



projectSTEP

FISCAL YEAR 2018 ANNUAL REPORT

DEAR FRIENDS,

Throughout fiscal year 2018 (July 1, 2017-June 30, 2018) we celebrated Project STEP's 35th anniversary, which culminated in a joyous and memorable concert in Jordan Hall in June. Our partners at the New England Conservatory generously made their magnificent performance space available to us, and musicians from the Boston Symphony Orchestra, (another STEP partner organization), graced the stage with their presence. The anniversary concert marked the conclusion of a year of much activity and accomplishment.

Once again, our students have made wonderful progress in their musicianship, and have made us so proud of their accomplishments. We welcomed Jin-Kyung Joen, as our new Artistic Director, and she immediately set to work, building upon the strong educational foundation already in place at Project STEP. In her first year as a full-time member of the Project STEP staff, Jin's tremendous experience as a teacher and coach were in evidence throughout the curriculum, and she purposefully worked to create more opportunities for performances by all of our students, through the introduction of regular student recitals.

In concert with a talented consultant, for ten months the members of the Project STEP staff and Board worked to devise and finalize a new strategic plan for the organization. In January 2018, the Board officially approved and adopted the 2018-21 Strategic Plan, which reaffirms our Mission, our Vision, and our Core Values. The Plan highlights five key goals for the upcoming three years: a focus on continued Board development as a function of our **Governance** process; enhanced **Organizational Effectiveness** to ensure that STEP has the necessary tools in place to maximize our potential as a high

performing non-profit; a **Relaunch** of our messaging about the Program to achieve greater visibility; a review of the **Facilities** necessary to best to serve our students; and a need for the development of a long-range fundraising plan to ensure our **Financial** goals.

In July 2018, Gabriella Sanna concluded her service as Project STEP's Executive Director. On behalf of the Board, I want to acknowledge with gratitude the many contributions that Gabriella made in her two years with Project STEP, and wish her well in her new venture. Similarly, all of us associated with Project STEP are deeply indebted to our friends and donors for your generous support; the successes described in this year's annual report could not have been achieved without your ongoing commitment to the mission of Project STEP. **Thank you.**

Sincerely,



A fluid, handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Diane M. Austin". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping tail.

Diane M. Austin
President, Board of Directors



OUR MISSION

Project STEP (String Training Education Program) recognizes that certain racial and ethnic minorities are vastly underrepresented in classical music. Its mission is to address this imbalance by identifying musically talented underrepresented students from Boston and surrounding communities, and providing them with comprehensive music and string instrument instruction. It sets the highest standards for disciplined study and performance, and offers a platform for students interested in pursuing classical music careers as well as other courses of study.

Core Values

- (1) We believe that the classical music profession should reflect racial and ethnic diversity.
- (2) We believe that children, if identified at an early age and immersed in long-term, rigorous music instruction, can flourish as professional classical musicians and as individuals, regardless of their ultimate career choice.
- (3) We believe that our students can reach their full potential when held to high standards and provided with the support and active engagement of teachers, mentors, family members, and alumni.
- (4) We believe that music can change lives and that the disciplined study of classical music enhances educational opportunities and opens doors for our students and their communities.



PROGRAMS

Project STEP Artistic Advisor and program alumna Mariana Green-Hill (above), teaches chamber lessons to 6th grade string players. As a former STEP student herself, Ms. Green-Hill serves as a teacher and an inspiring role model for STEP's students.

Project STEP provides a continuum of music instruction that begins when we enroll 50-100 five-year-olds from the Boston Public School system in our **FOCUS Program**, and continues through Grade 12. FOCUS introduces kindergartners from underrepresented populations to the study of music at an early age, generating enthusiasm and providing a bridge to further study at Boston-area music schools. It is also a gateway to the next level of Project STEP.

