

soundscapes

Changing lives through music



Annual Report: July 1, 2019 – June 30, 2020

A Year of Key Change

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REFLECTIONS ON THE YEAR

Dear Friends of Soundscapes,

This past year was one we will never forget. None of us could have anticipated in July of 2019 that we would end the fiscal year with our staff working remotely, our students learning virtually, and the structure of our fall program in question as school systems debated reopening.

When schools shut down in March to slow the spread of the novel coronavirus, our staff members and Board got to work immediately. They knew we needed to continue providing high quality music education to students who wouldn't otherwise have access, and they recognized that music would be more important than ever in our students' lives. The song couldn't stop; we just needed to change keys. For some of our students, this was no metaphor—their learning at Soundscapes shifted from the piano keys of their electronic keyboards to their computer keyboards.

I am incredibly proud of our program staff for their flexibility and creativity in the face of an unprecedented challenge. I am also proud of our administrative team and our Board—especially my predecessor, Robert R. Hatten, who ended his 11-year tenure as Chairman in June—for their leadership. This year has been a test for all nonprofit organizations, large and small, and I believe that Soundscapes' continued success shows what a strong and capable program it has become.

***THE SONG COULDN'T STOP;
WE JUST NEEDED TO
CHANGE KEYS.***

Even before the move to virtual learning, this was already a noteworthy year for Soundscapes, as you will see in this report. We expanded to a new location for the first time in January. We hosted our first fundraising gala in September,



featuring an unforgettable performance by award-winning bass player Victor Wooten. We recognized an extraordinary student, Lanasia Walls, for reaching a milestone 10 years in our program.

Even as we have changed keys, the song Soundscapes plays in the lives of our students and our community continues undiminished.

Sincerely,

J.W. Whiting Chisman, Jr.
Chairman of the Board of Directors

ABOUT THE PROGRAM

July 2019–March 2020

For the first half of the year, Soundscapes provided high-intensity, professional-quality music instruction on-site in Newport News Public Schools for two hours every afternoon. During the program, professional musicians taught increasingly complex music theory and practice to children. Student musicians were divided into levels, based on age and ability. Students in Level 1 learned



the fundamentals of music. By Level 2, students selected an instrument for mastery. By Level 3—typically 4th grade—students actively performed in instrumental ensembles. The most advanced students, both musically and socially, were in Level 4, where they took private lessons, performed in more advanced community groups, and mentored younger students. The children not only grew as artists, they also developed the skills required to succeed in school and beyond.

March–June 2020

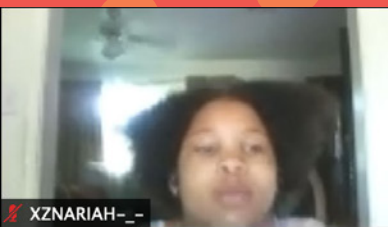
In March, schools across Virginia shut down to help slow the spread of COVID-19. In response, Soundscapes launched a new web-based version of its program. Using Zoom, Google Classroom, and other tools, **Soundscapes Virtual** allows students to connect with teaching artists and classmates to continue studying music and improving their skills at home.

The program staff and students at Soundscapes made an incredible effort to shift rapidly to completely new instructional methods in the spring. Each student took his or her instrument home the last day of school. From March 16 through the end of June, the Teaching Artists developed assignments the students could complete from home, created instructional videos, hosted live group discussions, and gave one-on-one virtual lessons. All of these components were new to Soundscapes and demonstrate the teaching staff's creativity, flexibility, and commitment to providing music education to students who would not otherwise have access.





Soundscapes is proud to be a member of El Sistema USA, a national alliance of like-minded music education programs across the country. El Sistema-inspired programs like Soundscapes believe music is the ideal vehicle for social change. Learn more at <https://elsistemausa.org>.



