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CityVoicesDesMoines.org



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@CityVoicesDM



Students Michael Xayavong and Mayte Gomez-Cruz with Audra McDonald after her concert. Thanks to the Des Moines Symphony who donated free tickets to City Voices!

Mission Statement:

City Voices is a nonprofit organization that provides high quality, individualized voice instruction to underserved students in the Des Moines Public Schools. It is our belief that helping students build these skills allows them to more effectively participate in vocal music opportunities around them, including their school and community programs. We also believe that, in doing so, we are mitigating inequalities, allowing students access to experiences that are frequently out of reach due to a lack of financial resources.

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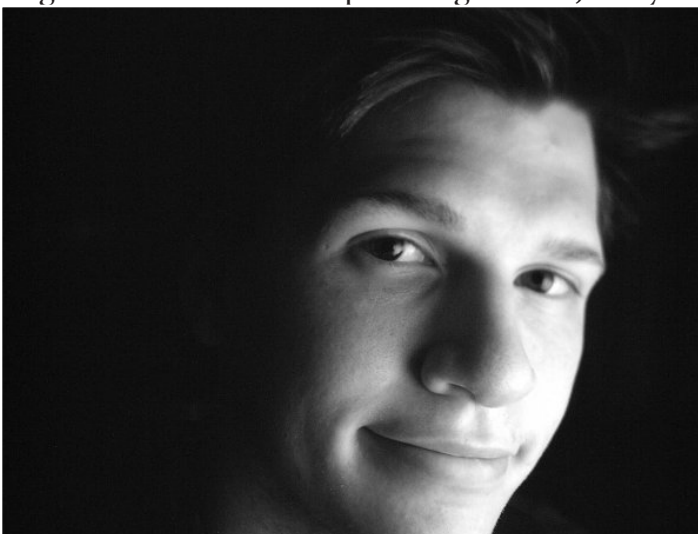
CITY VOICES MEETS NENNA FREELON



On Saturday, February 14th, City Voices had an amazing opportunity to participate in jazz singer Nenna Freelon's educational series "House of Song" where she talked to the students about a career and life in singing. The event was sponsored by the Civic Music Association's Partners in Education series, which allowed the students to ask questions and were given the opportunity to watch her in concert that night.

MEET TEACHING ARTIST CHRIS POWELL

Chris Powell is a vocalist and keyboardist working in Des Moines, IA. Chris got his start in the Des Moines Public Schools at Roosevelt High School, performing in classical ensembles and show choirs before joining the School for Music Vocations at Southwestern Community College in Creston, IA. After completing his Applied Associate Degree in Vocal Jazz in 2008, he set his sights on classical music, and began his studies as an opera singer with Jeffrey Brich at the University of Northern Iowa, graduating



with a Bachelor of Arts in Music in 2012. During his time at UNI, Chris was also a stagehand for the Gallagher-Bluedorn Performing Arts Center, and worked on more than 50 major productions touring through the Cedar Valley in addition to being the head technician for the Waterloo-Cedar Falls Symphony. As a result, Chris has a diverse skill set both on and offstage, and can be found applying it in many different places around the city, whether teaching piano or voice lessons, recording in his home studio, playing concerts, or designing and implementing sound and lights for theatrical productions and events.

THE mockingbird FOUNDATION



The Mockingbird Foundation is a non-profit organization founded by fans of the band Phish to raise funds for music education. They have awarded a grant to City Voices that has helped buy guitars to fund our students with guitar lessons and classes throughout the summer.

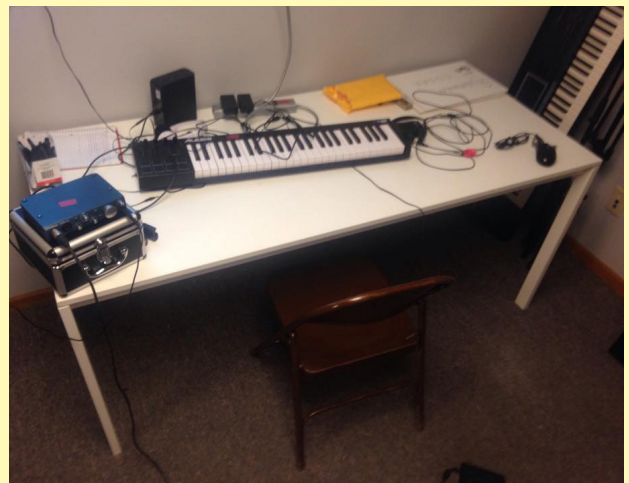


WHAT'S HOT?!

