



Delaware State University Music Program

Volume 3: Issue 1

Fall 2019

MUSIC PROGRAM WELCOMES NEW FACULTY

The Delaware State University Music Program is delighted to welcome four new faculty members. All of them have extensive performing and teaching experience and are exciting additions to our program.



Dr. Derrick L. Thompson joins DSU as our Choir Director. He holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in music with an emphasis in vocal music education from Lynchburg College, a Master of Arts degree in music from Morgan State University, a Master of Education in Music and Music Education and a Doctor of Education in the College Teaching of Music and Music Education from Teachers College, Columbia University.

Dr. Thompson made his professional vocal debut in 2007 with the Opera on the James as the Duke in Gounod's *Romeo et Juliette*, and he is an active recitalist, chamber musician, and operatic performer. His most recent performances include bass soloist in Faure's *Requiem*, Rutter's *Mass of the Children*, and Handel's *Messiah*; Ben in Menotti's *The Telephone*, Prince Torado in *Dunbar's Dream Lovers*, bass soloist for Beethoven's *Mass in C Major*, *King Balthazar* and the Page in

Amahl and the Night Visitors and more. Dr. Thompson spent his 2010-2011 season as the artistic director and conductor of the Tianjin Concert Hall's Mulan Children's Choir (China) and also made his debut as a soloist with the International Festival Chorus (Beijing) and Peking Sinfonetta in Handel's *Messiah*. In April he returned to the stage in his role debut as Jesus/Bass Soloist in Bach's *St. Johannes Passion*. Dr. Thompson also taught private voice lessons while in China having two young students placing first and second place in the Hong Kong Young Artist Competition.

In May 2014, Dr. Thompson recorded his first CD titled *Spirituals* including selections by composers such as Harry T. Burleigh, Moses Hogan and Jacqueline Hairston. He most recently served as director of choirs at Staunton River Middle and High School with the Bedford County Public School system and Minister of Music with the Mt. Olive Baptist Church - Amherst. He also serves as a guest conductor in choral workshops, both educational and church-wide.

New Faculty *cont'd*



Dr. Raymond-Joseph Bohn is the principal bassist of Glens Falls Symphony Orchestra in New York, a section bassist with Reading Symphony Orchestra in Pennsylvania and instrumental director at Saint Francis Parish on Long Beach Island, NJ. He completed his Bachelor of Music from Rowan University, his Masters of Music from the Manhattan School of Music, and his Doctor of Musical Arts degree from SUNY-Stony Brook. Dr. Bohn is an active freelancer and performs with diverse groups such as The Wizard's Consort, Mario Cantone Live!, appears in Amazon Prime's *Mozart in the Jungle* and is bassist for singer/songwriter Sahara Moon. He also serves as a principal and section bassist for several orchestras and theaters including The Philadelphia Festival Orchestra China tour, Allentown Symphony Orchestra, Binghamton Symphony Orchestra, The Orchestra of Northern New York, South Florida Symphony, Princeton Symphony Orchestra and The Endless Mountain Music Festival.

Stephen Cirino began his career in the music industry in 2006 at Sony Music Entertainment/RED Distribution. He worked with gold and platinum artists/bands including Jason Aldean, Mumford & Sons and Phoenix. In 2011, Stephen began his own venture into music management serving as a manager for Billboard charting gospel and jazz musician Hart Ramsey. Since forming his own management and distribution company, Stephen has released eight Billboard charting albums. He earned a Bachelor's degree from Indiana State University, and is a Senior Lecturer at the University of the Arts in Philadelphia, PA.



Described by The New York Times as a "glowing countertenor", **Augustine Mercante** enjoys an active career performing repertoire from the Baroque to the newly-created. He has performed with the American Spiritual Ensemble, the Oregon Bach Festival, Brandywine Baroque, the Mid-Columbia Symphony, and Delaware ChoralArts. Last year he premiered Aaron Grad's *Old-Fashioned Love Songs* for countertenor and electric theorbo and was praised by the Washington Post for his "full-bodied sweetness, exemplary pitch, and a reliably musical imagination." As a 2013 Vocal Fellow of the Tanglewood Music Center, his performance in the American premiere of George Benjamin's *Written on Skin* was described by the Wall Street Journal as "riveting" with a voice that "soared above the texture, lining the text with the haloed elegance of gold-leaf

inscription". A 2010 Fulbright Scholar, Gus completed post-graduate studies in Augsburg, Germany and appeared in Vivaldi's *Orlando Furioso* at Munich's Prinzregententheater and in scenes from *Orfeo ed Euridice* for Nurnberg Opera's International Gluck Festival. In addition to his artist diploma, he holds degrees from the University of North Texas and the University of Delaware.

