

CHSO IRELAND



2017





MAY THE ROAD RISE UP TO MEET YOU!

IN 2011, CHARLOTTESVILLE HIGH SCHOOL'S STRING ENSEMBLE TRAVELED TO ITALY, WHERE THEY performed in a 12th-century church outside Rome and at the Florence Youth Orchestra Festival, amid cries of "Bellissima!" These students were thrilled to tour the Sistine Chapel, the Palazzo Vecchio, and the Stradivarius Museum, but all agreed that the chance to perform in ancient venues was the highlight of the trip. Four years later, a new group of String Ensemble musicians performed at the American Cathedral in Paris and at the storied Chartres Cathedral. They also visited Geneva, the Louvre, and other world-class sites, but all agreed that the highlight was—again—the concerts, complete with standing ovations and calls for encores. Both trips also featured memorable visits to Charlottesville's sister cities, with a standing-room-only concert in the Medici Villa courtyard in Poggio a Caiano, and another standing-room-only performance at the new Cité des Arts concert hall in Besançon.

Now a fresh group of young musicians has the opportunity to travel to Ireland, where the fiddle reigns supreme in traditional Irish music, a national passion. For many of these students, this experience will be their first trip abroad, a chance to experience the vibrancy and mystique of another country and to serve as enthusiastic ambassadors for Charlottesville and the U.S. With this extraordinary opportunity comes a challenge: the need to raise funds so that all String Ensemble students can enjoy this once-in-a-lifetime experience.

Mary Birnbaum, a Juilliard faculty member who guest-directed *La Traviata* in Charlottesville recently, has said that "arts education ... is imperative, especially as we are running out of ways to teach children empathy." Travel is also essential, especially for those who have never experienced another country, another culture, another world view. Here is a chance to support some of the city's most dedicated young musicians, and to cast a vote in favor of the educational benefits of travel and the arts.

| *"I am constantly amazed and inspired by the performances of the Charlottesville High School Orchestra. Every year brings yet another group of impressive youngsters who meld their talents in a way that makes both our city and our Commonwealth proud. I know that they will enjoy the strong support of our region as they prepare for their next international effort in Ireland in 2017."*

— DAVID J. TOSCANO, DELEGATE, VIRGINIA HOUSE DISTRICT 57



The 2015-16 Charlottesville High School Orchestra

Ready for the International Stage

THE STUDENTS IN THE CHARLOTTESVILLE HIGH SCHOOL ORCHESTRA STRING ENSEMBLE have earned this world-class opportunity by dint of hard work, talent, and excellent instruction. Theirs is a success story that makes our entire community proud.

Under the leadership of Laura Mulligan Thomas, the CHS Orchestra has grown from eight string players in 1982 to 145 this year, making it one of the largest high school orchestras in the country. Its diverse membership includes representatives from many different countries, including India, Somalia, Liberia, Ghana, the Sudan, the Philippines, and Mexico. Its three compilation CDs, *Live!*, *Take 2*, and *At Last*, have sold more than 3,000 copies. The CHSO has gained a national reputation for excellence, garnering top prizes at music festivals all over the country—in New York City, Chicago, Atlanta, Boston, Orlando, Dallas, Nashville, and many other cities. In 1998, it won second place at the International Youth and Music Festival in Vienna, Austria, and in 2007, it won the Grand Championship of the London Heritage Festival of Music. In 2011, the CHSO String Ensemble performed concerts to large, appreciative audiences in Rome, Florence, and Poggio a Caiano, and performed to a standing-room-only crowd in our sister city of Besançon, France, in 2014, as well as Chartres Cathedral.

With your support, the CHSO program's premiere group, the String Ensemble, will take the stage in Ireland, and will serve as a new generation of ambassadors for our community and our country.

“The preeminence of the CHSO String Ensemble continues to demonstrate the power that music and the arts have to enrich the lives of our students, school, and community. The members of the CHSO String Ensemble, led by Laura Mulligan Thomas, are talented ambassadors that share the joy of music with the world. The support they receive from their community is not only an investment in the lives of these wonderful students—it also allows for their music to inspire another generation of musicians.”

—DR. ERIC IRIZARRY, PRINCIPAL OF CHARLOTTESVILLE HIGH SCHOOL

Awards and Honors

Over the past three decades, the Charlottesville High School Orchestra has won numerous prizes and honors for its exceptional performances. Among them:

