



IMPACT REPORT

BRASS AMBASSADORS

Students Represent Merit on National Stages

Yumpadump Brass Trio on NPR's *From the Top*

On February 7, the Yumpadump Brass Trio and Ensemble Director Timothy Riordan traveled to Boston to perform "Two Pastiches" by Walter S. Hartley on NPR's hit radio program, *From the Top*. The trio members include trumpet player Ricardo (Ricky) Zapata, horn player David Sweeney, and trombone player Adriel (Rush) Garcia. *From the Top* selected Ricky as a 2015 Jack Kent Cooke Young Artist Award winner, an honor that includes the opportunity to perform on the show as well as a \$10,000 scholarship. The Yumpadump Brass Trio is the fifth ensemble Riordan has coached and taken to *From the Top*, and Ricky is the fourth Merit student within two school years to win the Young Artist Award. In addition to their performance, the young musicians participated in two days of leadership training and outreach concerts for Boston elementary students.



The Yumpadump Brass Trio

Rush Garcia, David Sweeney, Ricky Zapata

You can listen to the original program here:
<http://tinyurl.com/MeritYumpadump>

PERFORMATHON

MERIT SCHOOL OF MUSIC

\$111,768

Raised for Merit

The 33rd Annual Performathon was wildly successful thanks to the generosity of:

Presenting Sponsors

Baskin Family Foundation
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Chicago Music Exchange

Plus

Sponsors & Individual Donors
Conservatory Students
Staff, Faculty, Volunteers

...and Especially

The Merit Parent Association!

THANK YOU!

Honors Trumpet Ensemble at National Trumpet Competition

In March, the Honors Trumpet Ensemble, along with Ensemble Director Paul Lowry and Staff/Faculty Member Logan Massey, flew to Mechanicsburg, Pennsylvania for the National Trumpet Competition. Throughout the weekend, the students attended the competition, participated in master classes, heard their peers perform, and—most importantly—performed in front of a packed house on Friday night as the opening act for the Airmen of Note concert.

Massey said, "Never have I been so excited to attend a Merit event as I was to travel to Pennsylvania with the Merit Honors Trumpet Ensemble. For me, as a staff and faculty member, this trip was very core to our mission. I have seen many of these kids grow and mature as musicians and individuals over the last few years and I knew this trip was going to be an incredible experience for all. Paul Lowry has created a culture within the trumpet studio that inspires these kids to seek out knowledge; that fosters a sense of family and community; that allows each student to feel like a part of something bigger than themselves. Each and every student presented themselves in a professional and diplomatic way from the beginning to the end of the trip. They were inspired and eager to return home to get back to work."



The Honors Trumpet Ensemble

Back Row (from left): Michael Wilson,
Jessie Uhrenbacher, John Fleming

Front Row (from left): Gerardo Martinez,
David Bocanegra, Olivia Bueschel,
Ricky Zapata, Carter Bracy

You can watch the Honors Trumpet Ensemble perform here: <http://tinyurl.com/TrumpetEnsembleMerit>



Upcoming FREE Student Concerts

MeritFest

(At Symphony Center)

- Band & Choir: May 8, 11am
- Strings: May 12, 11am

Instrumental Music Spring Concerts

- Band: May 19, 6pm
- Choir: May 20, 6pm
- Strings: May 21, 6pm

StringTacular

(At Benito Juarez Community Academy)

- May 30 at 11am

MERIT'S INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC PROGRAM

A spotlight on group piano classes

Merit's Instrumental Music program provides young musicians the opportunity to develop their expressive life through music. We offer group instrumental classes that are large enough for the students to play as a group, but small and nurturing enough for students to receive individual attention. The group piano class pictured below, taught by long-time faculty member Claudia Flack, is learning *The Boogie Woogie Band* to perform at their end-of-year recital. Some thoughts from Ms. Flack:

"There are many benefits to a group class for students. From a musical standpoint, they are able to work not only individually, but together on duets or as a whole class in ensemble pieces. This teaches them invaluable skills that are harder to teach in the private setting - such as the skill of listening, not just playing. It also teaches personal accountability; if your partner has learned their part well, then you need to learn yours or you are not meeting your obligation as part of the team. From a more general standpoint, I think the group environment helps students mature socially and interpersonally - they learn that people have different personalities and learning styles. They also learn patience; there's only one teacher but six of them!"



There are many things I enjoy about teaching music, particularly at Merit. I get tremendous satisfaction helping music become a part of the students' lives and helping them learn valuable lessons from music that apply to all aspects of their life—work ethic, focus, concentration, etc. Realistically, most of the students may not go on to be professional musicians but what they learn from studying music can help them for the rest of their lives."

Ms. Flack's students chime in about why they like group piano lessons:

"I can learn new songs and try new things, and if I need help [my classmates] are there to help me." —Angela Tan, age 9

"I like learning songs and [the group] shows sportsmanship." —Raymond Chen, age 8

"I understand better with the group." —Mikael Tambunan, age 10



10 Million Strong... and growing!

Watch Merit students perform in their very own Bayer Flintstones Vitamins commercial here: <https://vimeo.com/119230095>

Keep Merit students growing strong with a gift today!

DONATE NOW

Donate now at www.meritmusic.org

PRIVATE LESSON SCHOLARSHIP COMPETITION

Congratulations to the 2015 Winners!

1st Place: Irene Castillo, violin

Dr. Manuel L. Stillerman
Endowed Violin Scholarship - \$1,300

2nd Place: Jeremy Nohel, piano

Andrew M. and Bonnie G. Stein
Endowed Scholarship - \$1,100

3rd Place: Anthony Sung, piano

Ann R. Monaco
Endowed Scholarship - \$900

4th Place: Omar Tlatelpa-Nieto, trombone

Alice S. Pfaelzer
Endowed Scholarship - \$700

5th Place: Julius Richey, jazz guitar

Katherine R. Loewenthal
Endowed Scholarship - \$500



First place winner **Irene Castillo** performs with legendary violinist **Miriam Fried** during **Mesirow Financial Presents!** in 2014