Each year, approximately four students from FOCUS are selected to continue their musical studies in **Project STEP's core program** (grades 1-12). Each student receives weekly private lessons, theory and/or solfège classes, chamber music, orchestra, summer music camp support, and an instrument. In addition, they receive enrichment opportunities including masterclasses and residencies with renowned chamber ensembles, and tickets to dozens of concerts each year. Project STEP is a model for creative youth development. In the course of studying music, young people develop social, creative, problem solving, collaborative, and critical thinking skills. These skills are widely transferable and enable youth to reach their full potential as musicians, students, and productive members of society.

A photograph of a woman and a young boy sitting on a grassy field. The woman, on the left, has short grey hair, wears sunglasses, a striped shirt, and a name tag that says "Deborah Wood". The boy, on the right, wears a blue polo shirt, a dark baseball cap, and shorts. They are both smiling and looking at each other. In the background, there are white tents and other people, suggesting an outdoor event or festival.

FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

By building extensive student and family support systems into the program itself, Project STEP is able to hold students to - and help them reach - high standards of achievement. Incoming families are paired with “buddy” families, which allows older children to mentor incoming children and experienced parents to provide guidance for new parents. Families spend hours together each Saturday in the lounge at Symphony Hall while their children are in class, and all parents are part of the Parents’ Council which meets monthly for ‘parent pulse checks’ and workshops on practical issues related to their children’s music education. That Council elects two representatives to the Board of Directors who serve as full voting members and help shape the organization’s policies. These parent representatives facilitate communication between parents and staff. At the

end of each year, Project STEP hosts a Spring Recital with a fundraising component planned and executed by the Parents’ Council. STEP’s depth of support for parents and families creates an atmosphere of encouragement, ownership, and responsibility. Parents are crucial to our students’ success, and their active involvement is one of STEP’s greatest strengths. *Photo courtesy of Boston Symphony Orchestra*

“Project STEP is more than talented children and expert faculty; it is also made of a network of real families who juggle multiple obligations. Despite all the other facets of our lives, we have chosen to prioritize Project STEP. We can’t help but follow in amazement as the program guides our children to new heights we couldn’t have imagined.” - STEP Parent

2017/2018 SNAPSHOT

The 2017/2018 year was filled with outstanding achievements from our students, events, concerts, collaborations with world renowned musicians, workshops, and over 80 hours of community service performed by our students.

HIGHLIGHTS:

Dr. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. DAY – The Project STEP community celebrated the life and legacy of Dr. King. This event held at Hibernian Hall in Roxbury, MA included performances and a panel discussion about the role of race in classical music. In addition STEP students played at the Museum of Fine Art's annual Martin Luther King Jr. Day Open House. Our students presented two sets of programs for more than 110,000 visitors who came to celebrate the legacy of Dr. King.

PRE-CONCERT PERFORMANCE IN BSO COMMUNITY CHAMBER CONCERT SERIES- Project STEP's Honors Quartet was featured in the Pre-Concert BSO performance at Bunker Hill Community College. *BSO Community chamber concerts provide high-quality, relevant and engaging performances by BSO musicians in community spaces throughout Massachusetts.*

PRE-CONCERT AND SIDE-BY-SIDE PERFORMANCE IN A FAR CRY CONCERT AT JORDAN HALL, NEW ENGLAND CONSERVATORY- A Far Cry welcomed the Honors Quartet from Project STEP, who gave a pre-concert performance in spring 2018. This appearance was the culmination of work between Project STEP students and the Criers that had taken place throughout the year.

PERFORMANCE FOR CARTOONFEST PRESENTED BY WCRB Several Project STEP student groups and soloists performed at the 19th annual Classical Cartoon Festival presented by 99.5 WCRB. The event took place in Symphony Hall for kids of all ages who came to enjoy the live performances as well as their favorite cartoons set to classical music on a giant screen.

