

DEAN'S
CIRCLE

67 DONORS
\$181,746.20

RAISED FOR
ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE
IN 2022/23



Dear Friend,

What a truly exceptional year! The Dean's Circle provided a level of unprecedented support for the 2022/23 academic year. Because of your generosity, we tackled some really big projects.

We were able to fill the Contemporary Musicianship & Entrepreneur Development (CMED) studio with state-of-the-art equipment which means a great deal to a new and growing program with enormous potential for attracting a new student population to the conservatory.

The Shenandoah Conservatory Symphony Orchestra went on tour in Argentina where they had the opportunity to perform in Buenos Aires,

Bahía Blanca, San Carlos de Bariloche, Córdoba and Rosario. Dean's Circle support ensured that the full orchestra could participate in this tour.

And 38 Student Development Grants were awarded for the academic year and this summer. These grants enable our students to train, connect and compete nationally and internationally.

Throughout the academic year, Dean's Circle members gathered for receptions, attended masterclasses and kicked off ShenCoLAB. This past year, we also conducted a survey revealing that Dean's Circle members wanted to be involved in other ways at the conservatory which resulted in the introduction of virtual roundtable discussions. We also learned that the timing of events matters, for next year we will strive, when possible, to host receptions in association with matinees or as pre-performance events. We are grateful to those who provided input.

I hope that this annual report conveys not just some of the many accomplishments of the conservatory in 2022/23, but also our great appreciation for the support and involvement of our Dean's Circle members.

With gratitude,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael Stepniak".

Dr. Michael Stepniak
Executive Dean for Creativity & the Arts, Professor of Music
Shenandoah University

To learn more about the ways you can make a transformative gift to Shenandoah Conservatory, visit su.edu/performs/support or contact:

Melanie L. Mathewes
Shenandoah Conservatory Director of Development
mmathewe@su.edu | (540) 665-4733

Shenandoah University is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. All gifts are tax deductible to the full extent of the law.

The 2022/23 Year in Review highlights the many projects supporting students from all divisions of Shenandoah Conservatory. This year, we concentrated on projects and initiatives with broad reach and big impact. **Your support truly makes a difference in the work we do at Shenandoah Conservatory – thank you.**

PROGRAMS

CONTEMPORARY MUSICIANSHIP & ENTREPRENEUR DEVELOPMENT

The Contemporary Musicianship & Entrepreneur Development (CMED) program was able to provide its CONTEMPO Ensemble members with top-of-the line musical and sound equipment — the same equipment that is used by music industry professionals. This is important for many reasons, but two main reasons are: (1) with the music equipment, students can recreate the sounds needed for a wide variety of styles and genres (across cultures), and (2) learn all technical aspects of setting up equipment, using microphones, recording, troubleshooting and collaborating with audio engineers. With this, students not only become better critical thinkers, but they become better prepared creatively and technically. Ultimately, positioning them to be more marketable and employable which leads to more opportunities.



“Being a part of the CONTEMPO Ensemble has helped me grow as an artist and person. I have been able to surround myself with people that are just as passionate about music as I am and I get the opportunity to expose myself to different genres and styles of music. Being a part of this ensemble, you don’t just learn to perform, you learn how to set up music equipment and work with other musicians who play different instruments to form one cohesive sound. I have learned so much in just the brief amount of time I have been here and I am excited to see what else is in store for the CONTEMPO Ensemble.” – *Mati Ford, CMED vocalist*



OPERA

Shenandoah Conservatory was able to expand its programming to support the biggest scale opera presented on campus in years with more than 100 students involved across the production. The opera program was able to hire an award-winning designer — Madeleine Boyd — who provided a European perspective on scenic design education for the Theatre Design & Production students and also created a design that helped students engage with new perspectives on existing materials.



DANCE

Our students were provided the opportunity to work with choreographer Earl Mosley who made such a significant impact for our dance program's *Reflections* concert in February. Over a five-day residency period, Mosley was able to restage *I See You*, a 15-minute work that motivated the dancers to achieve a mastery level of physicality and artistic practice. As a strong advocate for intergenerational experiences, he included dance faculty members Tiffanie Carson and Daniel Padierna in the piece to cultivate a rich learning opportunity



with the undergraduate students in various movement sequences, partnering skills and setting the tone for a professional rehearsal process. After his enriching experience with our dancers, Earl Mosley awarded all of the students scholarships to his annual summer dance intensive, Earl Mosley's Institute of the Arts, providing opportunities to continue training in their dance studies while networking with nationally acclaimed educators and choreographers. We were very proud of our students achieving such a level of excellence and they continuously mention how impacted they were from this residency.

