

URBAN HARPIST

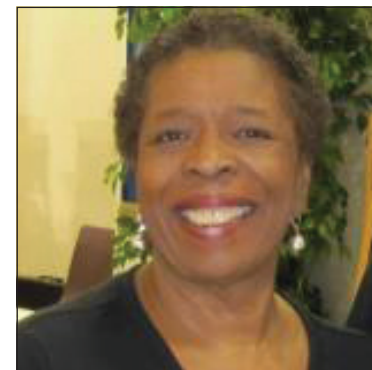


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Greetings to all our wonderful supporters!

The Urban Youth Harp Ensemble has had an amazing year of transition. After years of planning, we relocated our in-school program to Drew Charter School as part of our effort to introduce younger children to harp instruction. The new Drew Charter School junior and senior high school campus is under construction, and in the interim, Drew's middle school program is operating out of Kennedy Middle School. Carolyn Lund, our artistic director, was undaunted by this challenge. She set up the harps in a room provided for us at Kennedy and went about doing what she does best: teaching. As a result of her dedication, our Drew students have shown tremendous artistic growth this year.



Our after-school program continues to operate at Carver High School, and our students continue to inspire us with their dedication and determination to master this complex instrument.

In funding news, we were honored to receive a \$20,000 grant from the National Endowment for the Arts as part of the Art Works program. We are proud to have our work recognized at the national level. We have welcomed many new individual donors to the UYHE family this year, and those donors, along with our longtime supporters, continue to allow us to make a difference in the lives of young people.

Looking ahead, I am excited about the opportunity to introduce harp instruction to even younger children. Sometime in the near future, we will be able to offer harp to Drew Charter School students in fourth and fifth grades. This early exposure is vital to our vision of giving our students the best opportunity to reach their full potential as harpists and as individuals.

Thank you as always for your support of our program and our students.

Regards,

Roselyn Lewis,
Executive Director



Our Mission

The mission of the Urban Youth Harp Ensemble is to deliver quality musical instruction on the harp, develop music reading skills and musicianship to at-risk urban youth.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

<i>Student Voices</i>	2
<i>Parts of the Harp</i>	2
<i>Board Member Spotlight</i>	3
<i>Carolyn's Corner</i>	3
<i>Power to Give</i>	4

Student Voices: *From Our Students*

Jayla Thrash, Nia Anderson and Oliscea Taylor started playing the harp two years ago, when the UYHE first ventured over to Drew Charter School. The girls have worked hard to master the level harp. They are excited to graduate to pedal harps. They will perform as a trio at the spring concert. Here are their thoughts at this juncture in their development as harpists:



Jayla, 14: “The harp is a beautiful instrument that stands out from the others and makes a beautiful sound. Not a lot of people are harpists, so this is something that can get me out there. I can be an example to others and let them know the harp is something different you can try.”

Nia, 13: “I converted from piano to harp. A lot of people in my family play the piano. Not a lot of people get to play the harp, especially African-Americans. Black children need black people to look up to, and I want to be that person.”



Oliscea, 13: “I love the harp, and I also struggle with it. I play the cello and am used to reading only the base notes. I like to write the notes on the sheet music, but Ms. Lund doesn’t allow it. She wants us to learn to read music. Ms. Lund has to tell me over and over how important it is to practice. There is no way to master this instrument; you just have to keep practicing.”

Parts of the Harp

There are many parts to a harp, the strings being the most critical aspect of this beautiful instrument. Learn more about the four types of strings harpist may encounter during their harp career.

Nylon: Nylon strings are stretchy, and they tend to be more durable than natural gut strings. They are less expensive, but they also do not produce the same sweet, rich sound that natural gut strings do. Nylon harp strings may be monofilament, meaning that they are all of one piece, or they might be strings with a nylon core that is then wrapped in nylon. Nylon strings are gentler on the fingers than metal strings.

Metal: Harp strings for the instrument’s bass range are made out of steel that has been wrapped around with copper or steel wire. Harp strings with steel cores wrapped in wire have been used on lever harps since the 19th century, and they are often used in conjunction with natural gut strings. More volume can be achieved through the use of metal strings, but some subtlety of tone might be sacrificed. When metal strings are used in conjunction with natural gut strings, there may be a displeasing difference in tone between the two different harp strings.

Natural Gut: Natural gut harp strings are typically made from cow intestine. They are the most fragile harp strings available, and they are more expensive than nylon, but they also have a sweeter, more melodic sound than nylon strings. Natural gut strings are gentler on the fingers than metal strings.