PROJECT STEP'S 35TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION IN COLLABORATION WITH OUR PARTNERS, NEW ENGLAND CONSERVATORY OF MUSIC (NEC)

Celebrating 35 years of change in classical music, this extraordinary event took place at Jordan Hall at NEC in partnership with the New England Conservatory. The evening featured STEP musicians, performances from BSO musicians, and a tribute to William Moyer, a founder of STEP. *See background photo.*

PERFORMANCES & MORE:

Apple Hill String Quartet Recital/Masterclass, Boston Children's Museum, Boston Public Library, Brookhaven Retirement Community, Classical Cartoon Festival, FOCUS Recital, Masterclass with Gabriel Cabezas, Graduating Senior Recital, Spring Recital & Parent Benefit, Triple Helix Benefit Concert, Paper Violin Celebration at Bridge Boston Charter School, Mark O'Connor with Cape Symphony, A Far Cry Masterclass, Lasell Village (CCRC), Winsor Music Benefit Concert, BSO Community Chamber Pre-Concert Performance, Composition Collaboration with Triple Helix and Tufts.





IMPACT

In 2015, the Center for Collaborative Education and the Annenberg Institute for School Reform documented the major opportunity gaps that persist for Black and Latino males in the Boston Public Schools. These gaps impede their learning and lead to lower 4-year graduation rates than those of their white peers (Black students: 69%, Latino students: 67%, white students: 83%). These educational gaps continue to this day, even after decades of efforts to close them. Without equal access to educational opportunities, students of color are less likely to achieve success. Studies on diversity have highlighted the scarcity of musicians of color in orchestras, paralleling the lagging representation of non-whites in many areas including corporate America, higher education, and government, to name a few. The Institute for Policy Studies documented recent dramatic increases in wealth inequality indicating that a typical white family in America now holds a net worth twelve times greater than a typical Black family.

In many studies, researchers have documented that children who receive sustained music education are more likely to develop musical, language, cognitive, critical thinking, problem solving, character, and social skills that can help them to reach higher levels of achievement. Project STEP provides access to comprehensive music education for increasing numbers of children of color each year, helping them overcome the barriers that hinder their learning and achievement in academics and careers. Project STEP fosters equity by enabling these children to make the most of their talents and reach their full potential.

MEET OUR STUDENTS



ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT



Colin Benn (1998 STEP Graduate) is currently the Instrumental Ensemble teacher at Washington Heights and Inwood Music Community Charter School (WHIN), the first El Sistema based school in New York City where he provides daily string instruction to all of the students. He is also an active chamber and orchestral violist in the New York and Connecticut area.

From 2009 to 2016 Colin was resident violist at Music Haven, a nationally recognized, award-winning after-school arts program that provides tuition-free string instruction and free instruments to children in New Haven. Besides teaching, he performed and helped produce and curate a full season of performances by the Haven String Quartet and gave pre-concert lectures at Yale University Art Gallery. He was also the founding producer of an annual musical

celebration honoring the life and work of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. performed by Music Haven students and the St. Luke's Steel band. Colin began his career in Brazil, where he played in the 2003 season in the viola section of the Brazilian Symphony Orchestra in Rio de Janeiro. In the 2004 season of the Sao Paulo Symphony Orchestra, with which he toured South America. His passion for opera led Colin to play two seasons as assistant principal violist of the Multipromo Opera Festival in Florence, and earlier played two seasons with the Spoleto Festival orchestra in Umbria. Since 2008, he has been a member of the Tri-Cities Opera orchestra in upstate New York. In 2015 he founded the Acoustic Jazz and Classic Trio, in which he doubles on viola and bass.

Colin earned a Bachelor of Music degree at the Juilliard School in viola performance and a Master of Music degree from the Longy School of Music of Bard College. He is pursuing a Master of Education in Music degree at Teachers College, Columbia University and lives in Harlem with his wife, Denise, and their 18-month old daughter.



Colin Benn and BSO cellist Owen Young (right) - circa 2007

SCHOLARS



Above: Angelina Wallace, Grade 7 violin (left) and Gui Vignon, Grade 6 cello (right) received the Bond Scholarship for their studies in music.



In 2007, Barbara N. Kravitz established a scholarship for one advanced STEP student to be selected each year in memory of her husband, Dr. Arthur Kravitz. As Past President of the Board, he loved classical music and believed strongly in the mission of Project STEP. We were pleased to award the 2018 Kravitz Scholarship to Nathan Theodore, Grade 8 Violin (above).



Left: Isabel Garita-Chin, Grade 9 violin received the George James Webb Scholarship contributed by The Boston Society of the New Jerusalem. In 2018, Isabel went on to play with The Boston Pops at Franklin Park, performing a solo for the multitude of guests in attendance.

Also in 2007 Judge Levin H. Campbell established a scholarship fund in honor of his wife, Eleanor L. Campbell, a long-time Project STEP supporter. Scholars are chosen on the basis of merit, dedication, and community involvement. Project STEP was pleased to award the 2018 Eleanor L. Campbell Scholarship to Tayja Sallie, Grade 9 cello (right).





SUMMER CAMPS

Music camps are often some of the most productive and influential experiences for our students. In gorgeous country settings, students have many hours each day to play chamber and orchestral music with students from all over the world. Away from academic and other day to day obligations that compete with music, they enjoy relaxed but determined goal-oriented music-making in combination with fun and healthy outdoor experiences. Their identities as music students are heightened by being surrounded with campers who share and celebrate their passion. The combination of intensity, beauty, structure, physical freedom, and bonds formed among campers and members of the faculty, contribute to lifelong memories.

This summer, our students attended camps that included Rivers School Music Camps, Four Strings Academy, Sphinx Performance Academy, Apple Hill Summer Chamber Music Workshop, Camp Encore/Coda, Point CounterPoint, Indian Hill Music, Greenwood Music Camp, Berklee Global String Program, and the Harlem Quartet Workshop at Music Mountain. In addition several STEP students played with the Boston Philharmonic Youth Orchestra for the 2018 Tour to Europe (Germany, Czech Republic, Hungary, Austria, and the Netherlands).

This incredible opportunity is provided to every Project STEP student for two to six weeks each summer. In order to help cover the costs of these programs and make them accessible to all of our students, we combine funds from Project STEP with scholarships from the camps themselves and special support from the following generous funders: the late Susan Rothenberg and the Janey Fund, Winsor Music, The Willow Tree Fund, The Mary Saudek Jaffee Fund, and The Ramsey McCluskey Family Foundation.

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*At the conclusion of fiscal year 2018 the following Board of Director Members fulfilled their terms of service and stepped down: Gregory E. Bulger, Goetz Eaton, Dianne Luby, Christophe Oliver, Marcus Thompson, and Catherine Toppin.

+ In memory of Dr. Daniel I. Palant

**At the conclusion of fiscal year 2018, Gabriella Sanna accepted a position at The Rivers School and Ali Fessler took a position with A Far Cry. Alyssa Lee now serves as the Executive Director in FY2019.

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Gifts to the 2018 Instrument Fund Drive

The Klarman Family Foundation generously matched these donors' gifts. As a result, Project STEP was able to acquire seven pre-professional instruments and twelve bows that will be used by our most advanced students.

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Goetz Eaton and Ted Davis
James W. Gorman and Terri Lorenz
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The Still Waters Fund
The Willow Tree Fund

FINANCIALS

Sources of Income FY2018

Support from Individuals	\$332,258
Support from Foundation & Government Grants	\$199,475
Investment Income	\$32,075
Donated Space, Instruments, Services	\$51,510
Program Fees & Honoraria	\$18,729