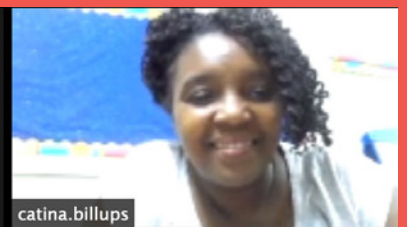
XZNARIAH--



Joseph Hamm



Diamond



catina.billups



deandre



Jaliyah Stewart



jaelynballou



Reynaldo Ramirez



LaNasia



Ciara Alexander



vehua



Zakikyah



Kimorah J



Mrs. Ballou



Amazyn P.

GREENWOOD



This year, Soundscapes expanded its program to a new location for the first time in its 11-year history. The new Soundscapes program at Greenwood Elementary School started with 25 Level 1 students in January. By the time schools closed in March, the Greenwood students had already become an important part of the Soundscapes family. Students from Greenwood have been some of the most engaged learners in **Soundscapes Virtual**!



Profile of a Greenwood Student

Seven-year-old José joined Soundscapes in January when our program expanded to Greenwood Elementary. Even though he hasn't been with Soundscapes long, "Soundscapes is genuinely a second family to us," José's mom tells us. "Since the first day that José joined, it just felt like immediate warmth and welcome."

José and his classmates had been working hard learning notes and rhythms when schools closed due to COVID-19, but they hadn't been issued an instrument yet. Soundscapes soon sent recorders to him and all Greenwood students, and they spent the spring learning how to play them through online lessons with Teaching Artist Ciara Baker. Ciara tells us José was incredibly shy at first during the online lessons, but quickly gained confidence and is doing very well. His mom says José practices for 20 to 30 minutes, 3 or 4 times a week, thanks in part to how easy it is to use **Soundscapes Virtual**. She also tells us José has been taking especially good care of his recorder and keeping an organized music folder, and how proud she is to see his passion and dedication. Everyone at Soundscapes is proud of José, too!

THE STUDENTS

150

STUDENT
PARTICIPANTS
JULY 2019



47

STUDENT
PARTICIPANTS
AUGUST 2019



CARVER
Colts

157

STUDENT PARTICIPANTS
SEPTEMBER 2019–MARCH 2020



GREENWOOD
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

25

STUDENT
PARTICIPANTS
JANUARY 2020–
MARCH 2020

soundscapes
VIRTUAL

123

STUDENT
PARTICIPANTS
MARCH 2020–
JUNE 2020

MEDAL RECIPIENTS

10 YEARS

LANASIA
WALLS

Viola



Most years, students who have been in Soundscapes for 5 or 10 years receive recognition and a special award during the final concert of the year. Since this year's May concert had to be cancelled, the 5-year medals and 10-year trophies were delivered to the students' homes and a special presentation ceremony was live-streamed over Facebook.

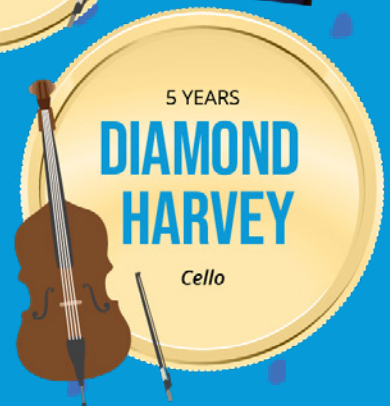
Lanasia Walls

Soundscapes has been a part of Lanasia Walls' life for 10 years. The 16-year-old started with the Level 1 bucket band and chose viola as her instrument in 3rd grade. "I love it," she shares. "I chose it because it's nice; I love the quality and sound of it."

Before schools closed and Soundscapes switched to virtual programming, in-person rehearsals were Lanasia's favorite part of Soundscapes. Even with all the changes, "I like the way they're doing it," she says. "I don't really get to see people a lot, but I get to see their faces and it brings me joy." The daily morning meeting with behavioral specialist Catina Billups is a highlight of Lanasia's day. "She helps you with whatever you're going through." Even though rehearsal is now online with **Soundscapes Virtual**, Lanasia still enjoys it. "My most favorite is going into breakout rooms for rehearsal. It's like you get one-on-one time with Ms. Kim. Whatever you need help with, you can ask."

