

QUARTER NOTES

CITY VOICES

MISSION:

City Voices is an after school, tuition-free nonprofit music education program committed to providing disadvantaged students with the skills, opportunity and knowledge necessary to excel in school,

SHE IS HERE

East Senior Antonesia Williams looks ahead to what comes next - and talks about her City Voices experience.

3

HELPING FIND AN OUTLET

Teaching Artist Amanda Lowe talks about her students, her passion, her music, and....weightlifting??

4

BRAVO!

City Voices students are achieving great things - and not just in music!

5



A
community-
based music
education
program since
2013

SUMMER IN BLOOM!

And our City Voices students have been blooming - making joyful noises all over the state! But that's nothing new - these movers and shakers have been busy all year! Read about it inside!



Napoleon Douglas in Concert

We were thrilled to have original Teaching Artist Napoleon Douglas back for a fundraising recital in April! Napoleon shared some stories, some songs, and tales of his Hong Kong Disney experience playing Simba in The Festival of the Lion King!. We had

a packed house and a great time! Napoleon also took time to do a workshop with kids, answering questions about what it is really like to be a working artist, including tips for preparation and college study. He was also named "Best Supporting Actor" for his Summer 2018 performance as Jimmy Early in "Dreamgirls" at Memphis Playhouse on the Square. We love having him here - he was also awesome at the Music Theater Camp, June 10-21!



Spring Recital

The Spring Recital was held on Tuesday, April 30 at 6:30 p.m. at Luther Memorial Church. Students from seven different metro schools presented songs from the Classical, Contemporary and Music Theater traditions! We are so proud of our City Voices singers!



City Voices in the City



At the Iowa
State Education
Association's
Delegate
Assembly

*Isaiah Wade, Damaris Nelson, Esther Ubadigbo,
Antonesia Williams, Jordan Legvold, Shaddai
Johnson, Nixson Benitez, Quinn Matzen, Taryn Cook,
Saraya Waters, Tessah Smith*



At Miss Capital
City-Miss 80/35

Damaris Nelson (East, 11)



The Avenues
Small Business
Saturday Caroling

*Macey Cooper, Saraya Waters,
Teaching Artist Amanda Lowe,
Damaris Nelson*



Community
Foundation of
Des Moines Better
Together 2019

Taryn Cook (Brody, 7)

Damaris Nelson & Simon Estes



At the
CultureAll
Banquet honoring
Simon Estes



*Matt Eclatt, Nawal Rai, Shaddai
Johnson, Jordan Legvold meet
Simon Estes*



*Veronica Eclatt, Shaddai Johnson,
Jordan Legvold, Nawal Rai, Damaris
Nelson*

Ft. Des Moines
Veteran's Day
Ceremony



*Nixson Benitez, Veronica Eclatt,
Damaris Nelson, Mercedes Castillo
(alum), Saraya Waters*

MAKING IT LOOK EFFORTLESS

Antonesia Williams takes on the next chapter of her life

The word “effortless” is not one that would seem to apply to the schedule of a busy high school senior. Between classes, extracurricular activities, jobs, and family, the word “effort” may, in fact, not be strong enough to describe their whirlwind existence. And for students who want to pursue college and a career in music, there are additional burdens - auditions, additional applications, private lessons - it is enough to make one exhausted! But Antonesia Williams, a senior at East, is determined to make that word apply to her - and if her successes are any indication, it's working!

