

A Letter from Our New Executive Director

My own devotion to the harp began when I received one from my aunt for my fifth birthday. As a child, my 'harpist' identity developed as my individuality meshed with the self-discipline and grit that my instrument demanded. Ultimately, the harp and my dedication to music fueled my commitment to excellence and capacity for hard work in anything I did.

At 13, I started studying with Elizabeth Hainen and volunteering for Lyra. Through my high school and Curtis careers, my envelope-stuffing developed into volunteering at our annual benefits. The Glissando students were my age when I was volunteering; sharing the excitement and delight of the Glissando families invigorated me and my playing.

When I became Director of Education and began teaching Lyra students, I saw how the regal history of the harp is reflected in our students as they play; their bearing and confidence match the elegance of the unique instrument. Their "harpist posture" extends into their everyday lives. Through our community of world-class musicians, mentors, and friends, our students develop the self-assurance to pursue their dreams in whatever they choose to do.

It is gratifying to realize that Lyra's work is a meaningful force in the lives of our thirty Glissando students. However, these students have shaped my life as well. They increase my awareness and empathy for those whose interests and talents are overlooked due to a lack of resources, growing my appreciation for my own musical education. It has also introduced me to you: the greater Lyra Family, who supports our important work. Thank you for all that you have done for this uniquely extraordinary organization thus far. I look forward to seeing you at our upcoming events, and I hope you have a wonderful fall season!

With deep gratitude,
Helen Gerhold

"[Harp] has taught me discipline, structure, love, grit and a thousand more qualities that I could go on and on about. Because of the harp I sit straighter, I walk with purpose, and I always arrive at least 30 minutes before an event starts."

- Jermoyah, graduated 1st in class at Girls' High, Bowdoin College

Lyra's Outstanding Graduating Class!



This year we had all of our six seniors admitted into college. They will be attending Bowdoin College, Brigham Young University-Idaho, Pennsylvania State University, LaSalle University, and Temple University. Jermoyah Parkinson was first in her class at Girls High with a 4.5 GPA, was inducted into the first class of "100 High School Students American Needs To Know About," and was admitted on a full scholarship to Bowdoin. Medgina Maitre was admitted to Peabody Conservatory (our first conservatory acceptance), but will be attending Temple on a full scholarship. Adiva Andrews was admitted on full scholarship to Oberlin but will be attending Penn State for engineering. Thank you to Anita Henderson (Lyra Board Member) for creating a college admissions seminar and working closely with our students through the application process!

"[Lyra] opened a new world that I didn't realize how much would make me grow as a person."

-Jessica, LaSalle University '22

Thank you, Ken!



The Lyra Family extends a tremendous **thank you** to Kenneth Hutchins, whose largesse has spurred the growth of our Philadelphia High School for Girls program. Ken's generosity is allowing Philadelphia High School for Girls' Glissando Program students to have weekly lessons with Elizabeth Steiner!

To watch "Medgina's Story," visit Lyra's newly designed website, LyraSociety.org!

All-City Partnership Brings Glissando Harpists to Kimmel and Inspires More Lyra Students

Thank You for Making Glissando LIVE! 2019 a Night to Remember



Four of our Glissando Program students performed at Kimmel Center's Verizon Hall with the All-City Orchestra! They played the Intermezzo from Bizet's Carmen and "Imperial March" from Star Wars. After the news spread through our Glissando student body, music teachers from our schools received many requests from our harpists to play in their school's orchestra!



Thank you to everyone who made 'Glissando Live!' at the Curtis Institute of Music a dazzling success! With your support, we raised over \$16,000 which will go directly towards instruments, harp lessons, and music presentations for students throughout Philadelphia. The event included beautiful performances by Oliver Herbert, who recently signed with Yo-Yo Ma's Opus 3 Management.

"I have watched several of The Lyra Society students come through the program; the progress in playing, and more importantly the development of poise and confidence from these students is nothing short of amazing."

--Ken Hutchins, Angel Patron, Past Benefit Sponsor



save the date
**THE LYRA SOCIETY'S
15TH ANNIVERSARY GALA
FEATURED ARTISTS**



Yannick Nézet-Séguin,
Music Director, The Philadelphia Orchestra



Elizabeth Hainen
Principal Harp, The Philadelphia Orchestra

WHEN: EVENING OF JUNE 5, 2020

WHERE: PENNSYLVANIA ACADEMY OF THE FINE ARTS

Interested in sponsoring our event to give harp instruction, performance opportunities, and mentorship?

Please contact Helen Gerhold at Helen.Gerhold@LyraSociety.org! Sponsorships start at \$2,500.

All proceeds from this event will assist in funding programs for The Lyra Society, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit.