

## NEWSLETTER | JULY 2024



## *Summer greetings to everyone!*

**It has been a very busy year at the Foundation. As you will learn below, we gave out \$3.43 million in grants in support of music both locally and nationally.**

I also urge you to read this newsletter to learn about upcoming grant application guidelines and deadlines. We are always looking to make the grant process easier, and one that has proven successful is the oral reporting process. After two years of offering this process, those who have participated have shared their appreciation for the opportunity to share their updates via Zoom. You can learn more about oral reporting below.

In addition to our usual activities, we began a strategic planning process to determine the path of The Presser Foundation in the years to come. We have devoted a lot of time to drafting a vision statement for the Foundation, and we will also be looking at our giving strategies, to determine the type of giving we want to provide in the future. I want to thank the Board, the staff, and our consulting firm 8 Bridges Workshop for all the efforts and wonderful ideas that are emerging as part of this process. This process is going to take time, and in the meantime, The Foundation is continuing its giving via the current grant areas and process.

In accordance with our bylaws, Corey Smith and Mark Wait have stepped off the Board as Trustees. I want to take a moment to thank both of them for their service. Corey provided invaluable advice and ideas to the Foundation for 19 years and served on several committees during his tenure, where he shared his extensive knowledge and gave sage advice. Mark was a wonderful head of the Scholar Award Committee where he championed and embraced a major change in the Undergraduate Scholar Award guidelines that are more in line with our values. I am thrilled that both have been elected as Honorary Trustees, so we will continue to have them serve on Board committees in advisory capacities.

We are thrilled to announce that Eve Hyppolite, Denise Iemolo, and Mary Ellen Poole have been elected as new Board members. We are also excited that Zulma Arria and Georges Buzaglo have agreed to join the Foundation as committee members. Georges is serving on the DEI Committee and Zulma is on the Assistance to Music Teachers Committee. You can learn more about Eve, Denise, Mary Ellen, Zulma and Georges below.

Sepehr Pirasteh is ending his year as the Foundation's Graduate Music Fellow, and we are sorry to see him go. I encourage you to read his blog posts on the local music scene. You can find his blog posts, and all the blog posts [here](#). The Presser Foundation accepts blog posts written by partners to enable them to share their stories, click [here](#) and scroll down for more information on this initiative.

Finally, I want to thank the wonderful staff supporting The Presser Foundation, Teresa Rodgers, Executive Director, and her team Abby Rolland, Rachael Gartner, and Jill Feldman. Their tireless efforts are outstanding and much appreciated!

*Ellen Rosen*  
President of the Board of Trustees

# GRANT GUIDELINES

Grant applications for the 2024-25 year are now open! Learn more about each regional grantmaking area – **Advancement of Music**, **Special Projects**, and **Capital Support** – and their criteria at [our website](#). You can also contact our staff if you have questions about eligibility requirements and/or the focus of each area. For current grantees, visit our website and click the "Apply Now" button to access the applications via our grants management system.

## GRANT ANNOUNCEMENTS



Capital Harmony Works received a Special Projects grant to pilot the Trenton Chamber Orchestra, which consists of high-level, dedicated performers from the Trenton Music Makers Orchestra. Pictured is Hans, a member of the Orchestra.



An Advancement of Music recipient, Black Pearl Chamber Orchestra offers engaging performances and innovative educational programming designed to inclusively engage and cultivate diverse audiences. Photo of a performance at The Barnes Foundation.



Through a Capital Support grant, Westrick Music Academy (WMA) will update its cataloging system. The update will deepen WMA's ability to track musical selections and enhance its mission of education. Pictured is the combined Princeton Girlchoirs.

## 2023-24 Total Grantmaking

**While music organizations continue to face challenges of funding, staff retention, volunteer recruitment, and audience attendance, they creatively engage their communities in the creation and performance of music. They also generate economic impact for Southeastern Pennsylvania – arts and culture organizations (which includes music organizations) and their audiences have a combined economic impact of \$3.3 billion.**

The Foundation is pleased to contribute to these wonderful organizations and gave more than \$3.43 million this fiscal year to six grantmaking areas: Advancement of Music, Assistance to Music Teachers, Capital Support, Graduate Music Award, Special Projects, and Undergraduate Scholar Award.

