In 2020, Music Haven signed on to Together New Haven’s Arts for Anti-Racism Pledge. This initiative of the City of New Haven’s Department of Arts, Culture, and Tourism aims to “amplify voices of BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Color) in arts and cultural organizations.” It commits us to changing internal culture to not only include open discourse on race and racism, but also to address racism when it happens, to seek out and provide a space for art that is focused on racial justice, to identify and dismantle policies and practices that create barriers for BIPOC leadership, to actively employ, support, and present works by more BIPOC artists, to address issues of accessibility, and to offer more participatory programming for the community. It calls on us to not only acknowledge the history of our organization’s relationship with and impact on BIPOC communities but also ensure that knowledge informs our programming decisions going forward.

Learn more at togethernewhaven.com/pledge

Music Haven addresses economic and racial barriers to access in the arts, providing a safe and supportive space for music-making and youth development in New Haven. Music Haven’s permanent quartet-in-residence, the Haven String Quartet (HSQ), spearheads a nationally-recognized, free, after-school lessons program for nearly 100 students in New Haven. Aspiring young musicians begin as early as first or second grade and continue until their high school graduation. Throughout their tenure, they not only acquire the fundamental principles of chamber music directly from the members of the string quartet but also learn invaluable life skills. These life skills encompass the art of attentive listening, the importance of teamwork, the power of communication through music, and the unwavering commitment and concentration required to collaboratively craft something profoundly beautiful.

Music Haven’s award-winning afterschool program continues delivering high-quality music education to children who might otherwise lack access to such an enriching opportunity.
Access and equity have always been at the center of Music Haven’s mission. As a free program, we recognize that simply meeting financial needs doesn’t achieve access or equity. Being an anti-racist arts organization is about pushing beyond access and equity to create a space of liberation for our students, their families, and everyone in our Music Haven community. It requires acknowledging white supremacy and addressing racism within our organization and beyond. This work is ongoing. Here are a few of the steps we’ve taken in the last year:

1. Music Haven staff continue the commitment to internal growth and programmatic change. Staff participated in facilitated DEI trainings with Creative Evolutions last year, and have committed additional time in the calendar for more trainings and workshops in the upcoming year.

2. The Haven String Quartet has a long-standing commitment to playing works by composers of color - every concert, all year long. Over half of the works featured in the 2022-2023 concert season were written by BIPOC composers. This season the HSQ will be developing guest artist appearances and collaborations with BIPOC musicians and artists.

3. We created a new position, Manager of Student Belonging, to ensure that every student feels seen, welcomed, and included in Music Haven’s program. From conversations about the issues and events that impact students, to celebrations that honor students’ identities and heritage, we want each student to find a home at Music Haven.

4. Our teachers have developed and deepened culturally responsive curricula and repertoire. Music Haven commissioned Suite de Danzas y Cantas en Forma de Variaciones by Luis Gustavo Prado which features modular parts for varying levels and ensembles. The piece explores Latin American music, dance, and folk traditions, with each movement taking listeners to a new culture and place.
Cello

Philip Boulanger received his Bachelor’s of Music from Boston University, and an Artist Certificate from the Krakow Academy of Music in Poland. He received his Master’s in Performance and Pedagogy from Northwestern University, during which time he was also Assistant Principal Cellist of the Civic Orchestra of Chicago. Philip served as a Teaching Artist for the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, and worked with Yo-Yo Ma on the Symphony’s Citizen Musician Initiative. He has been with Music Haven since 2013.

Violin

Patrick Doane has appeared as a soloist with orchestras and performed in recitals throughout the northeast. The New York Times described him as a “compelling violinist” and The New Haven Independent wrote, “His virtuosic playing and obvious command of his instrument was always in service of grand, thrilling musical gestures.” Patrick received his Bachelors and Masters degrees from Juilliard and is completing his doctorate in Violin Performance at The Graduate Center, CUNY. He has been with Music Haven since 2017.

Viola

Riana Heath is an American-Indonesian violinist and violist who expresses herself passionately in both solo and chamber music. She made her debut at the Musikverein in Vienna as a first prize winner of the 2016 Grand Prize Virtuoso International Music Competition. Often praised for her warm and soulful sound, she has given public performances in various concert halls throughout Europe, North America and Southeast Asia, providing her audiences with a wide range of repertoire. Riana holds a B.A. and M.M. from the Mozarteum University and the Yale School of Music.

