMU teaching. In Ann Arbor, he taught a full studio of 17 organ students from first-year majors through finishing doctoral students. This is the second time he has accepted an invitation as Visiting Faculty there. In February 2014, he performed in Monteverdi’s Vespers with the Grammy-nominated ensemble Seraphic Fire in Washington, D.C., and Baltimore for the Eastern Divisional Conference of the American Choral Directors Association. In September he was featured as guest solo recitalist for the 54th Conference on Organ Music in Ann Arbor. In December he completed four years as Organist at First Presbyterian Church, Kalamazoo, and he performs frequently with the Grand Rapids Symphony. At WMU, Schrock teaches organ and accompanies the Grand Chorus and has previously taught related keyboard, choral, and theory courses.
Jeremy Siskind fulfilled a lifelong dream in March by literally travelling from Kalamazoo to Kathmandu. Besides Nepal, his international travels this academic year found him performing and teaching in China, Thailand, France, and Tunisia. In February, he served as pianist and musical director for two shows in New York City — one with Lea Delaria at Lincoln Center and one with frequent collaborator Nancy Harms at the Metropolitan Room. His new CD, Housewarming, released on February 24, features his trio of Harms, Lucas Pino, and world-renowned guest vocalists Kurt Elling, Peter Eldridge, and Kendra Shank. Other 2014–15 highlights included being named a winner of the 2015 Herb Alpert Young Jazz Composers Awards, serving as Artistic Director for the premiere iteration of the American Jazz Pianist Competition, and giving a well-received presentation at the Jazz Education Network conference on “The Art of the In-Home Concert.” His primary 2015–16 goal is to dominate jazz department student-faculty basketball games.

Bruce Uchimura performed cello recitals and taught at the Sleepy Hollow Chamber Music Festival, Aria Summer Music Academy, and Cello: An American Experience. He gave master classes at Vanderbilt University, the University of Nevada–Las Vegas, and the Nevada School for the Arts. He performed solo recitals at Olivet College and chamber music with the Chamber Music North ensemble in Traverse City. He guest conducted the Wayland, Hudsonville, and Walled Lake high school orchestras. The WMU Symphony Orchestra performed the entire Nutcracker with the Moscow Ballet in Miller Auditorium and also performed at Detroit’s Max. M. Fisher Hall under his direction and in collaboration with DSO Maestro Leonard Slatkin. The WMU orchestra also worked with the Orpheus Chamber Ensemble. Uchimura also performed many concerts and gave master classes with the Merling Trio in California, Nevada, Illinois, Maryland, Virginia, Pennsylvania, and New York.

Susan Wiersma Uchimura, Resident Artist, performed throughout the U.S. as pianist with the Merling Trio. She gave solo master classes at Vanderbilt University and for the Kalamazoo Area Music Teachers Association. In the summer, she continued in her fourth year as resident collaborative pianist at Cello: An American Experience at St. Olaf College in Northfield, Minn., where she performed in daily master classes with Tanya Remenyikova, cello professor at the University of Minnesota, and Astrid Schween, cello professor at the University of Massachusetts–Amherst. While at CAAE, Uchimura performed a recital with her husband, Bruce Uchimura. The Uchimuras also presented a recital on the Artist Series at Olivet College. Other summer activities included her position as resident chamber artist with Golden Chamber Music.
Kelsey (McCraney) Adriance (BM’14) passed her music therapy boards and will be taking a private practice position as a music therapist in the Twin Cities, Minn.

Alexander Armitage (BM’12) is the new Director of Instrumental Music for Edison Ford High School in Dearborn, Mich.

Hana Belaglova (BM’11) has accepted a position at Midwestern State University in Wichita Falls, Texas, as a Visiting Instructor of Music. She will be teaching low brass applied lessons in addition to two music appreciation courses.

Carrie Brannen (BM’13) received a full Graduate Assistantship from and is attending the University of Massachusetts–Amherst.

C.J. Brooks (BM’06, MM’12) became Director of Bands at the Lincoln International School in Buenos Aires, Argentina. Prior to that, he was the Director of Bands for Dowagiac Union Schools in Dowagiac, Mich.

Sarah Cavis (BM’09) is a general music teacher for Mar Lee Schools in Marshall, Mich.

Paul Clifton (BM’13) officially became Principal Horn for the West Michigan Symphony in June 2015.