Antonesia has always known she wanted to be a lifelong musician, but also knew she had some gaps to fill in: “I wanted to involve music in my future career so I knew I had a lot to learn.” This included the knowledge about technique and the access to proper literature that is usually only available from a private teacher. So when a friend recommended City Voices to her, as a freshman, she jumped at the opportunity to receive voice lessons. And learn she has - since she joined, she has taken voice lessons, piano, music theory, Music Production, Hip Hop, A Cappella, Music Theater (where she memorably portrayed Mrs. Lovett from *Sweeney Todd*), and even done some ACT prep. And it's not just at City Voices - she has been seen on stages at her school and all over the Metro: as Danielle in *Bring It On* at Des Moines Young Artist's Theater (where she also did choreography), as Joanne in *Rent* at East, and in Master Classes at the Iowa High School Musical Theater Awards. She has appeared in City Voices events at the Edna Griffin Memorial Scholarship Awards, sponsored by the Des Moines Human & Civil Rights Commission, in a cappella groups at the Iowa State Educator's Association Delegate Assembly, in concert preceding the Iowa Dance Theater's Nutcracker Ballet, and in a special Christmas show at the Younker's Tea Room.

And that's not all: add in Upward Bound service projects, Show Choir, Chamber Choir, leads in straight acting roles, and a full schedule of advanced classes, and

you get a picture of a very busy young lady! But that's the way Antonesia is, and has always been, and somehow she makes it look effortless. There's that word again. In fact, that's what she strives for: when asked about her favorite song, she named “I'm Here” from *The Color Purple*. She says that the song is perfect for her because it's “definitely not easy but it's really fun to sing.” Her main challenge? “Making it look and sound effortless.” Any singer will tell you that this is much easier said than done - making things sound “effortless” is really very hard. But Antonesia has worked diligently, and now says that her biggest improvement since she started studying voice is her technique and her breath control. In her studies with Teaching Artists Sara Routh and Sarah Jorgenson, she says she has noticed a drastic difference in her range as well, in addition to gaining information and tools she can use in the future - although she is seeing some real rewards now, including Division I ratings and All-State nominations for Group Music Theater, the Special Recognition For Performance In A Principal Role award from the Iowa High School Music Theater Awards for her portrayal of “Danielle” in *Bring It On: The Musical*.

In her lessons, she has especially enjoyed being able to pick some of the songs she has studied, but she also appreciates the challenging songs that are picked for her. She notes, “I like that we can adjust and help find/work on music for upcoming events or auditions.” One of these auditions is what led her to consider Drake University, where she won a place in the freshman class of 2019-20, and where she plans to study Music Theater next year, hoping to receive her Bachelor's Degree in Musical Theatre. When asked about future plans, she says that she would love to make her living as a Music Theater performer.

All of her activities, onstage and off, don't leave her much leisure time; but when she finds an odd spare moment, she loves to - what else?! - sing, dance, and (like a typical teenager) watch YouTube! But none of those interfere with her ultimate focus - to use the skills she has learned from City Voices at college and beyond. She relates, “City Voices has helped me so much and I am extremely grateful I got to be a part of it. If it wasn't for City Voices I would not be the performer I am today.”

Effortless? She makes it look easy!



FINDING THE PASSION

Teaching Artist Amanda Lowe says that teaching can be an “awesome experience.”



Flashback to 2003: a shy young lady with a noticeably not-shy voice is leaving her Meredith Middle School classroom. Her teacher, Elaine Hagenberg stops her on the way out, saying she has something for her to hear; one Italian song and a convincing phone call with her parents later, and Amanda Lowe was introduced to her first voice lesson experience.

From that point on, she was hooked. She went on to graduate from Roosevelt High School, where she participated in Show Choir and Chamber Choir, and then went on to Augsburg College to participate in the Music Therapy degree. She finished her degree through a six month internship at Rainbow Mental Health Facility in Kansas. Upon her return to Des Moines, she re-united with her former Roosevelt teacher, Mary Anne Sims, at City Voices' very first recital, in the summer of 2013, and she has been a Teaching Artist ever since!

During her almost six-year stint at City Voices, she has shepherded many young singers through their high school careers, and has even helped prepare some for college music programs. In fact, she says “Definitely teaching someone from freshman year all the way to their senior year in order to receive a music scholarship to their college of choice is an awesome experience.” But her satisfaction is not limited to just those who study music in college - Amanda prides herself on individualizing her lessons, saying “I love trying to figure out what makes a student passionate and try to incorporate this into lessons. I want to help the students find their outlet and show progress in wherever their path takes them.”