Violin

Yaira Matyakubova has performed in Carnegie Hall with the Silk Road Project in collaboration with Yo-Yo Ma, and is a member of the Knights Orchestra based in Brooklyn. She received her Bachelor’s degree from The Harid Conservatory and her Master’s degree from Rice University. Yaira further pursued her musical studies at Yale University from 2003–2005. She has been with Music Haven since 2009.

Violin

Gregory Tompkins holds a B.M. in violin performance and a B.A. in psychology from the University of Rochester and the Eastman School of Music. He received his Master’s degree from the New England Conservatory. Gregory plays regularly in recitals all over the eastern United States, and has performed as a member of the Civic Orchestra of Chicago. He has been with Music Haven since 2013.

Piano

Andrius Žlabys, piano, is a Grammy-nominated artist who has received international acclaim for his appearances with many of the world’s leading orchestras, including the New York Philharmonic, Boston Symphony Orchestra, Cleveland Orchestra, and Rotterdam Symphony. He is a featured soloist on the 2013 album “Between Two Waves,” released on ECM in collaboration with Gidon Kremer and Kremerata Baltica. Born in Lithuania and trained at the Curtis Institute of Music, Žlabys was just 18 years old when the Chicago Tribune wrote: “Pianist-composer Andrius Žlabys is one of the most gifted young keyboard artists to emerge in years.” Žlabys was also heralded by The New York Sun in a review titled “A Shining Hope of Pianists” after his recital at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York.
The Haven String Quartet is Music Haven’s professional resident ensemble

“Music Haven is the heart of classical music in our city.”
Katie Bonner Russo
Marketing Director, New Haven Symphony Orchestra

The Haven String Quartet (HSQ) leads Music Haven’s tuition-free strings program for youth, which was recognized six times as a top 50 after-school arts program by the President’s Committee on the Arts and Humanities. Featured in The New York Times and on NPR, and sought after for both their command on the concert stage and their mastery as teachers, the Haven String Quartet has been hailed as “the nation’s premier community-based string quartet.” Its members bring outstanding chamber music performances to New Haven neighborhoods and throughout the region with a full season of concerts, recitals, educational workshops, and performances for diverse audiences in public spaces. Recent performances were held at Sprague Hall, the Kaufman Music Center, as part of the Manchester Music Festival, and across New England. This season, the Haven String Quartet presents an exciting and varied chamber series championing underrepresented voices in classical music, and will continue their beloved family-friendly concert series on Saturday mornings at the New Haven Free Public Library.

“[The] Haven String Quartet combines its own exquisite music making with skilled, passion-driven teaching in a powerful model of how classical music training can enrich the lives of young people. Uplifting and inspiring!”

Theodore Levin
Arthur A. Virgin Professor of Music, Dartmouth College
The Haven String Quartet (HSQ) embodies a different way to be a professional string quartet – one that is grounded in the Music Haven community. In this model, the HSQ members divide their time between the rigorous performance calendar of the string quartet and the demands of a full teaching schedule. In the mornings, they rehearse as a quartet. In the afternoons, each of the quartet members teaches a studio of 15-20 Music Haven students, including one-on-one lessons, weekly studio classes, coaching student ensembles, and mentoring young musicians in their studios. With an average tenure of nearly 10 years at Music Haven, each member of the quartet builds close relationships with students and their families over many years.

Free and accessible Community Concerts have long been a mainstay of the HSQ, with performances in public libraries, community centers, retirement homes, and accessible spaces throughout the city. The members of the HSQ also bring their passion and skill to in-school classroom programs and special workshops, weaving interactive learning, story-telling, and music into dynamic concert and workshop experiences for all ages. The HSQ partners with corporate and non-profit leadership teams to spark collaboration, storytelling, and innovation in the workplace through professional development workshops. For more than a decade, the HSQ and Yale University Art Gallery have collaborated on Playing Images, a concert series that is free and open to the public. These interactive sessions are held in the gallery and connect viewing a work of art with live performance.