Connecting with the younger students is also important to Lanasia. "You see the younger kids, like they were you yourself, so you go back and you mentor them and teach them everything that you learned, and you feel like you're giving back," she explains. When asked if she had any advice for those younger students, Lanasia replied, "Take risk, believe in yourself. Go for it."

Watch Lanasia receive her award at:
annualreport.soundscapes.org/lanasia



FINANCIAL DETAILS

FY20 EXPENSES

FUNDRAISING
\$86,822.06

9%

ADMINISTRATION
\$86,822.36

9%

82%
PROGRAM
\$470,355.25



FY20 INCOME

8%

BUSINESSES
\$62,481

2%

**GIFTS IN
KIND/OTHER**
\$11,898.29

10%

**PUBLIC/
GOVERNMENT**
\$78,607

38%

FOUNDATIONS
\$300,339.12

43%

INDIVIDUALS
\$338,847.21

FIRST FUNDRAISING GALA

In September of 2019, Soundscapes hosted its first fundraising gala in support of the students. Award-winning bass player and Denbigh High School graduate Victor Wooten headlined the event at the Newport News Marriott and played several songs with the students. During the gala, Soundscapes honored two of its founding board members: Robert R. Hatten and Alan A. Diamonstein.



SEE THE FULL GALA PHOTO GALLERY ON FACEBOOK
tiny.cc/soundscapes-gallery



SEE THE FULL COLLECTION OF VIDEOS ON YOUTUBE
tiny.cc/soundscapes-videos

OUR SUPPORTERS

Platinum

Joseph and Patricia Barto
Carnegie Hall
J.W. Whiting Chisman Jr.
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Earl & Waverly Charitable Fund
Robert R. Hatten, Esq.
Anne Henry
John & Marjorie Holt
Patten, Wornom, Hatten
& Diamonstein
Peninsula Community Foundation
of Virginia
Petters Family Foundation
VuBay Foundation
ToweBank

Gold

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Foundation
Helen and Murray Main Foundation
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TMG
The Rona Jaffe Foundation
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Rene Wenleder

Silver

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Wythe Holt
IECA Foundation
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Charles & Gloria Brooks
Ward & Anne Cates
Community Knights, Inc.
D'Addario Foundation
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David & Helene Egilman
Trip Ferguson
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William Harty
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Erin and Stacy Jewell
Adrienne Ryder Cook Joseph
Kiwanis Club of Greater Hilton
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Drs. Wayne & Rebecca Lett
The Main Street Preservation Trust
Hugh & Elizabeth McCormick
Patrick & Elaine McDermott
Newport News Arts Commission
Payday Payroll Services
Richard Rabil
Donald & Joy Ragland
Donald & Louise Ragland
Riverside Health System
Rotary Club of Oyster Point
Bill & Tудie Saunders
Hon. Bobby Scott
Jim & Becki Shamblen
St. Andrew's Episcopal Church
Troy & Theresa Stavens
Dr. Ruth Steinberg
Mark & Jennifer Stevens
John & Ellen Tompkins
Terry E. & Patty L. Hall
Philanthropic Fund of the
Peninsula Community
Foundation
The Beach Group
James & Mildred Wassum
Karen Wilds

