

In Perfect Harmony

Webster Groves and the Community Music School of Webster University

Webster Groves has long been known as a regional center for the arts because of the offerings of The Rep, Opera Theatre, the Webster Theatre Guild, Webster University's musical, theatre and art offerings, the Jazz & Blues Festival, the Art & Air Festival and the many art galleries and restaurants that feature live performances. Webster Groves is one of the few suburbs that has established an arts commission dedicated to supporting and sustaining artistic endeavors throughout the community, which draw thousands of visitors every year. Residents can feel proud that their city values the arts so highly.

The new kid on this impressive block is the Community Music School of Webster University (CMS). Last October, the CMS moved its headquarters from University City to an elegant new structure on the Webster University campus at 535 Garden Avenue, just east of the Loretto-Hilton Center.

The exterior of the new 26,000-square-foot CMS building, designed by Mackey Mitchell and Associates, is brick with metal-clad accents and a spacious glass lobby that mirrors the Loretto-Hilton Center lobby. The building features a 475-seat, state-of-the-art concert hall; a spacious two-story, light-filled lobby; two large ensemble rehearsal spaces; classroom/studio space and generous back-of-house amenities to support performances.

"In addition to being good neighbors to each other architecturally," says John Guenther, principal and project designer at Mackey Mitchell, "the Community Music School and the Loretto-Hilton



The new home of the Community Music School, 535 Garden Ave.

Center share the common goal of serving the St. Louis community in all facets of the performing arts."

"The Community Music School is a highly regarded and important institution for the St. Louis region," says Richard S. Meyers, president of Webster University. "For over 80 years, it has enriched the lives of our children and our community. We're very excited to welcome its headquarters to our campus."

The relocation also expands the collaborative educational and performance activities between the CMS and Webster University's Music Department. "The missions of the Community Music School and Webster's Leigh Gerdinge College of Fine Arts are to be the outstanding institutions for training in the performing arts for this region," says Peter Sargent, dean of the Leigh Gerdinge College of Fine Arts. "This natural partnership allows for unique opportunities to bring the finest instruction possible to a wide variety of talented students in the St. Louis area."

The CMS serves nearly 2,500 students, with a wide range of offerings for all ages

and skill levels. Individual and group lessons are available in all orchestral instruments, voice, guitar, organ, piano and jazz.

The youngest students begin in the Young Years Program, which provides early instruction for children as young as six months. Others may begin studying a stringed instrument through the Suzuki Strings Program, a highly regarded method whereby young children learn to play the same way they learn to speak.

Elementary through high school students perform in six orchestras and ensembles, which supplement their experiences in their school programs. Exceptionally talented students pursuing a career in music prepare with the Pre-College Music Preparatory Program, which offers high-caliber instruction, performance opportunities and mentoring in one comprehensive curriculum. Many adults — the oldest now over 80 years old — take up instrumental or voice lessons for the first time or to dust off their musical skills.

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Greetings from President Richard S. Meyers



Richard S. Meyers

Hello and welcome to the spring issue of *Webster to Webster*. I hope you enjoy the story about the new building for the Community Music School of Webster University. I am proud of the role that Webster University has played in the recent life of the School, which became a part of the Leigh Gerdine College of Fine Arts in 2001, and has now relocated to the home campus. I am personally delighted to have this regional treasure here in Webster Groves.

I strongly believe in the value of community music schools and the high caliber of music education they provide. My wife Yakko and I were community music school parents of two children. We witnessed firsthand the outstanding musical instruction that children receive. It's no coincidence that both of our daughters have grown up committed to the arts.

The Community Music School's programs complement the offerings of the University's outstanding Music Department by allowing Webster to provide music education to students prior to their university careers, and also to students who have long since completed university studies.

We've now completed another successful academic year. A highlight of the year

included a presentation by Christopher Gardner, author and inspiration for the film "The Pursuit of Happyness." The art department presented an exhibit, "Paper Working," which brought four Parisian artists to the campus. Financial assistance for the exhibit was provided by the Missouri Arts Council, a state agency. I'm also proud of the students who worked on the Webster student newspaper, *The Journal*, which won best overall newspaper in Missouri at the statewide conference of the Missouri College Media Association.