As with all fee or ticket-based programming of the HSQ, 100% of funds generated through these concerts and workshops support Music Haven’s free after-school programming.

Building Community & Collaboration

Photos
1. The Haven String Quartet playing a Celebration of Hispanic Heritage at the Atwater Senior Center
2. The Haven String Quartet playing a Pop-Up Concert at the Mitchell Library
3. The Haven String Quartet performing at the Baltic Studies Concert at Yale
The Haven String Quartet celebrates a commitment to performing works by composers of color, women, and those still living.

Composer Spotlight

Quinn Mason
String Quartet No. 6
Composer and conductor Quinn Mason has been described as “a brilliant composer... who seems to make waves wherever he goes.” Mason has indeed been making waves in Connecticut for the past few years! He served as the 2022-2023 Joyce C. Willis Artist in Residence with the Hartford Symphony Orchestra, and this season the New Haven Symphony will feature the world premiere of his piano concerto “Every New Day.” The HSQ is excited to present his sixth String Quartet this February, which was written to celebrate the 90th birthday of one of the composer’s longtime supporters. The quartet is centered around a four-note motif to which you can sing “Hap-py Birth-day” and features his characteristic energetic compositional flourishes.

William Grant Still
Suite for Violin and Piano
William Grant Still is one of America’s greatest composers. Born in Mississippi in 1895, Dr. Still achieved international success during his lifetime despite facing the adversity of being an African-American composer in the United States. His First Symphony, “Afro-American,” quickly became the most widely played symphony written by an American composer. Dr. Still’s first instrument was the violin. Written in 1943, each of the three movements of his Suite for Violin and Piano are based on a work of art by an artist associated with the Harlem Renaissance.

Charles Washington
String Quartet No. 3, “Bartok Meets Monk”

Charles Washington, music professor at the University of Pennsylvania, is one of the most distinguished musicians of his generation. Sorey was named a 2018 United States Artists Fellow, a 2017 MacArthur Fellow, and was a finalist for the 2023 Pulitzer Prize in Music.

“For Courtney Bryan, for violin solo,” was commissioned by the 2021 Vail Dances Festival, Damian Woetzel – Artistic Director.

Gabriela Lena Frank
Leyendas: An Andean Walkabout
Composer and conductor Gabriela Lena Frank has been described as “a brilliant composer... who seems to make waves wherever he goes.” Mason has indeed been making waves in Connecticut for the past few years! He served as the 2022-2023 Joyce C. Willis Artist in Residence with the Hartford Symphony Orchestra, and this season the New Haven Symphony will feature the world premiere of his piano concerto “Every New Day.” The HSQ is excited to present his sixth String Quartet this February, which was written to celebrate the 90th birthday of one of the composer’s longtime supporters. The quartet is centered around a four-note motif to which you can sing “Hap-py Birth-day” and features his characteristic energetic compositional flourishes.

Gabriela Lena Frank
Leyendas: An Andean Walkabout
Gabriela Lena Frank’s “Leyendas: An Andean Walkabout” is an exciting exploration of Peruvian folk music through the medium of a string quartet and over the last twenty years it has become a legendary part of the string quartet repertoire.

She writes in the introduction to the piece: “Leyendas: An Andean” draws inspiration from the idea of mestizaje as envisioned by Peruvian writer José María Arguedas, where cultures can coexist without the subjugation of one by the other. As such, this piece mixes elements from the western classical and Andean folk music traditions.

Tyshawn Sorey
For Courtney Bryan
Tyshawn Sorey, music professor at the University of Pennsylvania, is one of the most distinguished musicians of his generation. Sorey was named a 2018 United States Artists Fellow, a 2017 MacArthur Fellow, and was a finalist for the 2023 Pulitzer Prize in Music.

“For Courtney Bryan, for violin solo,” was commissioned by the 2021 Vail Dances Festival, Damian Woetzel – Artistic Director.
**Cristofer**

Music Haven Alumnus  
Graduated 2019  
Instrument Violin  
Teacher Gregory Tompkins  
Years in Music Haven 11

“Music Haven has been very supportive in the musical endeavors of their students, ranging from regionals all the way to all state. They’re also supportive with college applications. They build strong character amongst their students. I enjoy being a alumni because I get to help other students. I get to give back to the community and that was always the goal.”