Cammie Coffey (BM’13) has been working at the University of Michigan Hospital on the inpatient psychiatric unit since December 2013.

Erin Brown Conray (BM’11) is a novelist/writer, master teacher, and online course designer for Patrick Henry College Preparatory Academy and HomeschoolConnections.com. Erin also earned a Master of Arts in blind rehabilitation from WMU in 1991 and her Master of Fine Arts in creative writing/genre fiction from Western State of Colorado University in 2014.

Tracy Cowden (BM’93) is Chair of Music in the School of Performing Arts at Virginia Tech University. In May 2013, she was featured as a soloist with the Roanoke Symphony Orchestra, and in June of the same year, she presented solo and chamber performances at the Wintergreen Summer Music Festival. That September she performed as pianist with Mathieu Dufour, principal flute of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, and the following month presented a recital performance with Jeff Nielsen, horn professor at Indiana University. During the same academic year, she performed at the conferences of the National Association of Collegiate Wind and Percussion Instructors and the Mid-Atlantic Flute Fair. She also won the Albert L. Sturm Creative Arts Award, presented by the Mu Chapter of Phi Beta Kappa at Virginia Tech, for the commissioning and performance of Vegetable Variables by Donovan Hagen. Her article, The Privilege of Collaboration, was published in American Music Teacher. She was involved with an outreach project called OPERAircraft, combining opera and Minecraft. Cowden worked with her Virginia Tech colleague Aruna Wyatt from the beginning to help the students write the libretto, choose the Mozart excerpts to set their libretto to, and to weave the pieces together with transitions, a little overture, etc.

Xavier Davis (BA’97) was recently appointed a professor of jazz piano at Michigan State University.

Daniel De Kok (BM’17) earned his master’s degree in Library science from Clarion University of Pennsylvania in 2013 and shortly after became the Music Librarian at Rowan University where he supervises student workers, catalogues music, and provides reference assistance to music students. In 2015, De Kok will perform Saxo Grandahl’s Trombone Concerto with the Warrenminster Symphony.

Laura Dubin (BM’11) released a new album: Laura Dubin Plays the Great American Songbook. Laura puts her own spin on the music of Cole Porter, Irving Berlin, Rodgers & Hammerstein, Gershwin and more. The album includes ten arrangements of her favorite songs and features Laura’s brother Nick Dubin on bass and her husband/music partner Antonio Gravenero on drums. The release concert was on June 12 in the Wilmot Recital Hall at Nazareth College. Individuals can email Laura at lauradubin@yahoo.com to purchase a CD. Fifty percent of album sales will be donated to the Pancreatic Cancer Action Network in memory of Laura’s former piano professor, Dr. Steve Zagree. The album is dedicated to him.

Michael Duffy (BM’97) is the new Performing Arts Librarian at Western Michigan University and oversees the Harper C. Maybee Music and Dance Library. Please see the related article in the New Faculty and Staff section for additional information.

Christian Euman (BM’13) was featured on revivemusic.com as one of the “6 Drummers You Should Know About.”

Ray Fournier (BA’90) is a producer and co-creator of the Encore Cast Choir and Orchestra at Walt Disney World as part of the Disney Creative Entertainment Show Development and Production. The ensemble includes nearly 300 vocalists and a 90-piece orchestra. It is a vehicle for cast members to participate in a chorale/orchestral fundraising concert to raise money for Central Florida charities. Ray is also a board member and chair of the programming committee for the Garden Theatre in historic Winter Garden, Fla. They are celebrating eight seasons of incredible theatre, concerts, movies, and special events.

Brittany Harris (BM’15) offered a position as the full time 4th and 5th grade string teacher at Foundation Academy in Trenton, NJ.

Sara Harris (BM’13) became a homecare music therapist for Vita Healthcare in Fort Lauderdale, Fla.

Bradley Hatfield (BM’13) is a music therapist at Woodland Center Correctional Facility and in January of 2015 was employee of the month after working there for only five months.

Paul Hendrixson (BM’12) is a Sales, Service, and Copyright Specialist for The Lorenz Corporation in Dayton, Ohio. He is also a member of the Fillmore Wind Band in Habron, Ky., which performed at the Ohio Music Educators Association and Kentucky Music Educators Association conventions.