Keyboard theory, which introduced the students to keyboard skills was a new class added on this summer; taught by Chris Powell



The Performance Project, taught students how to make beats and produce their own music; taught by Larry Moore





ACT-SO

ACT-SO is the scholarship competition of the NAACP. Sameeah Muhammed earned 3rd place, Jelena Bragg earned 2nd place, and Kameron James earned 1st place all in the Classical Vocal Division. Kameron James, as the winner traveled to the national contest in Philadelphia, PA.

Kameron competed with over a hundred other people and did not place, however, he is optimistic and stated that he learned a lot from the experience and for his last year he's "making sure to bring home gold" for the 2015-2016 season.



CITY VOICES @ LARGE

ST. JOHN'S MIDWEEK MUSIC SERIES

City Voices was invited to perform at the Midweek Music Series, which is funded by Friends of the Arts at St. John's Lutheran Church, where they feature the best in music that Des Moines has to offer. They've hosted North High School's Gospel Choir in the past and we have been honored to perform for a wonderful audience.

Many of the students in City Voices are appearing more and more in award ceremonies, performances and any opportunity they can get. So keep an eye out! We're proud of each and everyone of our students.

ALEXIS COLE

Graduated from Roosevelt High School, where she has participated in Chamber Choir and Bridges 2 Harmony, and was the president of Varsity Show Choir. She also served as the director of the JV Show Choir, Rider Rhythm, running rehearsals, arranging, accompanying, and choreographing. She has participated in every musical while at Roosevelt. She has volunteered as a piano teacher with ELL students, and has participated in numerous contests, including winning outstanding soloist Indianola and second place at Cedar Rapids Jefferson, and first place in the Jabberwock Talent Show 2012-13. She plans to attend the University of Iowa, where she will double major in theatre arts/directing and communications with a minor in vocal performance.

MICHAEL XAYAVONG

Graduated from North High School. He has had a four year career in choir and theater, having done eleven shows with his school and playing in the ensemble in South Pacific at the Playhouse and recently RENT at Des Moines Young Artist Theater. He has been with City Voices since the beginning and has grown into a "triple threat." He is also a gifted instrumentalist, especially on the violin and piano, where he uses those skills to help him and others with their musicianship skills. Along with the work he does outside in the school and community, he also interns at City Voices helping out from turning pages to making newsletters. He will be taking his talents and experience and go straight to Chicago to attend Columbia College where he plans to study Musical Theater.

MATTHEW HAWKINS

Graduated from Roosevelt High School. He was a section leader in Bridges 2 Harmony, and Vice-President of both Revelation Show Choir and Chamber Choir. He played "Seaweed" in Roosevelt's production of Hairspray, which he reprised at the Iowa High School Music Theater Awards. He was a National Showcase Qualifier in two musical theater events at the Iowa Thespian Festival this year, receiving a perfect ballot for his solo performance of "Seeing You There." He also played Varsity Football, served on the Senior Board, was voted Man of the Year and Homecoming King, and mentored both freshmen at Roosevelt and a student at Hubbell Elementary School. He plans to attend the University of Iowa, where he will study Vocal Performance and Music Education.

CITY VOICES' GRADUATING CLASS OF 2015

REBEKAH OSTERMANN

Graduated from North High School. Where she has been a member their Gospel and Concert choir as well as performing in 3 musicals. This year, she was chosen to be a member of the prestigious 600-member Iowa All-State Chorus, one of only two Des Moines Public School students. She performed a spotlight medley for the Iowa High School Musical Theater Awards, where she will also reprise her role as "Morticia" She has also participated in musicals at the Des Moines Community Playhouse and is a member of the Adult Worship Band at her church. She plans to attend the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities to major in Vocal Performance.