THEATRE

The Wolves is a play for an all-women/female-identifying cast that studies the contemporary world of high school teenagers and the societal bubble they are caged in, the complexities of family, relationships, social media and the perspective of coming of age in a world that often feels void of anything wholesome or meaningful. It also allowed the actor to focus on a very contemporary, naturalistic script, which we do not often do.





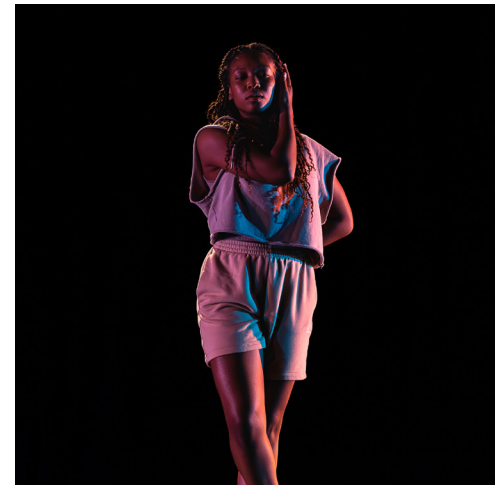
A YEAR IN REVIEW

IDE WORKSHOPS/TRAINING WITH ACTING FACULTY & STUDENTS

Due to the personal and vulnerable nature of acting, and the fact that many characters voice insensitive and bigotted ideas, our classrooms and rehearsal studios need trust and safety. In order to help us build an anti-racist and intersectional community of understanding, trust and freedom to fully delve into ugliness, Shenandoah Conservatory's acting program engaged facilitator, playwright and advocate Jacqueline Lawton for a year of training and workshops for both faculty and students.

“As part of my work, I design and facilitate panel discussions, workshops and cohort-style learning sessions based on topics related to race, racism, gender, class, power, privilege, identity and equity. Each session is unique and will be designed to suit the context of your theatre, department and/or organization. There are assigned readings, listenings and viewings; small and large interactive group discussions; and self-reflective writing experiences for in-depth dialogue, continuous learning and ongoing engagement. Together, we build a knowledge base, engage in active, constructive dialogue and discover how each of us can act as a social justice change agent.”

– *Jacqueline Lawton*



SHENCoLAB

Dean's Circle funding was critical to the success of Shenandoah Conservatory's fifth annual ShenCoLAB. This year, funding supported the imaginative work of more than 250 students, faculty and staff. A total of 27 project leaders and co-leaders presented 23 projects in collaboration with more than 200 conservatory students representing an array of artistic disciplines. The week culminated in the much-anticipated Festival of Arts, Ideas & Exploration, which drew nearly 500 audience members attending performances and presentations in eight different venues across the university's main campus. This year's event also debuted the Demo Stage, an “open mic” experience that supported shorter works by individuals and very small ensembles, including single tracks by singer/songwriters, original monologues, spoken word, slam poetry and more.



SHENCoSKILLS

This program, unique to Shenandoah, allows learners to explore topics specific to their experience at the conservatory to build community and offer a space of belonging. With dedicated faculty, learners were welcomed into the conservatory community of fellow artists and engaged in the arts through an interdisciplinary lens by getting to know fellow artists here on campus. While nurturing an environment of growth, learners explored resilience through introspective explorations of physical and mental well-being, supporting them through their studies. Learners were offered a safe space to express, explore and question their identity and discuss their beliefs, passions and goals. And, one of the most rewarding topics explored in ShenCoSKILLS was collaborations. Learners built a community of resilient individuals and were able to come together to collaborate on projects of importance to them by cultivating an environment of exploration and examination. Our Shenandoah Conservatory community has vastly strengthened through the program and we are proud of the investigation each member put into the growth mindset.