Chris Janowick (BA’08) became the Associate Director of Bands for Antioch High School in Nashville, Tenn.

Beth Janurik (BM’97, MA’05) accepted a position with the Matoon (Ill.) Bands, after 14 years as Director of Bands for the Parchment School District. She started her new assignment in fall 2014.

Kylie Karum (BM’12) is Director of Choral Music at Seymour (Ind.) High School.

Keith Kelsey (BM’15) accepted a position at Muskogee Heights (Mich.) Academy as the Middle and High School Band Director.
iTunes. Blake recently accepted a full-time position singing blogs.

Hum-Alongs
Blake completed and released a collection of original songs Mundi record label. Writing under the moniker of “Esto,” recorded and released under the Harmonia Sacred Spirit of Russia Performance 2015 with the CD group Conspirare, which won a Grammy for Best Choral All is Calm: the choral ensemble). Blake has performed at Lincoln Center Prairie Home Companion show and with Garrison Keillor Blake (BM’13) toured the Baltic Countries with NPR’s Jeremy Marks (MM’10) joined the faculty at Southeastern in the Wayne-Westland Community School District starting in the fall of 2015.

Morgan Macdonald (BM’15) will be teaching seventh and eighth grade band and orchestra at Stevenson Middle School in theWayne-Westland Community School District starting in the fall of 2015.

Jeramy Marks (MM’10) joined the faculty at Southeastern Oklahoma State University as an adjunct professor of trombone and euphonium. He will also contribute to brass chamber music, brass literature and pedagogy, and the low brass ensemble.

Blake Morgan (BM’13) toured the Baltic Countries with NPR’s Prairie Home Companion show and with Garrison Keillor this past summer, as a member of Cantus (professional choral ensemble). Blake has performed at Lincoln Center and the Met Museum of Art while touring the final season of Peter Rofstien’s acclaimed musical All Is Calm: the Christmas Truce of 1914. He is also a member of the choral group Comparsa, which won a Grammy for Best Choral Performance 2015 with the CD Sacred Spirit of Russia. Blake can be heard on the ensemble’s most recent release Path of Miracles, recorded and released under the Harmonia Mundi record label. Writing under the moniker of “Esto,” Blake completed and released a collection of original songs about Michigan’s Upper Peninsula titled Haughton-Hancock Hum-Alongs. The CD was featured on NPR in Minnesota and received positive reviews on several leading music magazines/sites. Haughton-Hancock Hum-Alongs includes instrumental performances by WMU alto sax player and can be purchased on iTunes. Blake recently accepted a full-time position singing tenor with the Grammy award winning ensemble Chanticleer for the 2015–16 season. Chanticleer has received the title of “The world’s reigning male chorus” by New Yorker Magazine.

Sarah (Piktita) Siebeck (BM’79) spent 26 years as a bondman in the U.S. Air Force and was Associate Director at Southern Music Company in San Antonio, Texas, for six years. While in the Air Force, she performed for the 40th anniversary of D-Day at Normandy, France for President and Mrs. Reagan and for the dedication of the George W. Bush Library. While at Southern Music, Sarah had the pleasure of working with many of the composers whose music she played while a student at WMU and edited the first publication of three Debussy piano transcriptions for clarinet and piano by Harold Wright.

Adam Smale (MM’09) played two sets on guitar from his album, Out of the Blue, on June 17 at the Why Not Jazz Room in New York City with fellow alumnus Logan Thomas (BM’07) on Fender Rhodes (electric piano). For more information on Adam’s performances, visit his website at AdamSmaleJazz.com.

Janelle Owens (BM’96) is a sixth grade teacher in Northeastern Indiana. Her classroom has adopted WMU, and they are participating in the Branca Buddy Pan Pal Program through the Lee Honors College. They communicate with a few music majors on a regular basis. In March of 2015, they visited WMU to spend time on campus with their Branca Buddies.

Kendra Peterson (BM’05) recently started teaching fifth through eighth grade band at Bloomfield Hills (Mich.) Middle School.

Virginia Pinkas (BA’05) is a secondary language arts teacher in Denver, Colo., and recently received her Master of Arts in secondary curriculum and instruction from Grand Valley State University.

