



Fall 2024  
Issue #1

# Notes

## NOTES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Friends of Music,

Welcome back! The start of the school year is always such an exciting and busy time as we adjust to new schedules and activities and fall back in with friends and familiar routines. As we begin our fall concert series, we already have so much wonderful music news to share!

The Niskayuna Music Department provides endless opportunities for our students to play, perform, participate, and share their love of music, and Friends of Music strives to support our teachers and students in accomplishing their goals. This summer, through your generosity as Friends of Music members, we were able to sponsor our annual Summer Sonata with over 50 students in grades 6-8 attending the program. In October, 55 students went on a field trip to NYC to see *Sunset Boulevard*, which will be our winter high school musical production. Also in October, we were thrilled to welcome the Commodores, the Jazz Band for the US Navy, who performed live in our auditorium. This fall, three of our high school musicians were accepted into All-State, and 22 were selected for Area All-State. Looking ahead, we are thrilled to share that the district-wide Band Festival will take place at Proctors Theatre in March and that students in grades 6-12 will have the opportunity to work with a guest conductor. And as the holiday season approaches, be on the lookout for our Bel Canto Voices and Studio Singers caroling through the streets of old Niskayuna!

We could not do our work without your help. Please consider becoming a friend of music or supporting our organization through a corporate membership by visiting [www.niskyfom.org](http://www.niskyfom.org) or stopping by the FOM table at any of the concerts. Our most delicious fundraiser, our pie and tea bread sale, is also up and running. These treats from Mourningkill Farm Bakery are perfect for holiday entertaining or as gifts. The last day to place an order is Small Business Saturday after Thanksgiving. We are also excited to offer our annual apparel sale. Friends of Music merchandise makes an amazing holiday or birthday gift for the musicians you love. Visit our website, [www.niskyfom.org](http://www.niskyfom.org), for information on how to order.

If you are interested in becoming more involved with Friends of Music, please consider attending one of our monthly meetings. We are currently seeking liaisons for Craig Elementary School and Van Antwerp Middle School and need a skilled editor to edit our newsletter, *Notes*, which is published three times a year. For more information, please email us at [niskayunafom@gmail.com](mailto:niskayunafom@gmail.com) and follow us on Facebook (@niskyfom) or Instagram (niskyfriendsofmusic).

I am so looking forward to our concerts this season—it is truly magical to hear our students perform and may your holidays be filled with peace, warmth, and music.

Warmest regards,

**Jillian Fountain**

# FROM THE DIRECTOR'S DESK

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Welcome to the 2024-2025 school year! The music department faculty is thrilled to welcome students back into our classrooms and ensembles!

## NEW YORK STATE SCHOOL MUSIC ASSOCIATION

8 students were selected as participants or alternates for this year's All-State Conference to be held in Rochester. Congratulations on this honor!

**Sophia Connell**, alto, Treble Chorus  
**Lily Graham**, soprano, Treble Chorus  
**Aryeh Korevaar**, bassoon, Symphony Orchestra

**Nathaniel Allen**, violin, alternate  
**Sean Calhoun**, violin, alternate  
**Noah Martinez**, jazz trombone, alternate  
**Andrew Watkins**, oboe, alternate  
**Nathan Yan**, jazz tenor saxophone, alternate

## Area All-State Festival, November 8 & 9 at Proctors Theatre:

### MIXED CHOIR

Gabriella Fountain (alto)  
Maryn Gleason (alto)  
Lily Graham (soprano)  
Carolyn Kelly (alto)  
Samuel Meyer-Veen (bass)  
Aidan Page (tenor)  
Samuel Radez (bass)  
Maria Samuel (alto)  
Priscayah Singh (soprano)

### JAZZ ENSEMBLE

Evan Frenyea (drum set)  
Nicolas Marin (trumpet/cornet)  
Noah Martinex (trombone)  
Nathan Yan (tenor sax)

### SYMPHONIC BAND

Cyrus Joo-Schwaber (French horn)  
Daniel Korevaar (trombone)  
Carlin Tysz (trumpet)

### SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Nathaniel Allen (violin)  
Sean Calhoun (violin)  
Evelyn Mok (violin)  
Isabelle Mok (viola)  
Brendan Yan (cello)  
Howyue (Kaydence) Yeong (cello)

## NEW FACULTY

**Ms. Catherine Jantson** (General music and Choral Faculty) earned her Bachelor of Music in Music Education from Ithaca College in the spring. We are excited to welcome her to Iroquois Middle School. She conducts the 7/8 Choir in addition to music classes. At the high school Ms. Jantson works with our special needs students. Welcome Catherine!