ALEXANDER TECHNIQUE

Students from varied areas and levels of study participated in Alexander Technique (AT) workshops and private lessons facilitated by Kathryn Enders, AmSat Certified AT Instructor since 2001. The Alexander Technique is a well-established approach that provides performers with strategies to increase ease and efficiency of movement, prevent injuries, decrease stress and improve overall well-being. In addition, the cross-disciplinary nature of workshops helped to nurture a culture of collaboration and well-being among students. This initiative was made possible by Shenandoah Conservatory, the Dean's Circle and the Being Well Together Committee, as well as Shenandoah University's English Department and the College of Arts and Sciences.



ADVERTISING

Advertising funds were used to support the launch of the new 3-year Jazz & Commercial Music degree at Shenandoah Conservatory. The funds used assisted with bringing in the largest jazz major class the conservatory has had in a number of years.

STUDENT SUPPORT PROJECTS



RUEBUSH HALL LOBBY FURNITURE

Hundreds of students, faculty and guests use and travel through our lobbies across campus throughout the year. Your support helped replace the old, worn-out lounge furniture in the upstairs lobby of Ruebush Hall with more comfortable and modern chairs, tables and more. Students can now take a refreshing break from daily practice and rehearsals, work on homework, eat a quick meal or snack, meet with peers and faculty members, and more. Small details help create a safe, welcoming place to inspire creativity, foster community and encourage well-being.

BEING WELL TOGETHER

Shenandoah Conservatory's Being Well Together Committee has several ongoing programs supported by the Dean's Circle that directly affect the day-to-day lives of the conservatory community. For the past two years, we've provided period products from AUNT FLOW in all women's and gender-neutral restrooms. In addition, we have dedicated food pantries in each of our conservatory buildings; these are stocked with ready-to-go meal options, high-energy quick snacks and other shelf-stable items. Having both the period products and food options readily accessible to our community allows our students, faculty and staff to concentrate on their studies and their work.



A YEAR IN REVIEW



INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL

SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA'S ARGENTINA TOUR

More than 90 Shenandoah Conservatory students, faculty and staff traveled to Argentina this May for the Symphony Orchestra's third international tour to perform in five major cities throughout the country. The ensemble traveled more than 2,000 miles in 10 days to share Mahler's monumental Symphony No. 5 and Clarice Assad's "Bohemian Queen" featuring Assistant Professor of Trumpet Mary Elizabeth Bowden as soloist in prestigious venues such as El Auditorio de Belgrano in Buenos Aires; La Catedral de San Carlos de Bariloche in the stunning Patagonia region; and more. The culminating performance at the Teatro El Círculo, a historical theatre and opera house in Rosario, was especially memorable as Maestro Jan Wagner conducted the students during his final performance with the orchestra.



CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY INVITED LECTURE & RESEARCH COLLABORATION

Director of the Janette Ogg Voice Research Center and Associate Professor of Voice and Voice Pedagogy David Meyer delivered an invited lecture, “Seeing voice: the pedagogical and musical applications of hybrid CT-MRI vocal tract modeling,” at the Cambridge University Faculty of Music (U.K.) as part of the Centre for Music and Science Seminar Series in November 2022. The trip was made possible by an International Exchanges Grant from the Royal Society in London, a competitive grant funded by the British royal family, and by a travel grant from the Shenandoah Conservatory Dean’s Circle.

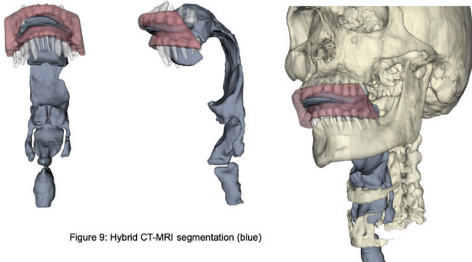


Figure 9: Hybrid CT-MRI segmentation (blue)

Dr. Meyer leads an interdisciplinary team that is developing the world’s most accurate 3D representations of the vocal tract airspace. Members of the team include Dr. David Howard of Royal Holloway College of London, Biomedical Engineering and School of Medicine faculty from the University of Iowa, and researchers from the University of Arizona College of Science. In their most recent publication (<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jvoice.2022.09.013>), Meyer and his coauthors demonstrated a novel method for combining high-resolution CT

and MR images so that structures such as teeth and bone are accurately represented in vocal tract reconstructions. This work allows us to better understand the structures used for speech and singing.



