

URBAN HARPIST



Volume VI, Issue II

Spring Concert 2024



Greetings and Happy Spring!

As we step into the vibrant season of spring and I reflect on this year's journey of our students of the Urban Youth Harp Ensemble, I am filled with an overwhelming sense of pride and gratitude. It is with great joy that I share with you the profound impact our program continues to have on the lives of our young participants.

The Urban Youth Harp Ensemble offers our youth a gateway into the transformative world of music. Led and nurtured by our talented and dedicated teachers, Dr. Molly O'Roark and Dr. Jennifer Betzer, our students have experienced tremendous growth, not only in their musical abilities but also in their confidence, discipline, and resilience. It is truly heartwarming to see them blossom into accomplished individuals, empowered by their newfound love for music.

The newness of Spring means new possibilities and so we celebrate the achievements of our graduating seniors as they step into their season of blossoming ventures. These remarkable young individuals have embraced the beauty of the harp with unwavering dedication and passion. While their paths may diverge, and not all may pursue the harp as a vocation, I am confident that they will carry with them the invaluable lessons learned through their time with us. The seeds of creativity, discipline, and a lifelong love of music have been firmly planted within them, ready to flourish in whatever endeavors they choose to pursue.

None of this would be possible without the unwavering support of their parents, UYHE Board of Directors, Drew Charter School, the community, donors and supporters. The generosity of you all enables us to continue nurturing the talents of our youth. Together, we are making a lasting difference in lives and shaping a brighter future for our community and beyond.

Looking ahead, with your continued support I eagerly anticipate the continued growth and success of the Urban Youth Harp Ensemble. We will persevere with our mission to introduce young people to the power of the music that is the harp.

Thank you for your steadfast commitment and donations. Together, we are changing lives as we expose our youth to a world of music they may not have known without the Urban Youth Harp Ensemble and you.

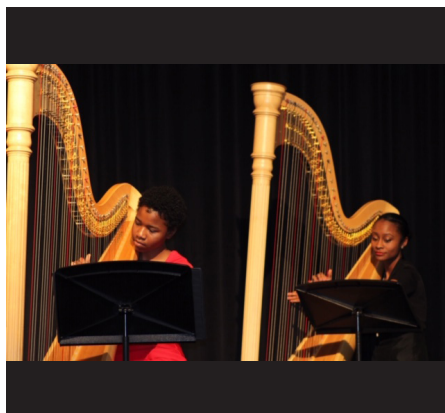
With heartfelt gratitude,

Roselyn M. Lewis
Roselyn Lewis

Executive Director, Co-Founder

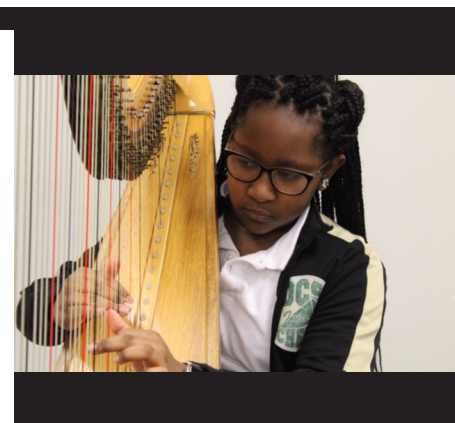


DONATE



INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

<i>Executive Director's Message</i>	1
<i>Our Fabulous Seniors!</i>	2
<i>Highlights of Winter & Spring</i>	2
<i>Outgoing Chairman</i>	3
<i>Spring Events</i>	4



OUR FABULOUS SENIORS!

Sage Harrison - Sage has played the harp since she was in 6th grade and intends to major in Harp Performance in college. She has been given scholarships to Vanderbilt, Emory, and Manhattan School of music. She has also been accepted at Spellman, Georgia State, Florida State, Louisiana State. She credits UYHE with providing opportunities she would not have had, including playing before a variety of audiences in preparation for her professional career. Long term, she sees establishing harp programs at HBCUs in her future.



Erin Howard - University of Georgia bound to major in International Business and minor in Spanish. Can you say study abroad, anyone? Erin has been the Georgia Ambassador for the American Harp Society and a harpist in the Emory Youth Symphony Orchestra. Regarding her experience in UYHE, she has been in the program since 6th grade and says, "It has been a privilege to have grown up in the Urban Youth Harp Ensemble because it has helped me to unleash my musical potential."