Fluorocarbon Strings: Fluorocarbon harp strings are synthetic strings that imitate natural gut. Though they are not replacements for natural gut strings, they do produce a sound that is between that of nylon strings and natural gut strings. The sound produced by fluorocarbon strings is bright and clear, and the strings themselves are more durable than natural gut strings or nylon strings

(source: http://www.ehow.com/list_6627109_harp-strings-made_.html#ixzz30vzKcYZy)



UYHE Board Member Spotlight: Dzauya Nkuchwayo

Dzauya attended her first UYHE concert in 2011. While watching three young men on stage dressed in tuxedos and playing the harp, she wondered why she hadn't heard about the program through the news media. "At that moment, I knew I needed to get involved," she says.

She joined the board and made an immediate impact, advising us on fundraising, overhauling our website and overseeing production of print collateral. With many years of volunteer and professional experience with organizations such as Girl Scouts of Greater Atlanta and The Atlanta Opera, Dzauya has shared valuable insight on marketing and stewardship. Now a fundraising software consultant, she works with organizations across the country and Canada while finding time to tell the story of the UYHE.

"While every student may not pursue a musical career or play the harp after graduation, the life skills they learn are priceless," she says. "They learn how to focus, work within a group and listen, not only to their teacher and to themselves, but to the harpist to the left and the harpist to the right."

Dzauya's passion continues to grow. "The UYHE is critical to the lives of the students who participate and their circle of family and friends," she says. "I have moved from being emotional about the program to becoming a champion and advocate for it. I don't want to just stir emotions, I want to help others make a personal investment in our mission and our students."



Carolyn's Corner

Q: How has the move to Drew impacted the UYHE? **A:** Our goal has always been to follow children from a young age all the way through high school and beyond. When we learned Drew was adding a high school, we knew it would be the perfect location for us. We would be able to teach students from kindergarten through high school. It is very exciting to have the possibility to start students on the harp at a younger age.

Q: How are our middle school students doing? **A:** I have been particularly impressed with the sixth-graders this year. They are eager to play classical music, and they have done so well mastering their technique. Their enthusiasm for music is inspiring.

Q: What about our high school students? **A:** We have two very special seniors graduating this year. A.J. Seymour has been playing the harp since he was in middle school, and he is the class valedictorian at Carver. Hati Pines began playing in ninth grade and has gone above and beyond with the harp for four years. She is planning to study music education in college.

Q: We have two students in the Atlanta Youth Symphony Orchestra's Talent Development Program. How are they doing?
A: Donevon Howard and Kimberly Walker are doing wonderful things! Donevon has been participating in the Atlanta Symphony Youth Orchestra and the Emory Youth Symphony Orchestra. Kimberly has become quite the in-demand performer at functions around Atlanta. They will both be attending prestigious music camps this summer.

Q: What can we expect at the spring concert? **A:** This concert is a little bit different. We usually perform a mix of pop songs and classical music. This semester, I have focused on classical music. I also wanted to give more students the chance to perform solos or in small groups. This concert will be more like a recital. I have been amazed at how hard the students have worked on their individual technique and artistry.

Q: What are your summer plans? **A:** I will be teaching at harp camps, attending a harp conference or two and then spending the rest of the time prepping the classroom at the new Drew high school. We are so excited to be moving into such a beautiful new building! Classes will start on July 28.

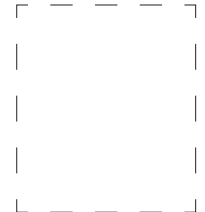
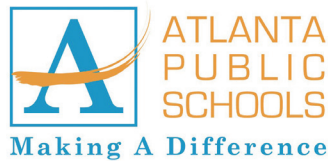
Q: What are your long-term goals for the UYHE? **A:** I am so excited for the future of the UYHE. The program has already seen a lot of success, and I expect our profile in the community to increase when we are teaching at Drew across the elementary, middle and high school levels. I want to expose as many people to the harp as possible, and I want each of my students to realize the potential they have to create beauty in the world.

INVESTING IN A CHILD’S FUTURE

In a concerted effort to assist our after-school harpists to succeed, we will make available a Harp Rental Fund to deserving students whose parents cannot afford the cost of renting a harp for home practice. After-school students receive instruction from the Artistic Director once weekly. Students who have a practice harp at home make much faster progress. To ensure that all of our students have equal access to success, we propose the Harp Rental Fund as one avenue to support students and assist parents in funding the rental of a troubadour harp for home practice. These harps can be rented for \$60.00 per month or \$720.00 per year. For those families with the greatest need, we will offer full harp rental scholarships. We will also offer assistance to those parents who can afford the partial cost of harp rental by subsidizing half the cost of yearly rental.



To continue to fulfill our mission of harp lessons to urban at-risk students, we want to ensure that students from throughout the metropolitan Atlanta area are able to take advantage of this unique opportunity. The students enrolled in the daily instruction program make amazing progress because they are able to play the harp more often than the after-school students. We believe that this project will level the playing field for all of our young harpists.



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