Capping off the year was the privilege of having The Honorable Nancy Pelosi, Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives, as our commencement speaker on May 12. For the last few years, the University's graduation ceremonies have been held in the Edward Jones Dome in downtown St. Louis. The University has been able to comfortably hold the 20,000 or more graduates and their families without fear of bad weather.

I hope you have a pleasant summer.

Sincerely Yours,



Richard S. Meyers
President, Webster University

Resource Information



**Director of
Community Relations**
Barb McEwen Ehnes
968-7174 or e-mail
ehnesba@webster.edu

Neighborhood Advisory Council

Mike Bohannon, John and Harriet Davidson, Larry Furrer, Ann and Ellen Fusz, Gary Heisel, Rich Lamar, Diane Lamboley, Wynn Miller, George Mishalow, Ted Pepple, Anita Louise Poole and Dan Warner

Emerson Library

Circulation Desk: 968-6952
Reference Desk: 968-6950
Web site: library.webster.edu

Community Music School of Webster University

968-5939
www.webster.edu/depts/finearts/cms

Fine Arts Hotline

For ticket reservations and information about theatre, music and art offerings, call 968-7128

Webster Film Series

968-7487
Web site: www.webster.edu/filmseries.html

School of Business and Technology Speaker Series

To register online visit www.webster.edu/depts/business
For more information, call 968-5986

Webster University Web site

www.webster.edu

St. Louis Event Calendar

www.webster.edu/calendar.html

Webster University Athletics

For a complete sports schedule, go to www.webster.edu/athletics. For more information about the pool, call 961-2660 ext. 7755 or 7970

Webster University has meeting rooms, a gymnasium and audio-visual support for all your business needs. Available to rent year round, from \$40/hour. Equipment such as a TV/VCR, portable sound systems and laptop are also available for rent. For more information, please contact 314-968-7105 or email violet@webster.edu

Webster University is guided by a mission of meeting the needs of students in an ever-changing world and incorporating an international perspective to learning.

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The CMS continues a long history of providing outstanding music education to the region. In 1925, Edna Lieber, a St. Louis piano teacher, founded the school with faculty from the Saint Louis Symphony Orchestra. In 1974, the CMS merged with the St. Louis Institute of Music to form the Saint Louis Conservatory and Schools for the Arts (CASA). Also in 1974, the School moved to Trinity Avenue in University City. In 1994, CASA merged with the Saint Louis Symphony Orchestra and became the Saint Louis Symphony Community Music School.

The CMS has had a presence in Webster Groves for more than 25 years, when the first branch of the school was established on North Gore. The branch moved onto the University's campus in 1996. And in 2002, the CMS was instrumental in re-establishing and administering the strings program in the Webster Groves School District by providing skilled music educators.

In September 2001, the CMS formally joined with Webster University. "The opportunity to acquire the Community Music School in 2001 was, for me personally, one of the most rewarding experiences in my tenure as president of Webster

University," says Richard Meyers. "Two of my lifelong interests are music and education. I strongly believe in the value of community music schools. As a community music school parent myself, I witnessed firsthand the quality of the music education that children receive."

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Lora Reardon, a Webster Groves resident, has taken her daughter Emily, now a seventh grader at Hixson, to Suzuki Strings lessons at the school since she was in kindergarten. Emily is now playing in the Hixson String Orchestra and the CMS String Orchestra. "The community of teachers at the CMS are artists," Reardon says. "Many are performers as well, and when you pair them with the community of children who have a passion for music, you get something unique. Webster

Groves is lucky to have such a treasure as the Community Music School in their midst."

Emily, even at her young age, is contemplating a career in music. She'll be well equipped to pursue her dream. Graduates from the CMS have received music scholarships to prestigious schools of higher education such as Juilliard, Eastman, the Curtis Institute, New England Conservatory, Northwestern University, and, of course, Webster University.

Local alumna of the CMS's various eras include jazz pianists Ptah Williams, a student in its early years, and Herb Drury, a graduate and former faculty member of the St. Louis Institute of Music. Bob Kuban, leader of the Bob Kuban Brass Big Band, is a graduate of the St. Louis Institute of Music, and Felicia Foland, Kristin Ahlstrom and Rebecca Boyer, current Saint Louis Symphony Orchestra members, also attended the CMS.