Imari Ricks - in the harp program for seven years, will major in Biology in college. She feels the harp program has been a major influence in her life and is grateful for the many opportunities it has given her to build confidence and take on new challenges.

Aoki Hawkins - Aoki has been playing the harp for two years but has really embraced the experience. Majoring in Architecture and Urban Planning once leaving Drew, she sees studying abroad and viewing structures all over the world in her future.

Tannilea Schliffer - Tannilea will attend Temple University to study Public Relations in order to learn everything she can before opening a PR firm. She says, "Harp has quite literally been one of the best things that has happened to me this year! I've made new friends, learned new skills and have overall had a very joyful experience. If I can take harp with me in the future, I definitely will!"

Samaya King - Samaya is hoping to attend an HBCU where she will study chemistry on her journey to becoming an orthodontist. She stresses that her experience with the Urban Youth Harp Ensemble has "allowed me to expand my musical career."

HIGHLIGHTS OF WINTER AND SPRING - UYHE - HARP IN DEMAND

- **March 15** - Madison Ford joined the Drew Orchestra on O Mio Babbino Caro for their LGE performance and earned a Superior rating.
- **March 17** - Alia accepted an Artistic Award from the Atlanta Chapter of the Pierians, INC. to recognize her "as an artist who exemplifies high potential in the pursuit of greater achievements in the world of the arts."
- **March 21** - UYHE accepted a donation from Cheryl Tryon of a Troubadour III, a tuner, tuning key, metronome, music stand and box of harp music.
- **March 22** - Myron performed with fellow student, drummer Nhenze, in Drew's lobby for STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Math) Day.



The Senior Academy

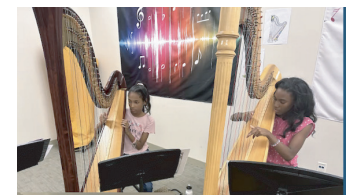
6 Seniors
8 Juniors
13 Sophomores
6 Freshmen

The Junior Academy

13 6th Graders
6 7th Graders
5 8th Graders

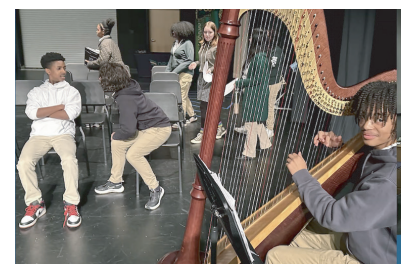
After School Program

7 Beginning Harp
6 Advanced Harp
(Senior Sage Harrison is a teaching assistant)



ACCOLADES

Alex Price was awarded a full scholarship to the Young Artists Harp Seminar at Washington College in Chestertown, Maryland Myron Leonard and Amber Nelms were accepted to the prestigious Sewanee Summer Music Festival.



And it's still early! The students are not shy about applying to programs to gain more harp experience.



Conversation With The Outgoing Chairman

An informal conversation between William “Bill” Stanley and Dzauya Fogle give insight to what has been and the possibilities that lie ahead for the Urban Youth Harp Ensemble. William Stanley was chairman for 14 years. Dzauya has just stepped into her new role.

1. What did you enjoy most about your service as Board Chair? *I enjoyed interacting with the young men as they were being developed to play the harp. One of my first experiences was getting Desmond Johnson and Montanez Baugh to and from gigs. I was even instrumental in helping Desmond get accepted to Georgia State University. I also got him on the banquet program for Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity's Conclave when it was here in Atlanta. Many of the students reminded me of my youth and the influence of music in my life. Additionally, the Board was in its infancy and I believe my experience leading boards helped to shape the Board to be the fully functional organization as it is today.*
2. As you look back over the years, what moment with the UYHE that stands out to you? And why? *The moment [would be] when I volunteered to purchase a tuxedo for one of the young men who had been adopted by his aunt. I took him to purchase the tux. This is the first time that he has been fitted for clothes. We left the tux for alterations to be picked up on the following weekend. The store had a buy one get one free sale over that weekend. His aunt talked to the store manager and was able to get a suit in addition to the tuxedo. I view it as “God took my gift and doubled it!”*
3. Tell us the importance of engaging more young men in the program. What are the challenges? *Generally, children that play musical instruments make higher scores in math and science. I believe it's important for all young people to participate in musical programs. The harp is a unique and harp instruction for free is rare. Young men have additional extracurricular activities pulling at them— particularly sports. Unfortunately, there are few male role models on harps unlike other instruments and sports.*
4. UYHE has grown in the number of students served. What do you credit that to? *The move from Carver High School to Charles R. Drew Charter School created more diversity in the program and the increase from one teacher to two also gave us more capacity. I credit Roselyn Lewis' dedication to program growth as a key factor.*
5. Are there any changes or issues you feel that should be a priority within the next year? *I am sure that, as our new Chair, you and the Board are in sync with the needs including: increase funding sources; revamping the afterschool program; adding new harps; and increasing our diversity including recruiting more African-American boys.*