JASON KING

Graduated from Roosevelt High School. He has ran Track and Played Football for 3 years, lettering for Varsity 5 times. He has qualified twice for the Drake Relays and went to the State Track Meet last year in the Shuttle Hurdle race, placing 2nd in the State. He sang in the Bridges 2 Harmony Choir for a year. He has been part of a mentoring group pairing high school boys with elementary school students at Hubbell Elementary School. In the future, he hopes to attend Iowa State and get his Bachelors in Counseling Psychology or Occupational Therapy, while continuing to further his voice and love for singing.

DANIEL AR'DELL LUCKETT

Graduated from Roosevelt High School. He has participated in Varsity Football, Varsity Basketball, Rider Crew and Hubbell Mentoring. He was also a a member of the Gospel Choir Bridges 2 Harmony and Chamber Choir. He won his category at the Jabberwock Talent Show, as well as the Roosevelt Talent Show with his original song, "Isn't She Lovely." His future plans are to attend Southwestern Community College in Creston to study vocal performance and music production and to play collegiate basketball.

BRIGHT LIGHTS, BIG CITY



Ask Michael Xayavong where he wants to be in five years and there is only one answer - Broadway. But whether as a performer, a director, or in some other capacity - this triple threat has many options open to him. We sat down with him recently to talk about his time with City Voices: he has been a part of the program since its very beginning, in the summer of 2013. He was then a junior-to-be at North High School, and heavily involved in the choral and drama departments of his school. Now a graduated senior, attending Columbia College (Chicago) on scholarship as a musical theater major next year, he looks back on a high school career that was filled with acting and singing, not only at North, but also in the community: he participated in the Des Moines Playhouse's production of South Pacific, and recently wrapped an ensemble role for Des Moines Young Artist Theater's production of Rent. He credits City Voices with helping him grow as an artist, saying "City Voices has helped me... find my voice in singing and as a person. I've learned how to hold myself better in front of a crowd which I find very valuable." Michael has had ample opportunity to practice those skills, saying that he has most enjoyed the numerous performances. He also says that being around the enrichment classes and other performers has made him a better musician. But in fact, Michael has been more than just a student musician - this busy young man served as a student intern this year that allowed him to teach piano and voice to some middle schoolers. He also has taken on a private voice student, and hopes to continue to teach. This summer he also volunteered at the inaugural Des Moines Parks & Recreation/Des Moines Music Coalition Music Education camps, as well as at the "Iowa Summer Journalism Academy." (Full disclosure: he is the author of most of this edition of the City Voices newsletter!) With all of these activities, spare time may seem scarce - but, as bespeaks his achievement level, he loves to practice when he has time. Of course, he is also a typical teenager, saying that he also "tries to sleep" when he is not working, acting or volunteering. He also noted that he "goes to Laos parties and send[s] random clips of people singing to Mrs. Sims." But for now, he is focused on the big city next year - Chicago - and the bright lights he hopes to feel - Broadway! We can't help but think that with his skill and hard work, he's well on his way!

PHOTO-OP!

Executive Director Mary Anne Sims warming up with Mayte Gomez-Cruz, soon to be senior at North High School

Executive Director Mary Anne Sims preparing with Rose Rocha-Crandell from Roosevelt for our Summer Recital!



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THANK YOU TO OUR DONORS!

Support City Voices:

- >\$25 will buy a package of CDs to aid student learning.
- >\$50 will buy two songbooks that students can use.
- >\$100 will sponsor a student for a summer
- >\$200 will sponsor a student for a semester.
- >\$400 will sponsor a student for the entire academic year.
- >\$500 will sponsor a teaching artist for an entire month - and reach approximately 8-10 students.

You may donate using PayPal at
CityVoicesDesMoines.org

Update:
 City Voices will be
 moving locations for
 the 2015-2016
 academic year.

VISIT OUR WEBSITE @
CITYVOICESDESMOINES.ORG

SUMMER NEWSLETTER!

3009 MERLE HAY ROAD, SUITE 5, DES MOINES, IA