The Foundation gave **Special Projects** grants to 12 music organizations. Three organizations received funding for pilot programs, one was awarded a grant for a collaborative project, and eight newer organizations received general operating support. Projects ranged from starting a new chamber ensemble for high-level performing youth to producing and sharing unique videos online to expand access to Latin chamber and popular music to schoolchildren. In addition, four organizations received the second installment of a multi-year grant, and four organizations received honorariums for presenting at the Next

Movement Idea Forum for Centering Community Voice. In total, \$122,500 was given through Special Projects.

The **Advancement of Music** Committee approved single-year and multi-year general operating support grants totaling \$1,278,500 million to 124 music organizations. The organizations' budgets ranged from \$13,000 to \$54 million.

**Capital Support** grants totaling \$474,125 to 16 music organizations. Funding provides both single-year and multi-year support for traditional building projects and equipment and technology grants, including audio upgrades, archival materials for preserving musical scores, music production hardware and software, lighting equipment for a small studio, and more. An additional \$563,500 was paid this year for previous commitments.

During the 2023-24 year, the **Undergraduate Scholar Award** program underwent a fundamental realignment to serve students and center equity better. Changes to the program include adding 37 new Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) and Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs) and seeking nominations for students who exemplify the Award criteria. Learn more about these changes and some of the students who received the Undergraduate Scholar Award in [this blog post](#).

The Foundation also continued its support of the **Graduate Music Award** program. A graduate student at 15 exceptional music institutions received \$10,000 in support of a specific project related to their area of study. Graduate student research proposals focus on topics such as commissions of six Balinese composers; a sonic installation about coral reef endangerment; and the creation of case studies examining Hispanic/Latine students in music education.

Finally, The Presser Foundation supports retired music teachers with financial need through **Assistance to Music Teachers**. Read [this interview](#) with one of the recipients about what the support means to her.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### June 2024

## NEXT MOVEMENT: PA CultureCheck

In June, the Foundation partnered with the Greater Philadelphia Cultural Alliance and PA Humanities to present the **2023 PA CultureCheck**. Read the highlights in the [reflection blog post](#), or [watch the recording](#) (passcode: c.7R6G6v) to learn more.

### September 2024

## NEXT MOVEMENT: Call For Presenters

The Foundation received requests to support Customer Relationship Manager (CRM) systems in the 2023-24 Capital Support grantmaking area. Based on the interest in the topic, the Foundation will host a Next Movement Idea Forum on how to engage audiences, donors, and other stakeholders with a CRM and why having an effective system matters. We are looking for a panel of four presenters. If you would like to present at this virtual Forum, please email Abby Rolland ([arolland@presserfoundation.org](mailto:arolland@presserfoundation.org)) with your name, organization, and a brief synopsis of how you're using your CRM to engage your audiences,

donors, and other stakeholders. Your organization will receive an honorarium of \$250 for your participation if selected. To learn more about Next Movement, visit [our website](#). **The deadline to submit is August 1, 2024.**

## PARTNER SPOTLIGHT

### Music For Everyone - Summer Camp

Music for Everyone (MFE), a music education organization based in Lancaster, PA, provides music resources and experiences to transform lives, schools, and communities. Every year, MFE hosts Camp MFE, its summer camp for 100-200 students, incorporating music instruction while emphasizing skills such as cooperation, collaboration, and teamwork. A free program, Camp MFE seeks to help students experience positive social development through music and gain an expansion of music expression with new repertoire. MFE received a Special Projects grant to offer more transportation options for students (as transportation is often a barrier to attendance) and the opportunity to bring in high-quality teaching artists to teach students more about music.

### Undergraduate Scholar Award Spotlight

Each of the 244 Undergraduate Scholar Award institutions nominated an outstanding music major for the Award. Highlighted below is the story of one such student who achieved a high level of musical and academic excellence, demonstrated leadership, and contributed to an inclusive community.

#### *Valeria Patron, California State Polytechnic University-Pomona*

Valeria Patron graduated with a degree in music education from California State Polytechnic University-Pomona. In addition to her coursework, she played and performed on tuba and flute, conducted, arranged, and completed teacher prep. She led the tuba section in the Bands and performed in Brass Ensemble and Flute Choir. Patron served on the department's student Music Board — a group that distributes student fee monies to ensembles — as a representative of the Flute Choir, where she was tasked with budget management and accounts payable, requiring a heavy responsibility to ensure financial obligations were met. In her conducting studies, she was given opportunities to lead the Symphonic Winds and did so without hesitation. In addition to being a first-generation college student, Patron worked part-time while also helping care for younger members of her family. In addition to her coursework, schoolwork, and family care, she also gave back through her role as Vice President of Service in the band fraternity chapter, Kappa Kappa Psi, which raised money and volunteered in the Cal Poly Pomona community.