# FROM THE DIRECTOR'S DESK

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We're also happy to have **Ralph Hays** as our long-term substitute at Iroquois MS while Mrs. Wilson is out on maternity leave. Most recently Mr. Hays taught in the Shenendehowa Central Schools. He holds degrees from the University of Miami and Kent State University.

## HIGH SCHOOL MUSICAL

We're proud to announce our upcoming production of Andrew Lloyd Webber's *Sunset Boulevard* February 27 – March 1, 2025. Auditions take place in November and ticket sales begin in January. With the support of the Friends of Music high school students were able to see the show on Broadway in October. It was spectacular!

## DISTRICT BAND FESTIVAL

We're excited to return to Proctor's Theatre for our festival involving students in grades 6-12 with a concert on Wednesday, March 12 featuring guest conductor David Blumenthal! Look for more details this winter.

## MIDDLE SCHOOL BROADWAY TRIP

7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students in Band, Orchestra or Choir are eligible to see *Disney's The Lion King* on Broadway next June 4<sup>th</sup>. See your ensemble conductor for more information.

~Eric Hughes



# MAKE A LASTING LEGACY

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## The Name-A-Chair Project

In order to ensure the future success of the Niskayuna Performing Arts Programs, the community members, parents and businesses are invited to contribute to the Name-A-Chair Project. The names of those making a pledge will be engraved on the arms of the new auditorium seats.

### Our Goal

We'd like to kick-off our campaign with 100 seats engraved! Contributions will support improvements in the auditorium to enhance the acoustics on stage, sound technology, and lighting for the audience.

They also make great graduation gifts or to recognize a special musician in your life.

### What is the Cost?

Each plate is \$150 for individuals and families or \$250 for businesses. We are a 501(c)3 organization and your employer may match your contribution.

Name\_\_\_\_\_

Address\_\_\_\_\_

Phone\_\_\_\_\_

#### Please check one:

- ☐ Individual/Family: \$150 per chair
- ☐ Business: \$250 per chair
- ☐ My contribution can be matched by my employer\_\_\_\_\_.

Please send this form with your check (made payable to Niskayuna Friends of Music) with "Name-A-Chair Project" written in the memo section to: Niskayuna Friends of Music, Niskayuna High School, 1626 Balltown Road, Niskayuna, NY 12309

Line 1:

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Line 2:

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There are 44 characters including letters, spaces and punctuation available per plate, divided into two 22-character rows. No messages please - only names of individuals or businesses will be engraved.

Engraving can include graduation dates, such as "Mary Smith, 1999".

Please return by 5/30/2025.

# FOM PIE SALE



## Niskayuna Friends of Music 2024 Pie & Tea Bread Sale




### Back by popular demand for your winter holiday celebrations!

Featuring Delicious Pies and Tea Breads from Mourningkill Farms Bakery

This **PRE-ORDER ONLY** sale supports music education through enrichment grants, scholarships and district festivals.

Choose from 12 varieties of freshly made, frozen pies, and 6 varieties of freshly made tea breads (can be frozen).  
Perfect as gifts or for winter celebrations!