And Amanda brings a lot of passion to her teaching - she says she especially loves teaching students how to use their voices so that their confidence, expression and musicality can really shine, and she loves to see “the happiness on students faces when they know that they have done good work. I always hope that that feeling will translate into the rest of their life and they can grow from their experience.” When asked about highlights from her long career, she says, “I think what makes me the proudest is when I see students that have worked hard recognized for their hard work. Their accomplishments through music are not necessarily limited to just competitions or grades, but also in creating music or putting out a selection of music that they have worked hard for (such as senior recital).”

Amanda, an expert in vocal pedagogy, also holds herself to the same high standards, continuing to increase her knowledge of music through taking private voice lessons herself and participating in community opera projects when the opportunity arises. She has also participated in competitions for the Met, and is considering becoming a member of a community choir, but she will have to find the time for that - her full-time job at a financial company (Cetera Financial) and numerous lessons give her little time for much else, although she has found time to take Italian, and visit Europe several times as well!

Outside of teaching, she says she loves listening to all types of music. She even gets some of her listening suggestions from her students, who, she says, “introduce me to a whole gamut of music. I listen to a lot of international music as well as I love to hear different languages.” Above it all, however, she continues to stay a student - she says, “I really enjoy learning classical music as I see a lot of challenge in incorporating all the elements of the compositions. Plus, I love the melodies.” She also loves reading, painting, and learning different languages. Oh, and she has also been introduced to working out and weight lifting, which she is “really getting into.” Maybe that’s no surprise at all - this lifelong learner and musician just continues to learn, and she continues to find outlets for herself as well!



**City Voices students are
succeeding all over the metro!**

TO IHSMA DIVISION I WINNERS:

Damaris Nelson (East, 11), Tessah Smith (East, 10), Esther Ubadigbo (Roosevelt, 11), Jordan Legvold (Roosevelt, 11), Matt Eclatt (Lincoln, 12) and Veronica Eclatt (Lincoln, 11) all received the highest rating possible, Division I, in the recent Iowa High School Music Association's Solo Contest, held at Dowling Catholic High School on April 6th.

TO IHSSA DIVISION I WINNERS:

Antonesia Williams (12), Damaris Nelson (11), Nawal Rai (12) and Tessah Smith (10) (all East), and Veronica Eclatt (11, Lincoln) all received Division I ratings at the Iowa High School Speech Association's Large Group and Solo Regional Contests. All these students advanced to State Competition, and Damaris was invited to perform her solo "Your Daddy's Son" from *Ragtime* at the All-State Showcase held at the University of Northern Iowa.

TO ALL-STATE SELECTIONS:

Matt Eclatt (Lincoln, 12) and Owen Yoder (Lincoln, 11), who were chosen to sing in the 600-member Iowa All-State Chorus in November, 2018.

TO SHOW CHOIR WINNER:

Shaddai Johnson (Roosevelt, 11) won 2nd place in the Solo Contest held at the Cedar Rapids Jefferson Show Choir Competition. She earned a performing spot in the Night Finals!

TO TEACHING ARTIST DANG FELTON:

Guitar Teaching Artist Dang Felton released his first music video, the original song "Mourning Bird," in April. View it at dangfelton.com.

TO CITY VOICES ALUMNI:

Allegra Hernandez (Urbandale, 2015) and Mayte Gomez-Cruz (North, 2015) are both on the Dean's List at their respective colleges. Allegra is studying Guitar and Music Business at Berklee College of Music, and Mayte is entering her senior year at the University of Iowa studying Music Therapy. Lorena Eclatt (Lincoln, 2018) was a contestant in the Miss 80/35 competition, held at Lincoln High School with the help of the awesome Lincoln Drama department. She sang and played an original song for her talent. The contest was organized by City Voices former Teaching Artist (and Miss Iowa 2017) Chelsea Dubczak. Original teaching artist Napoleon Douglas played "Simba" in *The Lion King Experience* at Hong Kong Disneyland October '18-March '19.