Popular Music Ensemble Visits China



In June, the Delaware State University Popular Music Ensemble travelled to China to study Chinese music and to perform concerts at two universities. Ten students made the trip, accompanied by Dr. Frank Gazda. The ensemble consisted of vocalists Aishah Bradley, Chloe Humphrey, Beauty Marsh, Mozella Matthews, Imani Sulieman, and Niraha Taylor with instrumentalists Kamin Clark (bass), Glamu Kpou (trombone), Devyn Parham (drums), and Issachar Scroggins (keyboards).

The first stop was Jilin, where the students visited Beihua University. The Delaware State

students were welcomed by students from Beihua performing traditional music and dances. The DSU students were then given lessons on the hulusi (a traditional Chinese flute). Students from both universities rehearsed and learned the "Dragon Boat Song" for part of a joint concert. In between rehearsals, the DSU students had the opportunity to explore Jilin, to have some spectacular meals, and to go shopping. At the concert, groups from India, Africa, and China performed before the DSU Popular Music Ensemble's international debut. The concert was performed to a full theater, with dignitaries from both universities present.

The next day the DSU students got to experience high-speed rail, as they travelled to Dezhou University. At Dezhou the DSU students got to meet and work with the university's popular music club and join together for two songs. The concert that night was jam packed, and the DSU students got a massive ovation. As the DSU students had another train to catch, they were pulled away from dozens of fans who wanted pictures and autographs.

The final two days of the trip were spent sightseeing in Beijing. The DSU students visited the Beijing Olympic Park, the Forbidden City, hiked the Great Wall, visited a silk factory, and got to shop at the Pearl Market, a four story indoor bazaar. The music students were joined in Beijing by faculty from the education department who had been visiting Changchun University.



Student News



Kelsey Oldland and Casey Artis



Michael Wingate (L)



This past June, **Casey Artis** and **Kelsey Oldland** were invited to attend the Collegiate Advocacy Summit and Hill Day for the National Association for Music Education (NAfME) in

Washington, D.C. They attended the conference with other students from Delaware with costs paid for by the Delaware Music Educators Association (DMEA). At this Advocacy Summit, they met students from across the country and attended several sessions with leaders of NAfME and professional educators as well as going to the Capital to advocate for music education with their congressional representatives. Inspired by the summit, Casey and Kelsey worked over the summer with Dr. Carla Becker to establish a Collegiate NAfME chapter at DSU.

Music Education major **Michael Wingate** competed in international beatbox battles top 16 solos at the Great North Battle in Toronto and top 16 battles at the Legends Beatbox Championship in Atlanta, GA. Michael competes under the stage name Match. He is also entering the American Beatbox Championships this year. Michael finished 17th in the US last year and aims for top 16 battles this year. His tag team, Forest Fire, also competed at the Great North Battle and became vice champions and took second place.

You can see Michael's solo entry video at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4kTigRDnyd8>

Michael's a Capella band Ember performed at Artscape in Baltimore this past summer. Artscape is the largest free music festival in the US. Ember is planning on releasing a full length original album this fall, multiple live videos over the next few months, as well as college gigs this fall and traveling back to LA this December.



Sophomore BA in Music major **Jaden Adkins** won the Music Teachers National Association State Solo Competition in the brass

division. He will next compete in the Eastern Divisional round for a chance to compete in the National Finals to be held in Chicago in March.



Ember

News

DSU EXCELLENCE AWARD IN TEACHING



Dr. Carla Becker won the 2019 Delaware State University Excellence Award in Teaching. Dr. Becker was nominated and evaluated by a select committee against teachers from all programs at DSU and was evaluated on Teaching Methodology, Program and Curriculum Development, and Student Development & Outcomes. Dr. Becker is the second recent winner of the Excellence in Teaching Award from the Music Program. Dr. Frank Gazda won the award in 2015. Dr. David Tolley was also nominated for the Excellence in Research and Creative Activity Award.

FACULTY NEWS



DSU Faculty Jazz Band (Photo by: Bernard W. Carr)

The DSU Faculty Jazz Combo performed at a reception honoring the DSU Aviation Sciences program and students. The reception was held at the Delaware Airpark and was sponsored by the DSU Alumni Association Florida Sunshine Chapter. The faculty combo was joined by DSU students Rashawn King and Zack Papan.