<p>All Standard Pies are \$18.00 (10-inch) Made Without Gluten Pie is \$18.50 (8-inch) Tea Bread Loaves are \$9.50</p> <p><b>Online Ordering Only:</b> <a href="https://niskyfom.org/">https://niskyfom.org/</a> (Click on Pie Sale)</p> <p>Pre-Order Your Pies and Tea Breads Online <b>October 31 - November 30, 2024</b></p> <p>Pick Up Date: <b>Tuesday, December 17, 2024</b> Pick Up Time: <b>3:30 - 6:30 PM</b> Pick Up Location: <b>Niskayuna HS</b> (Park in Lot by Old Cafe/Weight Room/Pool and Enter Through Door 14) <b>**Pies/Breads Not Picked Up Will Be Donated**</b></p> <p>For questions, email <a href="mailto:niskyfompies@gmail.com">niskyfompies@gmail.com</a> or call Nancy Gort at 518-221-9071</p>	<p>12 scrumptious pie varieties to choose from:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Apple</li><li>2. Apple Crumb</li><li>3. Apple Cranberry Crumb</li><li>4. Apple Very Berry (Apples, Raspberries, Blueberries and Blackberries)</li><li>5. Cherry Crumb</li><li>6. Very Berry Crumb (Raspberries, Blueberries and Blackberries)</li><li>7. Strawberry Rhubarb</li><li>8. Peach Raspberry</li><li>9. Chocolate Chip</li><li>10. Coconut Supreme</li><li>11. Pecan</li><li>12. Made Without Gluten Apple Crumb (the MWG flour is a mix of grains, starches, and nuts made by The Secret GF. The pies are made in a facility that also produces gluten-containing products so the pies are NOT a registered "gluten free" product.)</li></ol>	<p>6 delicious tea bread options:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Apple Cinnamon</li><li>2. Blackberry Cream</li><li>3. Banana Chocolate Chip</li><li>4. Blueberry Poundcake</li><li>5. Gingerbread</li><li>6. Orange Poppy Seed</li></ol> <p><b>Scan to Order:</b></p> 
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# SPOTLIGHT NEWS

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**Friends of Music interviews Catherine Jantson, General Music Teacher at Iroquois & VA Middle Schools, 7/8 Choir Teacher at Iroquois & Applied Music Teacher at Niskayuna High School**



**Where did you grow up?**

I grew up in the Albany area - not too far from Niskayuna!

**How were you involved in music growing up?**

I was heavily involved in both music and the performing arts in general growing up! I played violin in orchestra and sang in choir. I performed in musicals, both at school and in community theater groups, from 6<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grade. I participated in NYSSMA festivals for both voice and violin, and in high school I was selected to be in the Area All-State Mixed Choir and All-State Treble Choir.

**Where did you go to college?**

I graduated from Ithaca College with my Bachelor of Music in Music Education.

**Do you have any favorite extracurricular activities that you want to share?**

For one, I love to dance! I've trained in many styles almost my entire life and continue to take classes to this day. I also love photography! I love taking pictures of live events like concerts, dance performances, and theater productions.

**What are your current responsibilities with Niskayuna?**

I currently work in three buildings: Iroquois, Van Antwerp, and the High School. I teach general music at Iroquois and VA, and Applied Music at NHS. I also direct the 7<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> Grade Choir at Iroquois.

**What are your goals?**

Even if music isn't a student's favorite subject, my hope is that they enjoy being in the room and walk away from class being exposed to something new. Whether it's listening to music from a composer they've never heard of, learning about and watching a musical for the first time in their life, or being able to play a simple song on the keyboard, my goal is for the students to leave with at least one new musical skill or some interesting music fun facts they can share with others!

**What are your favorite things to do outside of school?**

Outside of school, I love to spend time with family and friends (including my dog), find ways to stay active, and watch my favorite TV shows!

**Do you have any advice to students studying music now?**

When things get frustrating, keep persevering.

**Do you have any advice to students who want to pursue music as their career?**

Having a career in music requires you to be able to juggle a lot of things, so make sure you're able to manage your time well. Additionally, music requires you to be very collaborative and patient with others. Take as many opportunities as you can to work with others in a collaborative musical environment in order to work on those skills. Lastly, practicing your instrument never goes away, so take the time to figure out the best way to practice that works for you!



# ELEMENTARY SCHOOL NOTES

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## Craig Elementary News

Welcome back to school. Craig students have kicked off the year with loads of activities and learning new musical skills every day!