TO SONGWRITING STUDENTS:

Damaris Nelson (East, 11) and Abbie Phelps (Roosevelt, 11) both had their original compositions included in the Bravo Greater Des Moines's mixtape, distributed to attendees of their annual Gala, as well as on their Spotify playlist.

AND OUTSIDE THE PRACTICE ROOM:

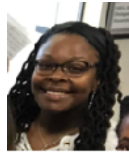
Nixon Benitez (Lincoln, 12) and Nawal Rai (East, 12) were both selected by their schools for the National Council on Youth Leadership. Joshua Ubadigbo (Roosevelt, 9) placed 3rd in the 110 Hurdles at the 2019 Drake Relays.

CITY VOICES IS PROUD OF OUR GRADUATING SENIORS!

WHAT COMES NEXT?



CONGRATULATIONS TO DESTINY FOSTER - who has been named to the City Voices Board of Directors. Destiny, a 2014 graduate of North High School and a 2018 graduate of the University of Iowa (B.A. Communications & Media Studies), was part of the first class of students in City Voices, and now works at the Principal Financial Group as a Client Service Associate. While at City Voices, she was named the winner of the Classical Voice category of the NAACP's ACT-SO youth talent and scholarship competition, and she advanced to National Competition in Las Vegas, NV. We are thrilled to welcome her back home!



Antonesia Williams (East) will be attending Drake University on a Theater Scholarship, and wishes to pursue a degree in Music Theater.



Albert Jones, Jr. (East) will be attending Iowa Central Community College on a Theater Scholarship, and wishes to pursue a degree in Music Theater as well as continue making his own music. He recently released a mixtape that he recorded at City Voices.



Sylvia Nguyen (Hoover) will be attending Iowa State University on an Upward Bound Scholarship.



Tanner Tillotson (East) will be attending Simpson College on a Theater Scholarship, and wishes to pursue Music Theater as well as earn a Teaching Certificate to become a Drama Teacher.



Nixson Benitez (Lincoln) will be attending the University of Northern Iowa on Scholarship, and wishes to pursue a degree in Theater.



Matt Eclatt (Lincoln) will be attending Iowa State University on Scholarship, and wishes to pursue Filmmaking and Business.

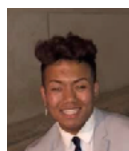
Hung Nguyen (Lincoln) will be attending IGrandview College. He wishes to study Dental Hygiene.



Justin Koromo (Hoover) will be attending Des Moines Area Community College. He wishes to study Graphic Design.



Tahzhae Burton (East) will be attending Iowa Central Community College on a Theater Scholarship, and wishes to pursue Business as well.



Nawal Rai (East) will be attending the University of Northern Iowa on Scholarship, and wishes to pursue Theater and, perhaps, Dance.

WHAT DID YOU DO THIS SUMMER?



WE WERE AT THE 2019 SUMMER MUSIC ACADEMY!

Our popular expanded program returned for the 7th consecutive summer! Featuring lessons in Voice, Guitar, Keyboard as well as Enrichment classes in Songwriting, Recording Mixing, Music Theater, Hip Hop, Music Production, A Cappella and College Prep Music Theory

Students learned from City Voices's outstanding music faculty and special guest artists.

INCLUDING:

Napoleon M. Douglas
Courtney Krause
DatDude Biggz
Dontae McKnight
Natalie Simon
Mary Anne Sims
Dang Felton
Amanda Lowe
Sarah Jorgenson
Jaime McTaggart
Jeremy Jorgenson

CHECK OUR FALL NEWSLETTER FOR PICTURES AND MORE STORIES OF SUMMER!