Sarah Rice (MM’03) began a new appointment as Director of the Heinz Chapel Choir at the University of Pittsburgh. Founded in 1938, the choir is a mixed voice a cappella ensemble comprised of singers drawn from the entire university student body, performing in the Heinz Memorial Chapel. She also teaches musicianship courses as Senior Lecturer in the Music Department.

Logan Evan Thomas (BM’07) released a debut solo piano album, From the Heart, in August 2015. “Throughout my life, I have been very blessed and extremely fortunate to meet, learn from, and be exposed to so many great people that have given of themselves in order for me to grow as an artist, and a man. Although an album is not much to repay all of the acts of kindness bestowed upon me, it’s more of a looking glass into my being, for it is what I feel is an honest representation of my character, and where I currently stand in my life. Raw, exposed, true…From The Heart to me you.” Logan performed two solo piano shows at the Kintano in New York City on August 12 and 19 as a CD release event.

Robert Traynor (BM’96) is a music teacher for Mattson School District 162 in Matteson, Ill.

Kally (Whelan) Wahlpi (BA’03) is Executive Director for the Denver Young Artists Orchestra, after serving for five years as General Manager of the Lexington Philharmonic.

Eden (Bristal) Wagner (MM’09) has been part of the pilot program between Spectrum Health Music Therapy and the Grand Rapids Symphony Music for Health Initiative. A patient she has worked with was featured on USA Today in July 2014 for a story about music therapy.

Matthew Weitsgate (MM’08) was appointed Director of Wind Studies at the University of Massachusetts–Amherst where he conducts the Wind Ensemble and Symphony Band, teaches graduate and undergraduate courses in conducting, and oversees the graduate instrumental conducting curriculum. Prior to his appointment at UMass, he was the Director of Instrumental Activities at Xavier University in Cincinnati, Ohio.

Erik Yankowskas (BA’11) earned a Master of Music from Carnegie Mellon University with an Advanced Musical Studies Certificate, won a concert position with the River City Brass Band, and joined the music faculty at Bethany College.
MUSIC GRADUATE HONORED BY COLLEGE

At a ceremony on Friday, Oct. 24, 2014, Dr. Donald Para was honored as the College of Fine Arts Distinguished Alumnus from the School of Music. In addition to being recognized by the College and the University, his visit included presentations to graduate students and the School of Music Advisory Council. At the College ceremony, he was surprised with a performance by emeritus faculty Robert Whaley of two movements from Four Sketches for Solo Tuba, a work Para wrote for Whaley in 1970.

Para was Associate Director of the School of Music from 1982 until 1986. As a student at WMU, he received the Bachelor of Music in music education in 1971 and the Master of Music in composition in 1972. He was appointed to the faculty in 1972, later becoming Assistant Director of the School of Music and ultimately Associate Director. He left WMU in 1986 to chair the Music Department at California State University in Los Angeles. In 1988 he was appointed Chair of the Music Department at California State University in Long Beach. During his 26-year tenure, he went on to serve as Associate Dean of the College of the Arts, Dean of the College, Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs, and finally Interim President of the University.

Para was accompanied on his return to WMU by his wife Sandy, a School of Music alumna (BM’69) and part-time faculty, and daughters Marina and Alyssa.
C. Curtis-Smith was born in 1941 in Walla Walla, Wash. After early piano studies, he studied composition with John Ringgold and David Burge at Whitman College, with Alan Stout and Doy Mombartz at Northwestern University, with Ken Gaboury at the University of Illinois, with Bruno Maderna at Slangenhorst, and at the Bloomson Music Festival in master classes with Pierre Boulez.

As a composer, he was the recipient of over 100 grants, awards, and commissions throughout his life—including a Guggenheim Fellowship, an award from the American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters, the Koussevitzky Prize at Slangenhorst, the Medallo d’Oro from the Concorso Internazionale di Musica e Danza O.B. Vitti, the Prix du Salzburg, the Concorso Internazionale de Composizione, and 26 consecutive Standard Awards from ASCAP. He also received grants from the Martha Baird Rockefeller Fund, the National Endowment for the Arts, the New York State Council for the Arts, the Arts Foundation of Michigan, and the State of Michigan Governor's Award, as well as commissions from the Barlow Endowment, the Fromm Foundation, Fontana Chamber Arts, the Kalamazoo Symphony Orchestra, and the Gilmore International Keyboard Festival. At age 38, he was the youngest faculty member at WMU ever to be awarded the Distinguished Faculty Scholar Award, the university’s highest academic honor. Curtis-Smith also taught composition at the University of Illinois and received many commissions from WMU’s Faculty Awards Program. His Twelve Etudes for Piano were selected in 2001 for the repertoire list for the ElbViertel Van Cliburn International Piano Competition. After a performance of several of the Etudes in Alice Tully Hall by his esteemed WMU colleague Lori Sims, the New York Times wrote: “Mr. Curtis-Smith takes us up where Debussy’s lonely, bleakly beautiful last music ends. Yet these pieces have a voice of their own. One hears ideas at work and a momentum that carries thoughts coherently and convincingly from first note to last.”