Kindergarteners have already made so much growth, learning the basic skills of school participation while having fun singing songs to help them! 1<sup>st</sup> graders are learning the difference between singing and chanting, while picking up a little Spanish and learning to read *Sol-Mi* on the music staff! 2<sup>nd</sup> graders are having fun experimenting with dynamics *piano* and *forte* and learning how dynamics can help us enhance music, by creating some *spooky* October songs. 3<sup>rd</sup> graders are singing rounds and really enjoying learning about wind instruments, and the science of sound waves, and how they are created on each individual instrument.

4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> graders started out the year very strong as excellent school leaders! They regularly help their younger friends find their way around school, while demonstrating what excellent learning looks like in chorus rehearsals. The 4<sup>th</sup> graders are really catching on to how to read their new Chorus Music, and will later arrange their own two-part renditions of our *Craig School Song*. The 5<sup>th</sup> graders are wrapping up a really fun unit exploring Latin American music in honor of Latin American Heritage Month!



~Marilyn Brown

## Hillside Elementary News

The Hillside Elementary School hallways are filled with sounds of music! Our students are working hard to prepare songs for their monthly *Hello, Hillside!* gatherings. We continue to celebrate Hillside through song and enjoy performing *Hillside Pride* at our monthly gatherings.

Kindergarten and 1<sup>st</sup> grade students are continuing to sing and play. We especially love singing and moving to *Wake Up, You Sleepyhead!* and *Ghostbusters!* There's plenty of laughter and smiles throughout our time together. 2<sup>nd</sup> graders recently performed a dance in honor of Hispanic Heritage month. Some of our students were able to perform the dance at the October *Hello, Hillside!* 3<sup>rd</sup> graders began the year

# ELEMENTARY SCHOOL NOTES

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with a partner dance. We love to dance, dance, dance!

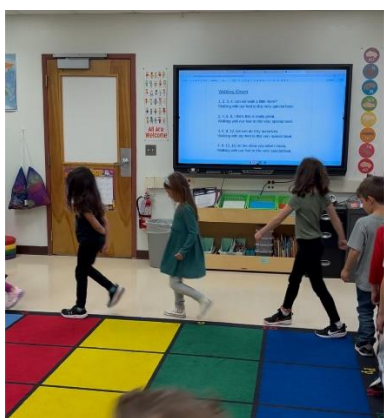
4<sup>th</sup> graders recently enjoyed a rhythm stick routine to a tune called *Sarasponda*. They were impressed with their hard work and dedication. Way to go, fourth grade! 5<sup>th</sup> graders spent quite a bit of time exploring Latin American music. We especially enjoy listening to *Salsa* and *Reggaeton*! All 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> graders have the pleasure of performing as a chorus. We are working hard to prepare for our upcoming performances in the winter and spring concerts.

A special thank you to the Niskayuna Friends of Music! We appreciate your ongoing support through the years.

~Sarah Sanson

## Rosendale Elementary News

At Rosendale, we have had a musical start to the year! Kindergarteners are learning how to use their echo voices and 1<sup>st</sup> graders are chanting and singing. 2<sup>nd</sup> graders are getting some practice conducting and showing dynamic changes. 3<sup>rd</sup> graders are learning about the sounds of wind instruments. 4<sup>th</sup> graders are practicing reading choral music and 5<sup>th</sup> graders are learning about music from Latin America! You can see an example of 1<sup>st</sup> graders doing a walking chant and an instrument the 3<sup>rd</sup> graders learned about.



~Alicia Bouteiller





# HIGH SCHOOL NOTES

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## Choral Corner

We are so happy to welcome back all of the families of our fantastic choral musicians. We have jumped into varied challenging repertoire but we sure are having a great time preparing for our first concert series.

## Choral Uniforms

Students in A-Choired Taste, Choir, and Concert Chorale will be following the Niskayuna HS Concert Attire Policy, where students dress in professional concert black attire (sent home via Parent Square and included in the course syllabus).

Studio Singers and Bel Canto Voices members received their uniform order sheets (black sparkly radiance dresses/vests for Studio Singers and claret satin dresses/vests for Bel Canto Voices) in September and everyone should have a dress or vest for the first concert. Please note that the fabric for the Studio dresses and vests has been discontinued and we are still ordering from the same company but you will see variations in this outfit. There is no need for students who have the previously used outfit to buy a new one.