"This is an exciting time in the life of our school," says Carol Commerford, CMS director. "We're enthusiastic about the prospects that await us and glad to have our home in a family-centered community such as Webster Groves." ■

Webster Student Interview with Carla Amores



Carla Amores, Senior in the Early Childhood Education Program

Where are you from?

I was born in New York City. I lived there until I was eight years old and then lived most of my life in Quito, Ecuador.

Why did you choose Webster University?

I went to school at The American School

of Quito. They have a very good relationship with Webster University through the work of Calvin Smith, the University's international recruitment director. I wanted to study at Webster University because of Webster's international reputation and its academic excellence. I was impressed with the number of programs offered to students and the wonderful opportunities to study abroad at Webster's international campuses. Also, I have an uncle who lives here, and being close to the people that I love is very important to me.

What do you like about Webster University?

I like the solid education Webster provides to students. I feel that I'm getting the skills that I need to succeed, not only in my career but also in life. Another aspect of Webster that I like is the international environment. I live on campus in the Webster Village Apartments, and my three roommates are from Nepal, Kenya and Pittsburgh. I like the opportunity of sharing experiences, knowledge, learning

and valuing the different cultures and points of view of people from all around the world.

What do you like about Webster Groves?

I like the Victorian style of the homes. Now that it's spring, I like walking by the shops, eating outside at the restaurants and enjoying the warm weather. I enjoy seeing people walking, jogging, riding their bikes and just having a good time. This weather reminds me a lot of Ecuador. Most of the time it's warm, although we have lots of changes and it's difficult to predict. Ecuadorians say, "We have four seasons in a single day."

What will you do when you graduate?

Since I have dual citizenship and I like St. Louis very much, I'm planning on staying here. I hope to find a job in a St. Louis school district teaching in pre-kindergarten or second grade, and then work on my graduate degree.

Calendar of Events

Music

Summer Sings

- Tuesdays, June 26, July 10, July 17, 7:30 p.m.
- Community Music School, 535 Garden Ave.
- \$10 at the door

Photography

Lux Obscura

- May 12–July 27
- May Photography Gallery, Sverdrup Business/Technology Complex, Webster University, 8300 Big Bend Blvd., 2nd Floor, West Wing
- Free

Webster Film Series

The Believer

- May 10, 7:30 p.m.
- Part of the St. Louis Psychoanalytic Institute's Celluloid Couch Series
- Winifred Moore Auditorium, 470 E. Lockwood Ave.
- \$6

Air Guitar Nation

- May 11–13, 7 p.m.
- Winifred Moore Auditorium, 470 E. Lockwood Ave.
- \$6

Cache

- May 17, 7:30 p.m.
- Part of the St. Louis Psychoanalytic Institute's Celluloid Couch Series
- Winifred Moore Auditorium, 470 E. Lockwood Ave.
- \$6

Little Miss Sunshine

- May 22, 7 p.m.
- Sponsored by the Mental Health Association of Greater St Louis
- Winifred Moore Auditorium, 470 E. Lockwood Ave.
- \$6

Yes

- May 24, 7:30 p.m.
- Part of the St Louis Psychoanalytic Institute's Celluloid Couch Series
- Winifred Moore Auditorium, 470 E. Lockwood Ave.
- \$6

An Unreasonable Man

- May 25–27, 7:30 p.m.
- Winifred Moore Auditorium, 470 E. Lockwood Ave.
- \$6

Gazebo Films in Old Orchard

Live music at 7 p.m., followed by classic family-friendly films at 9 p.m., Free

Hudson and the Hoodoo Cats

- “Can Mr. Smith Get To Washington Anymore?”
- With special guest director Frank Popper
- June 8

Rosie Flores

- “American Graffiti”
- June 15

Jeanne Trevor

- “Batman-65”
- June 22

Zydeco Crawdaddy's

- “Goonies”
- June 29

Dizzy Atmosphere

- “Edward Scissorhands”
- July 13

Kim Masse

- “Best in Show”
- July 20