**FALL
SESSION
BEGINS
TUESDAY,
SEPTEMBER
3!**

SIGN UP NOW:

www.cityvoicesdesmoines.org

In Appreciation

For our 2017-18 supporters, both individual, organizational and corporate. We couldn't do what we do without them - and we are so very grateful!

CORPORATE/GRANTS

BRAVO Greater Des Moines
American Enterprise Foundation
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Empress Threads Boutique
American Music Literacy Assn.
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Foundation
WestBank Foundation
Community Foundation of Des Moines
Ortiz Fencing
Big Red Dog Promotion
Sims Law Office
Iowa State Education Association
Polk County

INDIVIDUALS

Anonymous
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Rhonda L. Olson
Jamie Krieg
C.O. Creations
Angelita Williams
Kathie Danielson
Elizabeth Keast Sedrel
Joanna Lamb
Ian Stillmunks
Taz Clayburn-Stills
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Scot Talcott
Lori & Victor Glawe
Hasija Terzie
Kenneth Naanep
Scott Long
Tory Schlievert Schrock

Ellen Bupp Harvey
Virginia Bennett
Anthony Rodari
Jessica Saunders
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Susan Hernandez
Blas Hernandez
Allegra Hernandez
Ashiah Anderson
Molly House
Judy Svengalis
Julie Tabor
J. Donovan Larson
Paul Larson
Rob O'Brien
Sarah Tallman Muehe
Jonathan Meeker
Marcia Teter
Nick Wilson
Karrah Rau
Micaiah Anderson
Jay Hamilton Radcliffe
Rachel Gulick
Elizabeth Horton
Matthew & Haley Harvey
Lisa Lenth
Judy Svengalis
Sylvester McCracken
Shiloh Ballantyne Zdunek
Ryan Milligan
Erin Davison Rippey
Kelley Brown
Paula Martinez
Claudia Hawkins
Mackie Saylor
Yolanda Rubio family
Carla Dawson
Diane Morain
Molly House
Ben Berger
William & Sarabeth Anderson



Find us on the web: www.cityvoicesdesmoines.org

On Facebook: www.facebook.com/cityvoicesdesmoines

On Twitter: @CityVoicesDSM

On Instagram: cityvoicesdesmoines

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR: Mary Anne Sims, B.M.,(Ulowa), Piano, Music Education

M.A. (Ohio State) Music Education

TEACHING ARTISTS: Sarah Jorgenson, B.M., Vocal Performance (U. Of Nebraska)

Sara Routh, B. MusEd, Vocal Performance (Simpson)

Amanda Lowe, B. S., Music Therapy (Augsburg, MN)

Dang Felton (guitar)

Natalie Simon, B.A., Music Performance (Berklee) (keyboard)

We are proud members of the Berklee City Music Network. The City Music Network is a consortium of 46 community United States and Canada high-quality contemporary from underserved members, City Voices programs that receive access



organizations across the committed to delivering music instruction to youth communities. Like the other provides out-of-schooltime to the Berklee PULSE Music

Method®, as well as other resources and support from Berklee College of Music. You can read more about the network at: <https://www.berklee.edu/city-music-network>.

HOW YOU CAN HELP:

- Through Amazon Smile - For every purchase you make, Amazon will donate 0.5% of the price directly to City Voices! Get your gift list fulfilled and support your local high school singers at the same time! <http://smile.amazon.com/ch/90-0988104>
- Through PayPal - just go to <https://cityvoicesdesmoines.org/how-you-can-help/> and click on the PayPal button - it's safe, secure, and easy!
- Or: you can mail your donation to City Voices, 924 45th Street, Des Moines, IA 50312

The City Voices Spring Recital was held on April 30, 2019, and featured students from 9 different Des Moines Public Schools! We are so proud of all of our singers!



City Voices

924 45th Street
Des Moines, IA 50312