## CONGRATULATIONS

~Congratulations to **Sophia Connell** and **Lily Graham** who have been selected for this year's All-State Treble Chorus.

~Congratulations to **Gabriella Fountain, Maryn Gleason, Lily Graham, Carolyn Kelly, Samuel Meyer-Veen, Aidan Page, Samuel Radez, Maria Samuel** and **Priscayah Singh** who have been accepted to the Area All-State Chorus. Students will perform at Proctors Theatre on November 9 under the direction of Dr. Vernon Huff, Professor at SUNY Fredonia.

~Congratulations to the following students who have been accepted into the Empire State Youth Chorale and will perform at Melodies of Christmas on the Proctors Theatre stage in December: **Sophia Connell, Natalie Dinneen, Maryn Gleason, Lily Graham, Sullivan Graham, Adrian Mohabeer, Coumba Ndiaye, Aidan Page, Simone Pillai** and **Siya Tripathi**.

~Congratulations to **Gabriella Fountain** who sang the National Anthem at the Homecoming Football game on October 4.

## Outside Performances

- **Bel Canto Voices** and **Studio Singers** will be performing at the Niskayuna Town Hall for their Veterans Day Ceremony on **Friday, November 8 at 9:15 am**. Parents/guardians and community members are welcome to attend and a reception will follow. The event may be held outdoors, so please dress accordingly.

# HIGH SCHOOL NOTES

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- FOM'S ANNUAL CAROLING FOR CA\$H FUNDRAISER continues this year! Please mark your calendar for **Monday, December 9** (December 16 snow/cold date) as members of **Studio Singers** and **Bel Canto Voices** will stroll through Old Niskayuna in Victorian costumes while singing carols and collecting funds for FOM. The fundraiser will culminate with a group performance at Union Café, 1725 Union St., at 7:00 pm.

***\*Parents/guardians who would be willing to chaperone by providing a vehicle for students to stay warm in will hear from Mrs. Catalano in late November (timeslots range from 4:45-7:45 p.m.). Anyone who would be willing to donate or sew/make an article of clothing for the event would be welcome to do so (we are especially in need of cloaks)!\****

***\*\*Mrs. Catalano is also in need of parents/guardians/students who would be willing to help with publicity for this event.***

- **ALL H.S. CHORAL SINGERS** have been invited to share their voices on **Friday, December 6 at 5:00 p.m.** at the Niskayuna Town Hall for the annual Tree Lighting Ceremony. Candy canes and hot chocolate will be served and this will be an extra credit/makeup opportunity!
- **A-Choired Taste** will be singing at the Niskayuna Community Center on **Thursday, December 12 at 11:15 am** (snow date: Tuesday, December 17). Students will present a concert and join the members in a holiday sing-a-long. It has been a long tradition that this group also brings small gifts to the senior citizens in attendance.
- **Bel Canto Voices** and **Studio Singers** along with **Chamber String** and **Jazz Ensemble**, will go on tour to both Iroquois and Van Antwerp Middle Schools on **Friday, December 13**.
- **Concert Chorale, Bel Canto Voices,** and **Studio Singers** along with **Chamber Strings, Jazz Ensemble,** and **Symphonic Band** will perform at the annual winter assemblies scheduled for **Wednesday, December 18** (snow date: Thursday, December 19). Any family members or friends who would like to attend are encouraged to arrive a few minutes early to sign in at the front desk. Please bring your license to present to our campus security team.

**AN EVENING IN HISTORY** is set for **Monday, January 13, 2025 at 7:00 pm** (note that the time is earlier than HS concerts)! This year the social studies and music departments will come together to commemorate *1865 and 1965: The Civil War and Civil Rights*.

As always, thank you for your engagement in our music program and please enjoy our first round of concerts as we share what we have been doing in the classroom on a daily basis.