— Cristofer

**Innana**

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<td>Yaira Matyakubova</td>
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“Being a musician means you’re someone that sees the world differently. I find myself comparing things that I see to things that contribute to music. Even if I get frustrated with a song I’m not good at, I keep going and persevere through it. I want to get good at it.”

— Innana

Young Cris learning with Artistic Director and HSQ violinist, Yaira Matyakubova.  
Cris substitute teaching our current Music Haven students, Eddie and Jo!  
After Cris graduated Music Haven, he passed the musical torch to his talented little sister, Doris!
“Music Haven, even though it seems like a lot of work, is fun because you get to talk to people from different cultures and learn something new. Being a musician feels like a higher role because it makes me happy. I can play for my little cousin. He’s 4 months old now. Before he was born, I played twinkle twinkle little star for him on my violin.”
—Kevelyn

“I want the world to know that I’m a very good cellist and if you’re interested you can play your musical instrument at Music Haven too.”
—Madeline
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<td>Ashley</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Violin</td>
<td>Patrick Doane</td>
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“Music Haven is a very nice opportunity, it's free, and they provide a lot of aid. Being a musician makes me feel good.”
—David

“I learned my talents at Music Haven! Everyone is welcoming and nice. The longer you're here, the more you start recognizing people here as your family.”
—Ashley
Afterschool Lessons
In addition to weekly one-on-one lessons, Music Haven students play in a variety of ensembles and chamber groups, rehearsing weekly and performing throughout the year at libraries, community events, and neighborhood festivals. Some students play in student quartets and chamber groups coached by our resident musicians. Our middle school chamber orchestra builds music-reading skills and teaches students to work and play together with other young musicians. Students in Harmony In Action (HIA), our advanced chamber orchestra, also plans social action projects, hosts guest speakers, participates in workshops and masterclasses, and attend concert trips.

Group Classes
Music Haven students have multiple opportunities each week to reinforce their learning in group classes, including a weekly Suzuki Playdown and a Studio Class. In a Suzuki Playdown, students play together through a cumulative review of pieces they’ve learned from the Suzuki method, from the most advanced song they know all the way down to Twinkle Twinkle Little Star. In weekly Studio Classes, students get the chance to perform portions of their current solo repertoire for their peers and teacher, and learn how to give and receive feedback from one another.

Adult Beginner Violin Class
Music Haven families have always been the foundation of our community. We know that family involvement is integral to student success. This year, some of our parents had the exciting opportunity to take our Adult Beginner Violin Class. There, adults study violin with Ms. Yaira, just like a regular Music Haven student! This brought a new understanding between parents and their students—learning to play one of the most beautiful instruments in the world is no easy feat! Adults are taught together in groups and amongst Music Haven students. Some adults even got to play alongside their kids!

Music Bridge
Music Bridge is a beginner violin class serving recent immigrants and refugee students. Many of the first Music Bridge students are now 5th or 6th year Music Haven veterans, and they play with, learn alongside, and mentor new arrivals in this inclusive and supportive class. Music Bridge not only builds music skills, but also relationships and communication skills across boundaries of language and culture.

HERE to Play
Our HERE to Play Initiative (HERE stands for "Health & Emotional Recovery Education") recognizes that our students deal with traumas and stresses that can significantly impact their physical and mental health, and we understand they need the space, tools, and supports to respond, recover, and build the skills to do that every day. HERE to Play includes access to healthy snacks, meditation classes, physical activities such as yoga, as well as access to trauma-informed mental health support.

Leadership Through Music
Our Academic Success Program offers on-site homework help and tutoring for students between their lessons, ensemble rehearsals, and other Music Haven classes. Through the College & Career Pathways Program, high school students get help with the application and financial aid process, writing their personal essays, and visiting colleges. They also have the opportunity to learn from guest speakers, explore non-traditional career paths, and learn about vocational training.
Music Haven’s Parent Violin Class

This was a special year at Music Haven. Artistic Director and HSQ violinist, Yaira Matyakubova, taught the violin to a small group of Music Haven parents in the evenings. Those parents played at our spring recital and even at our biggest event: the annual Performance Party. Our parents got to play with their kids and understand the craft that their children are learning on a deeper and more personal level.