FELLOWSHIPS



AUDIO VISUAL (AV)

This past academic year, Nick Peretti '23 (B.M. in Music Production & Recording Technology) was selected by our sound faculty to serve as a Junior AV Fellow in charge of overseeing the extensive audio-visual needs of our students and faculty in the Armstrong Hall building.

Instrumental Division Chair Timothy Roberts recently said about Nick's service to the conservatory: "Nick is obviously one of the top-achieving Music Production & Recording Technology students at SU, as evidenced by his selection by our sound faculty — those that best knew his work. Armstrong Hall is a space in constant need of audio-visual enhancement assistance, and Nick was the perfect selection to help us with those needs. Without Nick's additional work, most recitals and performances in Armstrong Concert Hall would have been

performed with multiple acoustic quality control issues. His efforts were equally appreciated by faculty and students alike, and we are deeply appreciative that this appointment was able to be made possible by Dean Stepniak."



SOCIAL MEDIA

Having a Social Media Fellow has been very helpful this year. Shenandoah Conservatory was able to launch a TikTok with Bevin Taylor '25 (B.F.A. in Acting) as the content creator. With Bevin at the helm, we were able to reach a number of people through a wide variety of posts that highlight current students and performances, faculty members and conservatory life. Furthermore, we were able to incorporate Silly Saturday videos that connect to the life and humor of conservatory students. In 6 months, the TikTok account has had over 75,000 video views, 9,300 likes and 297 followers.



STUDENT DEVELOPMENT GRANTS

- Frank Ilya to compose a work for SSA voices and have it performed by the Shenandoah Chorus in Spring 2023
- Clint Curfman, Dasia-Maria Mitchell and Madeline Bevins to attend Techstars Startup Weekend to pitch an entrepreneurial business plan
- Pablo Peña Lopez to purchase a Puerto Rican guiro percussion instrument plus related music to record music like danza, salsa, bomba, plena, etc.
- Sarah Morris to participate in the panel discussion, “Creative Pursuits in Piano Pedagogy,” at the 2023 Music Teachers National Association (MTNA) National Conference
- Kennedi Roland to cover submission for the American Black Film Festival
- Gonzalo Hidalgo to compete for the music director of Salta’s Symphony Orchestra in Argentina
- Logan Casto and Brielle Windle for Shenandoah Conservatory Arts Academy opera
- Thomas Preston for technical assistance/expertise to support the Shenandoah Conservatory Student Council event, Black Artist Showcase

SUMMER STUDENT DEVELOPMENT GRANTS

- Azaria Rubio to participate as a Costume Lab Assistant in the USITT conference in St. Louis, Missouri
- Hang Yin to participate in the Boston Guitar Festival
- Clark VanBeek to participate as a carpenter in the Texas Shakespeare Festival
- Dasia-Marie Mitchell for a European opera internship with Professor Marchment
- Elías Aguirre Ceron to attend the Laffont Competition of the Metropolitan Opera (Mexico District)
- Sarah Morris to participate in the 2023 Performing Arts Medicine Association International Symposium in New York City
- Alexa Boyles to participate in a number of dance festivals this summer, including David Dorfman Emerging Artists Intensive, Earl Mosley Institute for the Arts and Bates Dance Festival
- Skylar Matos to participate in the Bates Dance Festival
- Darian Angel to participate in the Buffet Crampon Summer Clarinet Academy
- Marita Stryker, Shanshan Zhang and Megan Richards to participate in *The Voice*
- Bixiao Wang to participate in the Chicago Summer Opera
- Qiuyu Li to develop a voice concert performance tour in China
- Travis Gawason to participate in an internship at Eric Winterling Costume Studio
- John Bernard for completion of Wise Certifications
- Maria Pomares to participate in the dance-focused Koresh Pre-professional Summer Intensive
- Diana Restrepo, Sophie Dove, Leryn Turlington and Adia Fox to participate in the Voice Foundation Symposium
- Hidemi Minagawa to participate in the Adamant Music School
- Minji Lee to participate in the Honeywell Arts Academy
- Ethan Hemmings and Matthew Reffner to attend the Eastern Music Festival
- David Lécuyer to participate with the Symphony Orchestra of Sherbrooke University

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