*C. M. Pizzino-Catalano*  
~Christina Pizzino-Catalano

# HIGH SCHOOL NOTES

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## Choral Students Who Participated in Summer Arts Programs

**Sophia Connell** - *Fiddler on The Roof* at Proctors, Bristol Hills Music, Upstate Youth Choreographers Showcase (dancer and choreographer)

**Caleb Coppola** - Piano recital with Scotia Music Academy

**Evelia Echandy** - *Footloose* at Carpe Diem Theater and Vocal lessons

**Katie Esposito** - Joffery Ballet New York Intensive

**Gabby Fountain** - Juilliard School of Music Musical Theater Program at *Disney World*, Dance Intensive at Dance Dimensions

**Anna Geveci** - *Fiddler on the Roof* at Proctors, Baker School of Dance Ballet program

**Elisabeth Griffin** - *Seussical the Musical* at Albany Academy

**Claire Hull**- Capital district Arts Initiative Dance Intensive, ADTC Summer Dance Intensive, *The 25th Annual Putnum County Spelling Bee* at Debuts Theater Co.

**Molly Hull** - Capital District Arts Initiative Dance Intensive

**Alana Kearney** - Sang the National Anthem at Proctors for BOCES Graduation

**Ella Lovegrove** - Played guitar/sang at Niskayuna Farmer's Market

**Brookelyn McDonald** - Cantored and taught the music classes at St. Kateri Tekakwitha VBS Camp

**Walter MacDonald** - Bristol Hills Music Camp, gigs with Jazz group *The Walt MacDonald Quintet*

**Stella Myers** - STEPS on Broadway Pre-Professional Dance Intensive, Capital District Arts Initiative Dance Intensive

**Matthew O'Keefe** - *Mean Girls* (Karen) at SCT

**Ishanna Persaud** - Ballroom dancing Dance Fire Studio

**Celeste Radez** - *Fiddler on the Roof* at Proctors

**Ada Ryan** - Dance Intensive at Dance Dimensions

**Kiana Sheffield** - Dance Intensive at the Capital District Arts Initiative

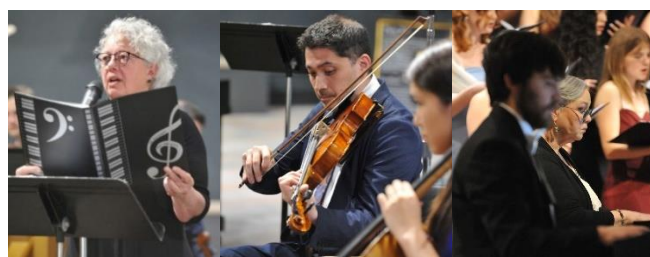
**Chloe Trimarchi** – Five-week Boston Ballet Summer Dance Program

**Ray Williams** - Guitar and Ukulele lessons and Warren Music Academy Band

# HIGH SCHOOL NOTES

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## Studentiade at MiSci in June



*Photo Credit: Jim Kokernak and David Pizzino*



# HIGH SCHOOL NOTES

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## Concert Band News

The High School Concert Band has been working hard and sounds fantastic! With COVID in the rearview mirror, the level of repertoire that the band has been working on continues to get more difficult, and students have risen to the challenge. They have been working diligently since the beginning of September in anticipation of our November 7<sup>th</sup> concert where we will be performing an exciting and diverse program of both classics and new pieces. This is a Band Festival year and we look very forward to performing with all of the Niskayuna Bands at Proctors on March 12<sup>th</sup>! In addition, the band will also be performing at the Memorial Day Assembly again in May and close out the year with our third formal concert on May 29<sup>th</sup>. Coming up soon, we look forward to spending a morning rehearsal in December side by side with the 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Band. Thanks to funds from the Niskayuna Friends of Music - the band was given the opportunity this first quarter to work with two renowned retired band directors. We were visited by both Michael Allen (Ithaca City School District) and Mike Struzik (Brighton Central School District). Both former band directors leant their expertise in meaningful rehearsals with the Concert Band and we are so grateful for their time!