Total Income **\$634,047**

Use of Funds FY2018

Program	\$425,744
Administrative	\$213,959
Fundraising	\$104,573

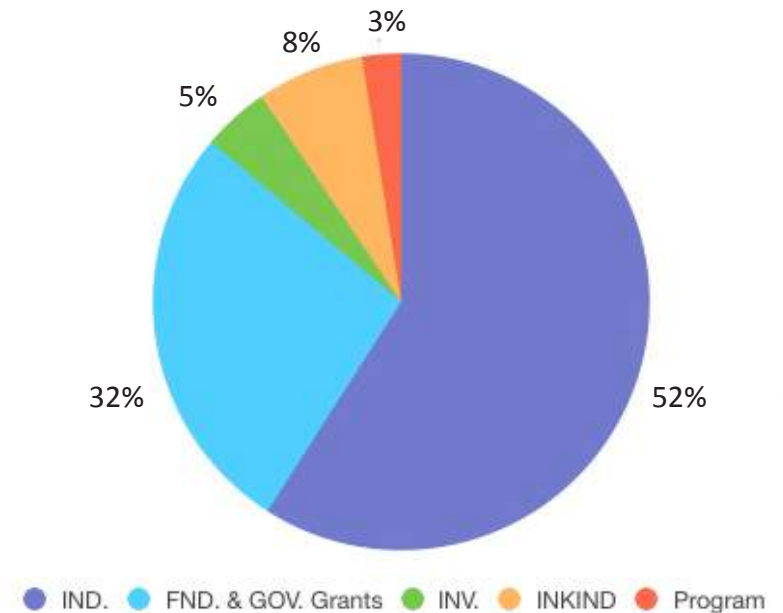
Total Expenses **\$744,276**

Change in Net Assetts from Operations (\$110,299)

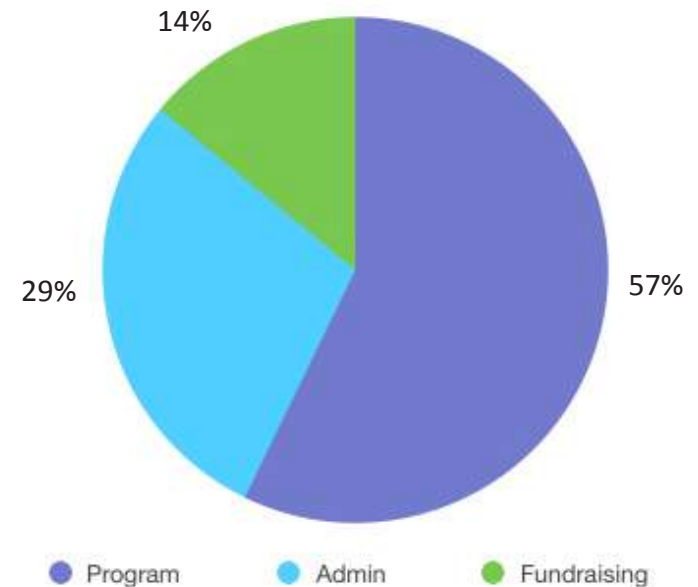
Bequest Received FY2018/ Allocated FY2017 \$102,980
Change in Value of Investments \$93,431

Change in net assets **\$86,182**

SOURCES OF INCOME \$634,047



USES OF FUNDS \$744,276



FINANCIALS

PROJECT STEP, INC. STATEMENTS OF FINANCIAL POSITION June 30, 2018 and 2017

	2018	2017
ASSETS		
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 57,548	\$ 27,825
Investments	1,756,863	1,730,018
Contributions receivable, net	181,831	117,000
Prepaid expenses	-	18,000
Office equipment, net of depreciation of \$18,913 and \$15,736 in 2018 and 2017, respectively	6,325	9,503
Music instruments, net of depreciation of \$291,897 and \$278,100 in 2018 and 2017, respectively	107,178	112,574
Total assets	\$ 2,109,745	\$ 2,014,920
LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS		
Liabilities:		
Accounts payable and accrued expenses	\$ 11,305	\$ 2,662
Total liabilities	11,305	2,662
Net assets:		
Unrestricted	1,561,385	1,473,087
Temporarily restricted	149,955	152,071
Permanently restricted	387,100	387,100
Total net assets	2,098,440	2,012,258
Total liabilities and net assets	\$ 2,109,745	\$ 2,014,920





projectSTEP

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Partners:



All Photos by: Abdi Ali, Alberto Casiano , Michael J. Lutch, Boston Symphony Orchestra , & Project STEP