Supporter

Joan D. Aaron
Charles & Susan Armfield
George & Mary Lynn Askew
Joni Baker
Joseph Barto IV
Claire Bellecci
Jason Benson
Todd Beyer
Joyce Blaylock
Christopher Bond
Rebecca Boon
Mary Dame Broad
Susan & Randy Bryant
Cristy Burguete
Carol Butler
Stenette and Tonya Byrd
Christine Cann
Thomas Carbin
Judith Carey
Lindsey Carney
Christina Carpenter
Douglas & Rosanne Cary
Raymond & Christine Challoner
City of Hampton
CNU Greek Music Societies
Kristin Cochran
Leroy & Cora Collins
Colonial Williamsburg Foundation
Commonwealth of Virginia House
of Delegates
James Conklin
Bettie Minette Cooper
Wilson & Ann Cooper
Mrs. Susan Cowling
Cozzy's Comedy Club & Tavern
Sylvia Craft
Dorothy Critzer
Michael Curry
Gordon & Jane Cutler
Sue Danehy
Paul Danehy & Shelly Simonds
Suzanne Daniel
Virginia Darden
David & Kerri Difiore
Dominion Energy Charitable
Foundation

Fidelity Charitable Gift Fund
 Eugene Foster Jr.
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 Gordon Gentry, Jr.
 General Federation of Women's
 Clubs, Hampton Roads Chapter
 Rob & Susan Goetz
 Bill & Janice Grace
 Mary Grant
 Carlyle Gravely
 David Gregory
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 Margaret Gregory
 LeRoy & Kathi Griffin
 Michael Hamm
 Hampton Roads Eye Associates,
 Oyster Point
 Julie Hanks
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 Village Inc.
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 Laufer Insurance & Financial
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 Luxur-Eyes Optometric Center
 Manhattan's NY Deli & Pub
 Charlotte Anthony Mason-Gordon
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 Amy Nathan
 Jim Neff
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 Newport News Public Schools
 Bradley Norris
 Ralph and Pam Northam
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 Rick Overbaugh
 Kelly and Dave Peck
 Susan Perrin
 Stephanie Perry
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 PMP Marketing Group, LLC
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 Reynaldo & Cynthia Ramirez
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 Patricia Rober
 Cynthia Rohlf
 Neal & Barbara Rosenbaum
 Robert & Alice Rubinstein
 Janet Salley
 D. Scott
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 Winthrop & Jane Short
 Robert Shuford
 Laurence Smail
 Mary & Mike Smith
 Mr. & Mrs. Robert and Jane Smola
 Luvia and Tim Sniffen
 David Speck
 Raymond Spencer
 Brandy Stajkowski
 Joseph Stellute
 Wendy Stephens
 Margie Stinson
 Anne Sweetman
 The Mariners' Museum
 Daniel Trahey

Paul & Rosemary Tribble
 Helmuth Treishmann &
 Tamzen Burgess
 Karl Troll
 Sandra Tudor
 William Grace
 Charlotte and Doug Vaughan
 W.M. Jordan Company
 Valerie Wallace
 Bobby & Joy Walters
 Clara L. Warren
 Avery Waterman Jr.
 William Weaver Jr.
 Michael Piercy & Wendy Drucker
 Virginia Wertman & Stanley Bolding
 Elizabeth Whetstine
 William Wilds
 Josephine Williams
 Susan Wilson
 Tom and Karen Wilson
 Jim & Joan Wool
 Betty Wrightson
 Woman's Club of Hilton Village

In-Kind

ARTINSPIRED
 William & Nancy Beach
 J.W. Whiting Chisman Jr.
 Alan* and Beverly Diamonstein
 Ferguson Center for the Arts
 Hauser's Jewelers
 Roslyn Haysbert
 Mr. Howard Hoege
 John & Marjorie Holt
 Jeff's Flowers Of Course
 Mellen Street Creative
 Sarah Rose
 Robert & Alice Rubinstein
 Schlesinger's
 Ray & Beverly Van Ausdal
 Virginia Peninsula Chamber
 of Commerce

*DECEASED

The list above reflects donations and pledges made between July 1, 2018 and June 30, 2019. In spite of our best efforts, errors occasionally occur. If you notice a mistake, please accept our apologies and contact Carol Minter at cminter@soundscareshr.org or 757-273-6178 x5 so we can correct our records.

LOOKING AHEAD

Dear Friends,

Our mission has always been to provide early social intervention by removing barriers to youth music education. In FY2021 we view our mission through a broader lens.