## SUNY Schenectady Brass Day

Several Niskayuna Students attended the fourth annual Brass Day at SUNY Schenectady on October 12<sup>th</sup>. The Day was filled with masterclasses, lectures, and performances with SUNY Schenectady School of Music Faculty members Dr. Allyson Keyser, Ms. Katy Svatek, and Phil Pandori. 30 student brass players from around the Capital Region joined the trio on the culminating recital and performed *Amazing Grace* and *Ghostbusters*. It was a great day of music for all!

## Jazz Band and Jazz Ensemble News

The High School Jazz groups are off to a GREAT start! Both groups sound fantastic and we are excited to kick off two of the Fall concerts (10/30 and 11/7). The pieces we are working on include both jazz standards and popular music. In addition to our two regular concerts this year in November and February, we look forward to the annual Niskayuna Jazz Fest in April where we will be welcoming in



# HIGH SCHOOL NOTES

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Grammy Award winning Niskayuna Graduate, Dominic Fallacaro! You can read about Dominic's many accomplishments in his bio:



*Dominic Fallacaro is a Producer, Composer, and multi-instrumentalist based in Brooklyn, New York. His productions and performances have been featured on numerous albums, and across film and television. He is the Musical Director, and provided additional orchestrations for "[& Juliet](#)" - a new musical featuring the music of Max Martin, now on Broadway. He won a Grammy in 2015 for Producing the [Best Children's Album](#), received a [nomination in 2018](#), and his works have been featured on [Sesame Street](#) and the [Sprout Network](#). His composition for the 2019 Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade, also received an Emmy Nomination. In 2016, he composed original music for the film [Shortwave](#), which has since gone on to win multiple film festival awards. Additional film credits include [In the](#)*

*[Heights](#), and [Tick Tick Boom](#). Dominic has appeared at almost any and every venue on the New York City scene, and has toured across the United States and abroad.*

In addition to our three concerts, the Jazz Ensemble looks forward to our annual tour to the Middle Schools in December as well as our Holiday Assembly at the High School. We will also join the Middle School Jazz Band for a side-by-side rehearsal in December. Lots to look forward to this year!

## Jazz Combo Club

This year at the High School, we are piloting Jazz Combo Club! The club gives jazz students the opportunity to further explore jazz improvisation in the small group setting. The club has a mission to bring jazz to the school community and beyond and we plan to have many public performances this year both at school as well as in community coffee shops, nursing homes and senior living facilities, and more! The club is open to students of all abilities, in or out of the music program, who wish to develop their improvisation skills and explore jazz music further. We sit at 16 members with more students joining each week!



~Philip Pandori

# HIGH SCHOOL NOTES

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## Band Students Who Participated in Summer Music Programs

### Bristol Hills Music Camp:

Theodore Aimi  
Zoey Fohtung  
Laura Graves  
Sami Lazarus  
Kai Moore  
Anabelle Rahner

Ellie Shaw  
Miles Bisnett  
Sophia Connell  
Addison Elsbree  
Caitlin Li  
Walter MacDonald

Nicholas Marin  
Noah Martinez  
Lincoln Merrill  
Siya Tripathi  
Carlin Tysz  
Adrew Watkins



### Capital Region Summer Trombone Institute

Nico Contreres-Perez  
Daniel Korevaar  
Pierce Olsen  
Otis Piotrowski  
Gabriel Roe

### Boston University Tanglewood Institute

Cyrus Joo-Schwaber  
Andrew Watkins

### Skidmore Jazz Institute

Nathan Yan  
Noah Martinez  
Evan Frenyea



## Congratulations to the following Niskayuna Students who were selected to join the Empire State Youth Orchestra

As a regional organization, ESYO attracts students from over 75 public and private schools throughout eastern New York State and western New England. Returning and potential members must pass a competitive audition for their positions. ESYO students range from 4<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grade. The thirteen performing ensembles rehearse weekly with professional musicians as conductors and coaches. A season's schedule includes over 30 concerts, requiring over 600 hours of rehearsal time.