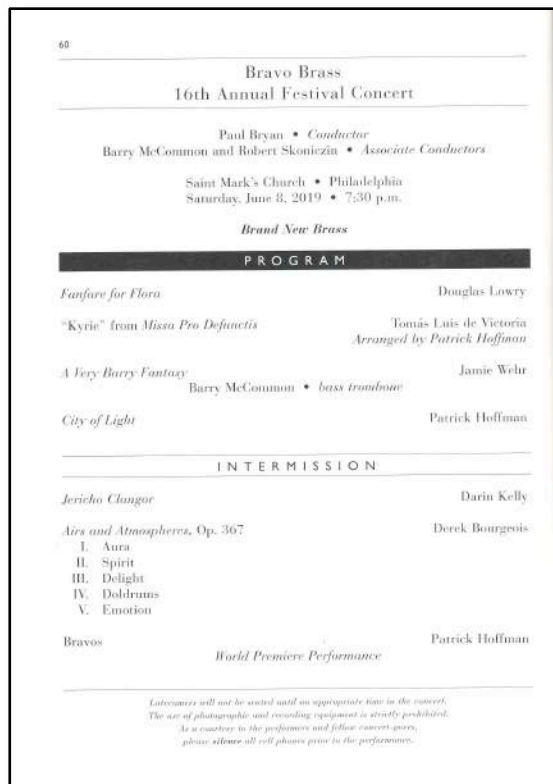
Dr. David Tolley was the music arranger, orchestrator and music producer of the soundtrack for *Alone in America, an Immigrant's Story* which was nominated for a 2019 Emmy award for best animated movie.



Lionel Thomas (2nd from right)

Adjunct Instructor in Violin **Lionel Thomas** performed as a member of the Colour of Music Festival Orchestra in September in Columbia, South Carolina. The Colour of Music Festival highlights the significance of black composers and professional black classical musicians from around the world and takes place at various venues throughout the country. In November, Mr. Thomas will join the festival orchestra for a performance at Vanderbilt University in Nashville, Tennessee.

Faculty News



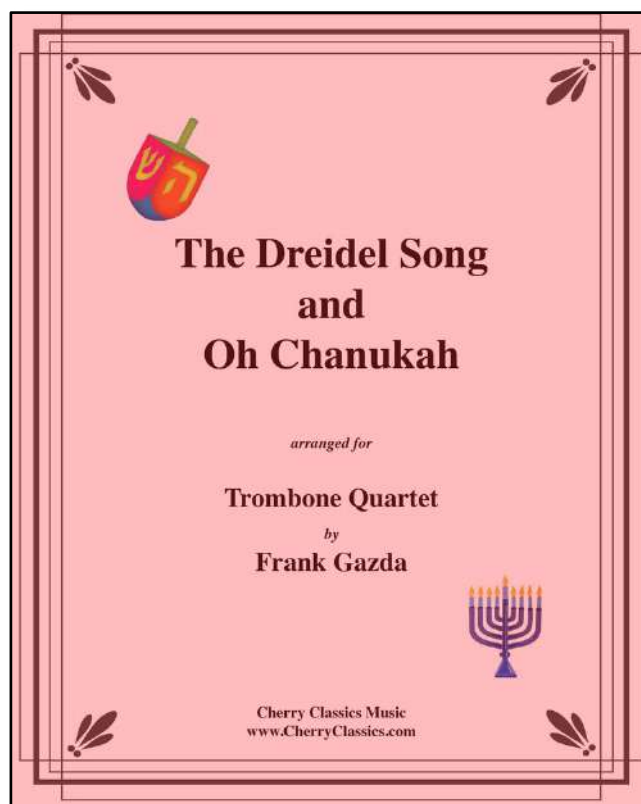
Dr. Frank Gazda has been invited to join S.E. Shires Trombones as an Artist Representative. Shires is the leading custom trombone maker in the United States and its artist roster includes many of the world's leading classical and jazz performers and university faculty. Dr. Gazda has also been invited to present a clinic titled Low Brass Basics at this year's Delaware Music Educator's convention. Additionally, Dr. Gazda's arrangement of *The Dreidl Song* and *O Chanukah* is now available from Cherry Classics Music in Vancouver, Canada.