"Being a part of the Music Haven parent class has had a profoundly positive impact on me. It has changed my perspective on music by deepening my appreciation for its transformative power in personal and social growth. Witnessing the dedication of the instructors and the growth of the students has shown me the immense value of music education. Moreover, it has fostered a sense of community and belonging between us parents. Overall, it has been a transformative experience, and I’m grateful for the opportunity to be part of this wonderful community."

—Josh, Major’s parent

Even our Executive Director, Milda Torres McClain, took the class alongside the other parents! Here she is practicing with Ms. Yaira!

A sneak peek at a day in the life of a Music Haven parent and student!

Our parents striking a pose at the annual Performance Party. Looking good, everyone!
2022-2023 Funding Sources

We are so grateful to the numerous donors, foundations, businesses, and partners that support Music Haven's program throughout the year. Donations to Music Haven sustain our award-winning afterschool music program and give nearly 100 New Haven students a chance to play.

Our Funding Sources

- Individual Donations: 34.01%
- Foundations, Private Grants, and Corporate: 41.74%
- Federal, State, and Local Grants: 20.84%
- Earned Revenue: 3.41%

6 Ways You Can Support Music Haven

We are always grateful for your donations! And, if you're looking for more ways to support Music Haven, you can:

- Bring a friend to a Music Haven concert
- Give a gift of stocks or securities
- Donate an instrument to Music Haven
- Name Music Haven as a beneficiary in your will
- Follow us on social media and share our content
- Make a contribution from your IRA
We are so grateful to the individuals who made gifts to Music Haven this year!

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Honoring Annelisa Boerner
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Honoring All students & teachers
Sidney & Elaine Klein

Honoring All students!
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Cantor Arthur Giglo

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Wendy A. Horwitz

Honoring Keith & Kelly Carini
Jeffrey Watt

Honoring Janice Land
Abigail & Max Simmons
Pictured Above: Mr. Philip conducting Harmony In Action students along with the Music In Schools Initiative (MISI) students at Yale University’s Woolsey Hall. Audience members were audibly impressed by the students’ performances. This collaboration was a successful showing of how much beautiful music we can put into the world when we work and play together.

Pictured below: Mr. Gregory along with his violin students after their spring recital. Look at those smiles!
Mr. Patrick was instrumental to a number of collaborations this year, including the successful— and strikingly beautiful, collaboration with the New Haven Ballet!

December 3rd, 2023 at 4PM
The Unitarian Society of New Haven
700 Hartford Turnpike, Hamden, CT
featuring music by Johannes Brahms and Claude Debussy

May 19th, 2024 at 4pm
The Unitarian Society of New Haven
700 Hartford Turnpike, Hamden, CT
featuring music by Franz Schubert, including Schubert’s Fantasy for Violin and Piano in C Major
Our students were asked to share some words to describe Music Haven. This is what they shared:

"Music"
"Fun"
"Opportunity"
"Challenge"
"Heart"
"Create"
"Inspire"
"Mentoring"
"Space"
"Instrument"
"Future"
"Identity"
"Acceptance"
"Family"
Thank you to our major institutional supporters for their investment in our 2022-2023 programming season:


Thank you to our media sponsor:

WMNR Fine Arts Radio

Thank you to all who provided in-kind donations and other forms of support and collaboration, without which we could not deliver high quality programming to so many.

Arts Paper | LEAP
Board of Education - Transportation Dept. | Mary Wade
Chabaso Bakery | New Haven Symphony Orchestra
Clifford Beers | Nica’s Market
Dixwell Q House | Shubert Theatre
Erector Square | St. Luke’s Steel Band
Gia Marie’s Pizzeria | Studioteo Recording Services
IRIS | Trader Joe’s - Orange, CT
K.H. Chapin Fine Violins | Unitarian Society of New Haven
Larsen Strings
A Special Thank You to Jay Bright.

For many years, Jay Bright has been funding our Music Haven students' summer camp tuition. Because of this generous funding, our students have been able to enjoy wonderful experiences during the summer.

We appreciate you, Mr. Bright!