In 2002, Curtis-Smith gave the first complete performance of the Twelve Etudes at the Gilmore Festival. Early in his career in 1972, he developed the technique of bowing the piano, using flexible bows made of monofilament nylon line. This technique, exemplified in such pieces as Phases of 1972 has been widely imitated and used by many other composers, including George Crumb.

As a pianist, Curtis-Smith appeared early in his career as a soloist in recitals at Western Michigan University, the National Gallery, and the Phillips Collection in Washington, D.C., as well as the Gilmore Festival. Orchestral appearances included concerts with the Indianapolis, Seattle, Spokane, and Kalamazoo orchestras. In 1986, he premiered the last three studies of his beloved Wilco Balcom’s Pulitzer Prize-winning Twelve New Etudes and Knockout from Balcom’s Three Dance Portraits. More recently, he and Balcom wrote an unusual collaborative piano piece, Collusions, in which each composer took turns writing successive phrases of the music. He performed Collusions at the 2010 Gilmore Festival.

His music has been performed many times by the Kalamazoo Symphony Orchestra, the Merling Trio, Fontana Chamber Arts, and regularly at the Gilmore International Keyboard Festival. The Festival commissioned and premiered two major works from him: the Concerto for Left-Hand & Orchestra, performed by soloist Leon Fleisher and the KSO in 1991, and the Concerto for Violin, Piano & String Orchestra, performed by 1994 Gilmore Artist Ralf Gothoni and violinist Elena Vlahuta in 2006. The Leon Fleisher Concerto has been performed many times by Mr. Fleisher, including with the Detroit Symphony Orchestra, Neemi Jarvi conducting, with the New Japan Philharmonic Orchestra, and with the American Composers Orchestra in Carnegie Hall conducted by Dennis Russell Davies also on which he performed the Twelve American Symphonies (which he subtitled “GAS!”—displaying his characteristic wit and sense of humor) twice the American Composers Orchestra in Carnegie Hall and Lincoln Center. Other GAS! performances by Davies include the New York Philharmonic, the Barbican Symphony, the Cadence Festival Orchestra, and the West German Radio Orchestra where it was recorded for CD release. The eminent violinist Sergiu Luca premiered the Violin Concerto with the ProMusica Chamber Orchestra in Houston. In 2011 the Kalamazoo Symphony and conductor Raymond Harvey premiered his Fanfare Symply to open their 2010–11 season.

Also notable are Curtis-Smith’s several important vocal works including the setting of Walt Whitman’s Auriol Melville’s A Civil War Song Cycle of 1987, The Mystics; Darkwar (1991), and Oh God, What Would Jesus Do? (1984), Theodore Roethke’s Six Roethke Settings (1992), The Shimmer of Evil (1997), and Theodore Roethke (1987), among others. His chamber music includes string quartets, two piano trios, piano brass quintets, and a host of other varied works.