In the fall of 2018, Paul Bryan and the Bravo Brass of Philadelphia commissioned DSU faculty member **Dr. Patrick Hoffman** to compose a piece for the spring 2019 concert "Brand New

Brass." Paul Bryan is the Dean of the Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia and conductor of the Bravo Brass, the brass ensemble of the Philadelphia Youth Orchestra. The Bravo Brass has previously performed another of Dr. Hoffman's compositions entitled *City of Light* on several occasions, including its premier at the International Trumpet Guild Festival in 2014.

For the June 26th concert at St. Mark's Church in downtown Philadelphia, the title "Brand New Brass" referred to music that had been composed or arranged within the last ten years. Maestro Bryan selected three of Dr. Hoffman's works for the concert including an arrangement of the "Kyrie" from a *Requiem Mass* by Tomas Luis de Victoria, *City of Light*, and the new commission, entitled *Bravos*.



Faculty News *cont'd*



Dr. Carla Becker will be presenting two sessions at the Delaware Music Educator's conference on October 11. The first session is titled Children's Games, Songs, and Drumming from Ghana. The second session is Giant Steps: Helping Students Step Outside of the Lines. In March, 2019 She presented Creativity, Identity, and Curricula: Tri/Partisan Agreements at the Enacting Curricular Change in Music Education through Vernacular Music Conference in Ohio and in May presented Improvisation Samples across Genres: Closing Distinctions of Hierarchy at the International Society for Improvised Music Conference in Minneapolis, MN. This past summer Dr. Becker traveled to Bali to study the history of Gamelan and Yogic Sound Therapies. She also took the opportunity to go surfing, and do yoga. Inspired by her trip to Bali, Dr. Becker is currently pursuing her 200 Hour Vinyasa Yoga Teacher training certification. She hopes to implement these in her Music Methods courses.



Instructor of Percussion **Stephen Tipping** performed with the Delaware Symphony Orchestra on their Classics concert last May. The Symphony performed Rachmaninoff Symphony No. 3 at the Grand Opera House in

Wilmington, DE. This was Mr. Tipping's first time performing with the Delaware Symphony. Mr. Tipping recently signed on as Core Faculty at the Music School of Delaware, Wilmington Branch, as the specialist in classical percussion.



Adjunct faculty in Music Theory and horn **Sara Hoffman** will be performing Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's Horn Quintet as part of the Music School of Delaware's Music Masters concert on October 18 at 7:30 PM at Avenue United Methodist

Church in Milford. She will also be performing as part of a faculty chamber orchestra at the Wilmington branch of the Music School of Delaware on October 2 at 7:00 PM.



Delaware State University Choir Director **Dr. Derrick Thompson** has been invited by the Delaware Music Educators Association to present a clinic at the annual Delaware Music Educator's conference on October 11.



During the summer of 2019, **Marty Denson** performed as a guest keyboard player and performer with Mike Hines & The Look, a popular band in the Delmarva area. Marty has made special guest appearances at venues such as Paradise Grill and the Harrington Raceway and Casinos in Delaware.

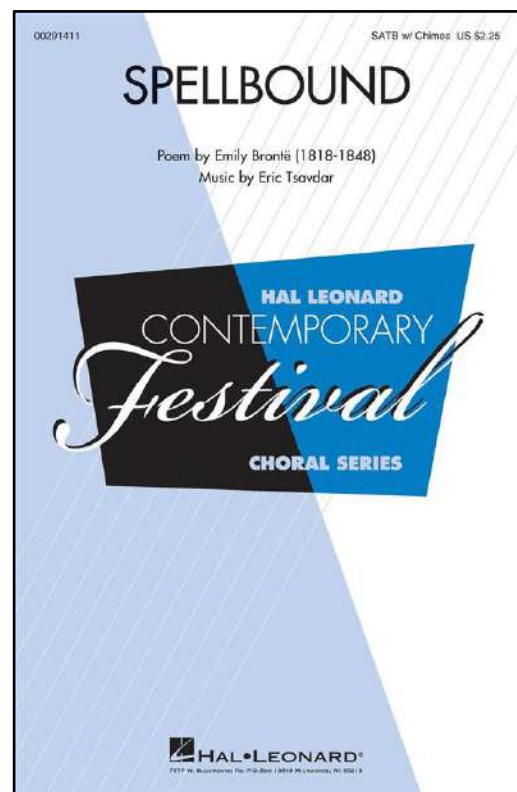
Alumni News

Bri'Yahn Ritchie is employed at Easton High School located in Easton, MD. He is in his 5th year as the school's steel drum and band director for students in grades 9-12. This past year he received his Masters degree in Secondary Education through Grand Canyon University's online program, and plans to enroll in a doctoral program in either Music Education or Music Composition at the University of Maryland. Bri'yahn studied the trumpet with Dr. Patrick Hoffman while performing with the Columbia Blue Brass Quintet, Marching Band, Jazz Band, and Choir. Since graduating, he has been featured in two editions of Maryland State Educators Association's (MSEA) magazine entitled *Actionline*. His concert band received perfect scoring at last year's regional adjudicated band festival as well as silver medals in Cavalcade of Band's Jazz Band Festivals. Bri'yahn also returned to DSU to host a clinic during last year's Alumni Music Education Workshop.