<b>Kehan (Kevin) Bao</b>	Repertory Orchestra	Violin
<b>Sean Calhoun</b>	Symphony Orchestra	Violin
<b>Cyrus Joo-Schwaber</b>	Symphony Orchestra	French Horn
<b>Aryeh Korevaar</b>	Symphony Orchestra	Bassoon
<b>Daniel Korevaar</b>	Symphony Orchestra	Trombone
<b>Isaac Lee</b>	Repertory Orchestra	Cello
<b>Nicholas Lessard</b>	String Orchestra	Cello
<b>Nathaniel Lossner</b>	Wind Orchestra	Flute
<b>Nicolas Martin</b>	Youth Jazz Orchestra	Jazz - Trumpet
<b>Remi Morales</b>	String Orchestra	Violin
<b>Amelia Pack</b>	String Orchestra	Viola
<b>Emily Shim</b>	Symphony Orchestra	Oboe
<b>Mai-Ly Tran</b>	Symphony Orchestra	Cello
<b>Simran Utturkar</b>	Repertory Orchestra	Viola
<b>Andrew Watkins</b>	Symphony Orchestra	Oboe & English Horn
<b>Brendan Yan</b>	Symphony Orchestra	Cello
<b>Nathan Yan</b>	Youth Jazz Orchestra	Tenor Sax
<b>Howyue Kaydence Yeong</b>	Repertory Orchestra	Cello
<b>Joelene Zheng</b>	Repertory Orchestra	Violin
<b>Max Zheng</b>	Symphony Orchestra & Youth Percussion Ensemble	Classical Percussion



### GE Foundation Matching Gifts Program

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You can also scan the following QR Code as a direct link to joining Friends of Music.



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## **Her Contribution to the Community: Our *Notes* editor Soma De**

Soma De is entering her sixth and final year as the editor and publisher of *Notes*. Responding to a call for a new editor, she brought her previous publishing experience and a personal sense of design to the newsletter. Soma began in this volunteer position in 2019 when her daughter Pallavi Datta began high school making the current issue her sixteenth.

As editor and publisher of *Notes*, Soma collects news and stories from teachers in the Niskayuna School District. The newsletter features announcements about upcoming events and student accomplishments. *Notes* also acknowledges the financial support of our members and community sponsors. Three times a year, she assembles articles and advertisements, proof-reads the text, designs the layout, and oversees the printing of copies for distribution at school concerts.

She enjoys working on *Notes* because the publication connects teachers, students, and parents and guardians in the school music community. *Notes* centers the work of our wonderful music teachers. She pointed out that it functions as a great resource for parents to find out about music opportunities available to their children, especially parents of younger children. "The first time I read *Notes* was when Pallavi was in first grade," she recalled.

Soma is a Chemical Biologist and an Adjunct Professor at Russell Sage College and her husband Rajib Datta is a Chief Engineer at GE Vernova. As parents, they have always been supportive of their daughter's artistic pursuits. "She has always been musically and artistically inclined," Soma shared. Pallavi was actively involved in the music department as the concertmaster of the High School Symphony Orchestra and a violinist in Chamber Strings. Pallavi also studied piano as well as Indian Classical music and dance. Beyond school, she performed with ESYO and Proctor's Broadway Camp. She now attends Swarthmore College where she is majoring in Math and Economics with a minor in Music. She continues to play violin in the College Orchestra and the Lab Orchestra, and travels to Philadelphia for private lessons with a member of the Philadelphia Orchestra.

Soma decided to volunteer for Friends of Music as a way to become more involved in the school community. She continued to serve even after her daughter graduated in 2023 because she really loves to help, and it keeps her connected to the events at the high school, especially with music. If you are interested in becoming the next editor, she would like to let you know, "You're contributing to the community, and you get to work with a good group of volunteers."

~Rachael M. Joo

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**NOTIFY US AS SOON AS POSSIBLE** if you are becoming/renewing your sponsorship, so your logo is included on our website and in all publications. Donations to Niskayuna Friends of Music are tax-deductible to your business. Email any questions to: Sarah Bilofsky at: **niskyfomcorpsponsor@gmail.com**.

### **Two ways to submit your Sponsorship Payment:**

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2. **Check:** Email Sarah Bilofsky at: **niskyfomcorpsponsor@gmail.com** with your sponsorship level and include a digital logo or scanned business card. Then, mail your check to:

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