### Graduate Music Award Spotlight

The Graduate Music Award program is designed to encourage and support the advanced education and career of truly exceptional graduate music students who have the potential to make a distinguished contribution to the field of music. Below is an excerpt from Mattie Levy of the University of Michigan, who completed her project "Concert Black."

*Concert Black is a musical about three Black classical musicians. Through three different perspectives conveyed in vignettes, audiences see modern Black classical musicians as they journey through academia, love, and life. Concert Black illustrates the orchestra from a Black musician's perspective, the conflict between imposter syndrome and success, and Black joy in performance. Following the story of an oboist, violinist, and vocalist, Concert Black emphasizes that the Black experience is a shared one but not*

*monolithic. It aims to create a chosen home for Black/Black queer people both in the arts and beyond. On January 27th, 2024, I produced a semi-staged reading Act 1 with props and lighting effects, 7 cast members, and 12 musicians. It premiered in-person and via live-stream at the University of Michigan in partial fulfillment of my master's thesis for music composition and oboe performance. Next up, I'm finishing the music for Act 2, and editing the script. I am also actively applying for more grants to enact the next performance of Concert Black. I am excited for the future of this show, and I know continuing to work on it will broaden my horizons as an artist and lead to more opportunities that will enhance my career.*

## NEWS & INFORMATION

### Oral Reporting

**An organization that has received general operating support (either through Advancement of Music or Special Projects) and has a budget under \$500,000 can complete either a written or oral report.** While grantees can submit a written report if they prefer, we hope that offering an oral report option will be received as a benefit. If interested, visit **our website** for details and a sign-up link!

### Blog Posts

**Guest Blog Post:** Remember that your organization can submit a guest blog post about your efforts and receive an unrestricted honorarium! Read the guest blog post guidelines on our website and a **guest blog post submission** from Susquehanna Chorale.

**Grantee Blog Post:** The Foundation may also reach out to feature your organization based on information from your 2022-23 Advancement of Music report. Foundation staff will write the post and share a draft with you before publication. Check out a recent post about **Montgomery County Chorale & Orchestra**.

### Board & Staff Updates

#### *Honorary Trustees*

The Foundation has been grateful to have **Mr. Corey Smith** and **Dr. Mark Wait** serve on the Board and as Committee Chairs. Each has overseen changes to the grantmaking programs they have led with thoughtfulness, care, and thoroughness. Mr. Smith joined the Board in 2005 and served on the Finance and Capital Support Committees. Under his leadership, the Capital Support Committee expanded guidelines to support hardware, software, and equipment. This expansion has given smaller organizations the opportunity to apply for Capital Support. As an Honorary Trustee, Mr. Smith will continue to serve on the Capital Support and Finance Committees. Dr. Wait joined the Board in 2009 and served on the Scholar Award Committee. During Dr. Wait's tenure as Chair of the Committee, the Foundation started transforming the Undergraduate Scholar Award program, shifting the focus to the recipient music students and adding 37 HBCUs and HSIs to the program. Dr. Wait will continue on the DEI Committee as an Honorary Trustee.

#### *New Trustees*

Three new individuals have joined the Foundation as Trustees: **Ms. Eve Hyppolite**, **Ms. Denise Iemolo**, and **Dr. Mary Ellen Poole**. Ms. Hyppolite joined the Special Projects Committee in July 2023. At Comcast NBCUniversal, she serves as the Product Experience Engineer and Storyteller. She will join the



Capital Support Committee and continue on the Special Projects Committee. Ms. Iemolo joined the Finance Committee in Spring 2023 and works as a Portfolio Manager at Hirtle, Callaghan, & Co. In addition to being on the Finance Committee, Ms. Iemolo will join the Special Projects Committee. Dr. Poole serves as the Dean of the College of Fine Arts at Carnegie Mellon University. She has served on the Scholar Award Committee since 2013 and assumes the role of Chair.

### *New Committee Members*

The Foundation also welcomes new Committee members. **Ms. Zulma Arria**, who worked as the Director of Enterprise Growth Marketing at Comcast Business, joins the Assistance to Music Teachers Committee. **Dr. Georges Buzaglo**, who is the president of Management Strategies International, Inc., serves on the DEI Committee.

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