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HONOR ROLL

2  Aldrich, Bruce
3  Allen, John
4  Amos, David and Lori
11  Anne, Loretta
1  Anusbigian, Kevin
32  Appel, William and Jean
22  Armbruster, Terry and Barbara
7  Atkinson, James
2  Atwood, James
14  Azkoul, Robert
15  Baker, Gail
3  Ballen, Harold
1  Barber, Nathan
2  Barlow, Beth and Steven
11  Barnes, Cheryl
2  Barnes, Donald
2  Barrus, Cynthia
26  Bates, Sherry and Harold
6  Benedict, Barbara
12  Bennett, Jack
2  Berghorst, Janet
2  Bernstein, Jeff and Jean Stevens
42  Bjerregaard, Carl and Maria
7  Blanchard, Dale
1  Block, Jan
9  Bloemers, Robert and Beverly
20  Blount, Betty
21  Blixt, Maureen
1  Boardman, Gordon
1  Robinson, Jane
19  Boekline, Paul and Mary
5  Boerna, Robert
29  Bowerson, Kathryn
7  Bradford, Scott and Maureen Lindenberg-Bradford
3  Bradley, Dona
10  Brahic, Joel
3  Bredeweg, Norman and Thelma
1  Breidenbach, Alison
5  Brett, Jill
5  Brix, Marlene
3  Broyles, William and Ruth
27  Brixius, Terry and Robert
39  Brill, Marilyn
7  Briel, Mary and David
6  Brown, Cynthia and Larry
28  Bruce, Barbara
8  Bullock, Andrew
25  Burns, Mary
1  Burt, Virginia
1  Burke, Joan
12  Burns, John and Angela
8  Bursch, Robert and Marilyn
4  Busch, Ellen
36  Bussard, Leonard and Sharon
1  Byrne, Jan
10  Cake, Peter and Marilyn
1  Colton, Claire
2  Carie, Travis
17  Carr, Deana
1  Carroll, Becky and Pat
1  Carroll, Kathy and Patricia
3  Cary, Kathleen
11  Casbeer, Karen
6  Caris, Janelle and Anthony
44  Christian, Daniel and Jill
8  Christiano, Robert and Beverly
14  Cloos, Clare and David
8  Cloough, Donald and Pamela
1  Coffey, Jack
23  Colburn, Gwennan
26  Colgan, Joan
2  Colson, David and Liz
29  Combs, William and Marie
33  Contey, Lyle
30  Connable, Tesho and Bradley Wellar
2  Copeland, Kevin and Kelly
6  Courtney, Laura and Bob
3  Covault, Maureen
7 Craig, Judith
12  Cron, Jolene and Kenneth
16  Cuddihy, Bruce
6  Curry, Kevin and Audrey
26  Curtis-Smith, Curtis
12  Daneman, Marc and Linda
5  Darow, Louis and Beverly
24  Davidson, Clifford
3  Davidson, Louise
27  DeDee, Bruce and Dorothy
38  Dehn, Roger and Barbara
13  Dekema, Brian
8  Dier, Frank and Carol
8  DelRusso, Paul and Darlene
40  Detjen, Dixie and Corbin
21  Dett, Larry and Diane
1  Domier, Lisa and Kevin
45  Dosselley, Carl
18  Douglas, Merce, Dorothy
20  Douglas, Nancy and Fred
31  Dunsap, Michael and Pamela
4  Dunham, Malcolm
22  Dunlap, Anne
21  Dvorsk, Daniel
9  Edwards, Michael
27  Edwards, William and Diane Sturman
23  Elkins, Nancy
4  Elkins, Royce
17  Elder, Stewart and Irene
4  Elkins, Robin
37  Ells, Jack and Jowlynn
3  Ellis, Lisa
3  Endicott, Douglas and Andrea
38  Engelage, Hans
2  Eske, M.
9  Facett, Carolyn and Michael
32  Farrand, James
15  Farris, Barbara
12  Fenton, David and Jeanne
2  Ferrell, Tonya Maxene-Grace
6  Fischer, David and Mary
35  Fisher, Marilyn
5  Fitzwater, Karin and Milton
2  Flann, Carolyn and Michael
31  Fogel, Diane
8  Fornarito, Marie
6  Frank, Beth and Todd
10  Franks, Floyd and Virginia
43  Frappier, Calvin and Cara
21  Frazier, Louise
16  Friedman, Rox and Franklin
27  Frost, Tom and Paul
19  Gage, Joe and Sandra
8  Gambler, Clara
23  Garrett, Andrew
17  Garrett, Dawn and Christopher
1  Garzotto, Pauline
1  Garzotto, Philip
31  Gauss, Schroeder
3  Gazdag, Mariell
19  Gei, Robert and Marilyn
20  Gess, Gene and Carol
15  Gittel, Mary
11  Gianakaris, C.J. and Ann
27  Gils, Catherine
14  Giovannini, Dorothy
3  Glaser, Shari and Gregory Rosine
39  Glinski, Patricia
1  Gluck, Karen
1  Golden, Samuel and Paula
9  Goodman, Gregory and Karla
4  Gordon, Jenny
8  Grobel, Daniel and Gabrielle
24  Graczyk, Dennis
6  Grandstaff, Russell and Anne
20  Grape, Dawn and David
17  Gray, Robert
8  Greene, Sharon
1  Greiner, Keith
7  Griesbach, Donald and Catherine
17  Griffin, Robert and Christina
36  Griffis, Tom and Susan Drew
1  Groendal, Constance
A MUSICAL LEGACY
by the Office of Development & Alumni Relations