Board of Directors

Ms. Roselyn Lewis - Executive Director
Dzauya Nkuchwayo-Fogle - Board Chairman

Mrs. Billye Aaron
Dr. Larry Copeland, Jr.
Ms. Sadie Dennard
Mr. Don Doran
Ms. Gwen Ellis

Ms. Monica Hargrove
Mrs. Carolyn Munford
Mr. William Stanley, Jr.
Ms. Adrienne Scandrett
Mrs. Sabrina Simmons

Mrs. Cynthia Turner
Ms. Sigele Winbush
Mr. Michael Young

Advisory Board

Mrs. Nancy Hamilton
Mr. Trent Floyd
Mr. Mark Mines

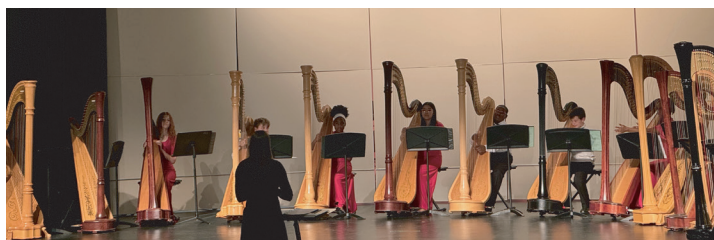
Mrs. Ginger Bell
Ms. Adrienne Howard

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.

Staff

Dr. Molly O’Roark, Artistic Director

Dr. Jennifer Betzer, Teaching Artist



SPRING EVENTS 2024

March 30 - Quartet Performance Sorority Debutante Ball

April 16 - 7:00 PM Spring Concert, Drew Auditorium

April 27 - 9:00AM Dr. Betzer and Dr. O’Roark host District 5 Solo and Ensemble Contest

May 2 - 3:05 PM UYHE student ensemble, “188 Strings,” to perform for Collect Impact Action, opening for Stacey Abrams

May 4 & 5 - Myron Leonard, Amber Nelms, Alex Price, and Sage Harrison to perform for Talent Development program

May 5 - Junior and Senior Academy to perform Star Wars and Mandelorian selections for opening of Metropolitan Youth Symphony Orchestra Concert



UYHE STUDENTS CONTINUE TO IMPRESS

Madison Ford is principal harp at Metropolitan Symphony Orchestra.

Waverly Alcock is a member of Metropolitan Youth Symphony Orchestra Chamber Music Program.

Alex Price is a member Atlanta Youth Wind Symphony.

Myron Leonard is Principal Harp for Emory Youth Symphony.

Sage Harrison is 4th year as a Principal Harp with Atlanta Youth Symphony.

Alessia Escobar is 2nd Harp for Emory Youth Symphony.

Cassandra Reiner is a member of Metropolitan Youth Symphony Orchestra Chamber Music Program.



THE ZEIST FOUNDATION, INC.



Thank you to all of our sponsors and supporters! We are here because you are there helping us maintain quality programming for our youth. Visit our newsletter for supporter spotlight.

CONTACT US: ROSELYN LEWIS • EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR • URBAN YOUTH HARP ENSEMBLE
3259 BRIARWOOD BOULEVARD • EAST POINT, GA 30344
404.271.5899 • ROSELYN@MINDSPRING.COM • WWW.URBANHARP.ORG