Naomi Barrios graduated from Delaware State University in 2017 with a degree in Music Industry, and has just received a Master of Science in Entertainment Business from Full Sail University in Winter Park, Florida. Presently, Naomi is a full-time flight attendant, and is also training in professional dance. Naomi's future plans are to open a dance school in New York and establish her own production company.

Hakeem Nabi (Class of 2017, BA in Music Education) is going into his second year as a music teacher in the Smyrna School District. He teaches 5th and 6th grade general music at Clayton Intermediate School in Clayton, DE. He also works with the Smyrna High School Regiment of Red Marching Band as their staff music arranger. He has also begun teaching after school private piano and percussion lessons for young students ages 6-12 as well as tutoring students in math, science, and social studies.



Eric Tsavdar graduated from Delaware State University in 2011 with a degree in Music Education, and has just begun his ninth year teaching for the Indian River School District — and his seventh at Selbyville Middle School, where he teaches Chorus and General Music. This year, his third choral composition, *Spellbound*, was published by Hal Leonard. He is currently working on two original musicals, one of which will be performed this December at Dickens Parlour Theatre.

Fall 2019 Concert Schedule

SEPTEMBER

- Saturday, 14: Marching Band Home football game and performance at Middletown High School
- Sunday, 15: Marching Band Parade in Harlem, NY
- Friday, 20: Marching Band Performance on ESPN First Take, Wilmington, DE
- Saturday, 21: Marching Band Homecoming Parade and game
- Tuesday, 24, 11:00 AM: Required Music Major Meeting (EH 138)

OCTOBER

- Friday, 4: Marching Band Performance in Wilmington, DE
- Saturday, 5: Marching Band Home football game
- Sunday, 6, 3:00 PM: Music History Class Field Trip to Piffaro Renaissance Ensemble.
- Tuesday, 8, 11:00 AM: Faculty Showcase Recital (EH Theater)
- Friday, 11: Delaware Music Educators Conference-Dr. Gazda and Dr. Becker will be presenting clinics and music education students will attend.
- Saturday, 12: Marching Band away football game vs. Morgan State
- Tuesday, 22, 11:00 AM: Dr. Frank Gazda Faculty Recital (EH Theater)
- Thursday, 24th: Music Education Field Trip to Washington, DC – lecture by Prudence L. Carter, dean and professor of the Graduate School of Education at the University of California, Berkeley
- Saturday, 26: Marching Band Performance at Caravel Academy

NOVEMBER

- Saturday, 9, 11:00 AM: Parents & Family Weekend Choral Concert (EH Theater)
- Saturday, 9: Marching Band Home football game
- Tuesday, 12, 11:00 AM: Performance Seminar (EH Theater)
- Thursday, 14, 11:00 AM: Percussion Studio Performance Seminar (EH Theater)
- Saturday, 16: Marching Band Home football game
- Tuesday, 19, 11:00 AM: West African Drumming Seminar-Dr. Carla Becker (EH Theater)
- Thursday, 21, 7:00 PM: Popular Music Ensemble Fall Concert (EH Theater)
- Friday, 22, 7:00 PM: Mozella Matthews Senior Voice Recital (Presbyterian Church of Dover)
- Saturday, 23: Marching Band Home football game
- Monday, 25: Marching Band Christmas Parade in Norfolk, VA

DECEMBER

- Tuesday, 3, 11:00 AM: Performance Seminar (Art Center Gallery)
- Wednesday, 4, 8:00 PM: Kelsey Oldland senior clarinet recital (Art Center Gallery)
- Thursday, 5, 10:00 AM: Vocal Juries (Location TBA)
- Friday, 6, 9:00 AM: Instrumental Juries (EH 138)
- Sunday, 8, 2:00 PM: Marching Band Christmas Parade in Elsmere, DE
- Sunday, 8, 4:00 PM: DSU Choir Presents Handel's *Messiah* (EH Theater)

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Tell us what you have been up to over the years and we will feature you in future newsletters.

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