Although he did not follow the career paths of his mother and father, music has always been an area of great passion for James K. Overley (Western Michigan University BBA’57).

“Music is important to the joy of life,” says Overley.

His parents, Christopher and Maureen (Castleton) Overley, met in Chicago in the late 1920s and were graduates of the Sherwood School of Music. Christopher was a talented violinist, music teacher, and a charter member of the Kalamazoo Symphony Orchestra. Christopher and Maureen married, settled in Kalamazoo, and had two sons.

Maureen became a well-known piano teacher in the ensuing decades, giving private lessons in her home. For nearly 30 years, she taught for as little as $1 per half hour. Usually carrying a student load of 55, Maureen was very busy and in demand. Years later, Jim would comment that because of her hard work and a knack for investing, she was able to construct a lovely new home and put both of her sons through college. She was also an early member of the Michigan Music Teachers Association, which advances the qualifications and standards for music teachers. Maureen passed away in 1956.

Jim credits his mother, his dentist, neighbors, local businessmen, and Dr. Arnold Schneider, the founding dean of WMU’s Haworth College of Business, with influencing his life and financial goals. Upon graduating from WMU, James worked as a banker, a stock broker, and retired from Eaton Corporation in 1984 at age 50.

While Jim ultimately chose a path in finance, music was always an integral part of his life. Because of this legacy, he and his wife Carol recently created the Maureen Overley Piano and Organ Scholarship. The endowed scholarship is now offered to a piano and/or organ major in the WMU School of Music. The family hopes the scholarship in Maureen’s name will help young pianists chart their path for a successful career.

In addition to his love of music, Jim learned early on the importance of giving back. He is grateful that philanthropy gives him an opportunity to be a positive influence on others.

“One ought to leave the world a little better than one found it,” he said.
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Roxy Coss, Saxophone
Ashley Daneman Group
Jodee Davis, Trombone
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Slawomir Dobrzanski, Piano
Driftless Winds
Robert Duke, Presenter
Ensemble Dal Niente
Estrella Consort
Stephen Framil, Cello
Keith Ganz, Guitar
Michael Haber, Cello
Kip Hickman, Trombone
Jon Holden, Clarinet
Umit Isgorur, Cello
Shachar Israel, Trombone
Stephen James, Trumpet
Kari Johnson, Piano
Galit Kaunitz, Oboe
Fred Knapp Trio
Andrew Koehler, Violin
Kontras Quartet
Cecilia Kazlowski, Horn
Barabara Lieurance, Piano
Jun-Ching Lin, Violin and Viola
Jerry Loenide, Piano
Corey Mackey, Clarinet
Tony Malaby, Saxophone
James Marvel, Stage Director
Daniel Mattson, Trombone
Kate McGarry, Jazz Vocals
Andrew Megill, Conductor
Mivos Quartet
Peter Miyamoto, Piano
Peggy Moran, Horn
Joan Morris, Voice
Northside Trombone Quartet
Phoenix Park-Kim, Piano
Charles Pikler, Viola
Caen Thomason Redus, Flute
Nina Scolnik, Piano
Ed Simon, Piano
Sonic Escape
Mollie Stone, Conductor
Gisela Hök Ternstrom, Conductor
Keith Terry, Presenter
Third Coast Percussion
TRI-FI
Trio Globo
Carla Trynchuk, Violin
Chris Van Hof, Trombone
Vanessa Vo, Dan Tranh Zither
Juliette White, Viola
Chris-Wild, Cello
Dana Wilson, Composer
Jacqueline Wilson, Bassoon
Steve Wilson & Wilsonian’s Grain
Paul Wingert, Cello
Carl Witt, Piano
Wuhan Conservatory Bassoons
Miguel Zenon, Saxophone
Jeff Zook, Flute