The inequities exposed by the 2020 pandemic have expanded our understanding of what it means to teach and learn in a framework emphasizing social justice and have underlined our commitment to social change on a systemic level.

By providing access to intensive music education and instruments at no cost, Soundscapes has given a voice to over 1800 students since we opened in 2009.

The onset of the pandemic this spring and our shift to **Soundscapes Virtual** created an unexpected detour in the road of our previous growth. We remain committed to our mission and to the students already enrolled in our program and look forward to eventually returning to our previous path with new knowledge and insights.

**SOUNDSCAPES HAS
GIVEN A VOICE TO OVER
1800 STUDENTS SINCE
WE OPENED IN 2009.**

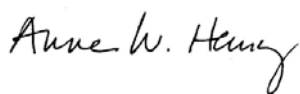
FY2021 opened in July with Soundscapes taking over management and administration of the Peninsula Youth Orchestra. This change, which followed four years of strong partnership between our organizations, will allow the 60-year-old orchestra to continue serving advanced musicians across the Peninsula. For these students, virtual study will consist of a series of weekend workshops.

Even in this unusual time, our instructors are strengthening their skills and preparing to return to the classroom. We learned in June that Soundscapes was invited by Carnegie Hall to be a PlayUSA partner in FY2021. This exclusive professional development community will allow our teaching artists to build their skills with music education experts from around the country.

There are still many unknown answers to when and how we will be able to reconvene in person, sharing classroom and rehearsal space with Newport News Public Schools teachers and students. In preparation, we are creating safety plans especially designed for music education.

We hope to form a live ensemble of PYO students as early as February 2021 if it is safe to do so. The PYO program extends Soundscapes' curriculum demographically and regionally, and we are excited about growing it into one of the Commonwealth's premier youth orchestras!

Thanks to all of you who make our program possible!



Anne Henry



Reynaldo Ramirez



HOW TO SUPPORT



Make a Gift

The vast majority of students at Soundscapes are considered economically disadvantaged, which is why our program is FREE to all participants. You make our program possible with your generous support!

For individual gifts of at least \$500 and corporate gifts of at least \$616, we are pleased to offer Neighborhood Assistance Program state tax credits worth 65% of your donation. That means the out-of-pocket cost of a \$1,000 donation would be only \$350. NAP tax credits are available on a first-come, first-served basis. Please call to confirm availability before making your gift.

[SOUNDSCAPES.ORG/DONATE](https://soundscapes.org/donate)

Sponsor a Child

Through the Sponsor a Child program, you can provide the gift of music for an individual student at Soundscapes! Sponsor levels start at just \$12.50 per month (\$150 per year). For \$100 per month (\$1,200 per year), you can fully cover the cost to provide high-quality music education for one child for an entire year. A child is waiting for you--transform a life through music today!

[SOUNDSCAPES.ORG/SPONSORACHILD](https://soundscapes.org/sponsorachild)

Donate an Instrument

Do you have an instrument hidden away in a closet or under a bed that hasn't been played in a while? Consider donating it to Soundscapes! For students from low-income households, purchasing or renting an instrument can be a significant barrier, which is why we provide free instruments for all students in the program.

Volunteer Your Time

We provide volunteer opportunities to suit your needs, whether you are looking for a regular commitment to work with the students during weekday afternoons, a one-time volunteer opportunity during an event, or something in between. Let us know your interests and availability, and we will be glad to find a way for you to get involved!

***We always welcome questions from our supporters and friends.
Contact Development Director Carol Minter anytime at
757-273-6178 Ext. 5 or cminter@soundscapeshr.org to learn more.***

The background of the entire page is a light cream color. It is decorated with a pattern of musical notes and a treble clef. The notes are in two colors: a muted sage green and a pale yellow. They are scattered across the page, some appearing to float above and below a series of thin, curved green lines that resemble musical staves. A large, faint treble clef is also visible in the center-right area.

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