- 2016** Two Superior Ratings, First Place in Division V, First Place in Division VI, six Soloist Awards, Adjudicators' Award, Overall Orchestra Champions, and Overall Grand Champions, *Nashville Fiesta-Val*
- 2015** Two Gold Medals, Second Place in AA Division, Second Place in AAA Division, two Adjudicators' Awards, and Maestro Award, *WorldStrides Heritage Festival of Music in Boston*
- 2014** Two Gold Medals, First Place in AA Division, First Place in AAA Division, two Adjudicators' Awards, Outstanding Orchestra Award, Maestro Award, and Instrumental Grand Championship, *WorldStrides Heritage Festival of Music in Annapolis*
CHSO String Ensemble performed in Chartres Cathedral, the American Cathedral in Paris, and in Charlottesville's sister city of Besançon, France
- 2013** Two Gold Medals; First Place in AA Division, Second Place in AAA Division, two Adjudicators' Awards, Best Overall Orchestra, and Instrumental Sweepstakes Award, *Worldstrides Heritage Festival of Music in New York City*
- 2012** Two Gold Medals; First Place in AA Division, First Place in AAA Division, Adjudicators' Award, Instrumental Grand Champions, and Festival Sweepstakes (Grand Champions), *Orlando Worldstrides Heritage Festival of Music*
- 2011** Two Superior Ratings; First Place in Division V, First Place in Division VI, and Instrumental Grand Champions, *Virginia Beach Fiesta-Val*
CHSO String Ensemble performed in the Florence International Youth Festival, as well as Tarquinia, and Charlottesville's sister city, Poggio a Cainano
- 2010** Two Gold Medals, First Place in AA Division, and First Place in AAA Division, Overall Orchestra Award, Adjudicators' Award for top scores, and Festival Sweepstakes (Grand Champions), *Boston Heritage Festival of Music*
- 2009** Two Superior Ratings; First Place in Division V, and First Place in Division VI, *Myrtle Beach Fiesta-Val*
- 2008:** Two Superior Ratings, First Place in Division V, and First Place in Division VI, *New York, NY Fiesta-Val*
- 2007:** Grand Champions, *London Heritage Festival of Music*
- 2006:** Two Superior Ratings, First Place in Division V, and Second Place in Division VI, *Atlanta Fiesta-Val*

Continued on the CHSO website: www.chsorchestra.org

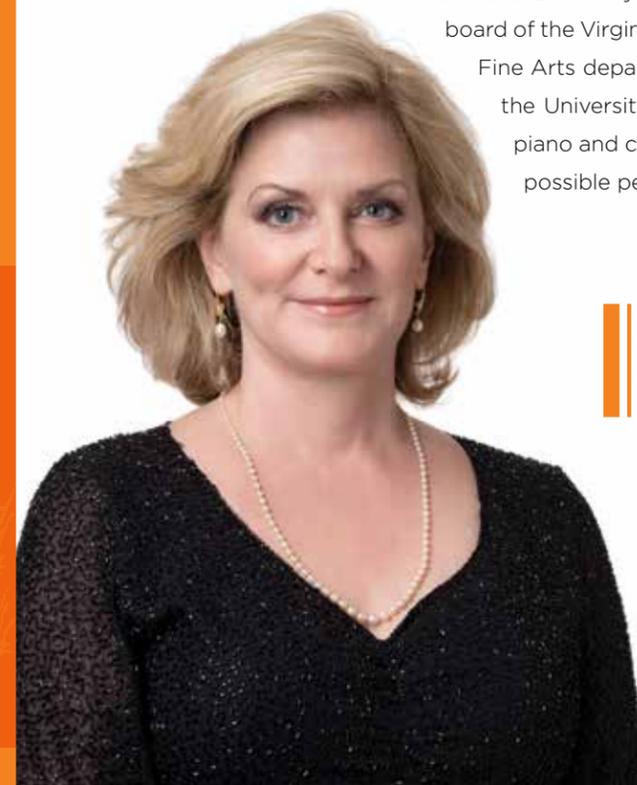
About the Director

LAURA MULLIGAN THOMAS HAS SERVED AS THE DIRECTOR OF THE CHARLOTTESVILLE High School Orchestra for more than three decades. She came to CHS after graduating with honors from James Madison University in 1982 and began immediately to develop and nurture the orchestra program of the eight students she inherited. Today, she leads an award-winning group of 145 musicians, and many CHSO graduates go on to become professional musicians who perform with orchestras and pop, rock, and country artists in the U.S. and Europe. Still other alumni have followed in Ms. Thomas's footsteps and pursued careers in music education.

Numerous additional awards for her work with young musicians include Charlottesville's Distinguished Teacher Award, the Golden Apple Award, the Piedmont Council of the Arts Award, and Outstanding Educator in Central Virginia awarded by Phi Delta Kappa. In 2002, Shenandoah University honored her with its first graduate Alumna of Excellence Award, and in 2013, she was recognized as the James Madison University Outstanding Music Educator Alumnus.

Honored as Charlottesville's Citizen of the Year in 2015 by the Rotary Club and Woman of the Year in 1999 by the Virginia Women's Forum, Ms. Thomas was also named one of the Charlottesville Top 25 Citizens by *C-VILLE Weekly*. Ms. Thomas studied orchestral conducting with Thomas Wilkins, Carl Roskott, and Ray Fowler, and earned her master's degree from Shenandoah Conservatory in 1996.

Ms. Thomas spent her early years in Alexandria, Virginia, where she studied piano with National Symphony pianist Marion Herrett and learned cello in the Alexandria City Schools string program. She has guest-conducted dozens of youth orchestras throughout Virginia, and serves on the executive board of the Virginia Band and Orchestra Directors Association. She is the chair of the Fine Arts department at Charlottesville High School, and for three years directed the University of Richmond Orchestra. An active performer, Ms. Thomas plays piano and cello with several Charlottesville chamber ensembles, and whenever possible performs with her three siblings as the Mulligan String Quartet.



“We are fortunate to live in this extraordinary community that wholeheartedly supports arts and education. The CHSO String Ensemble and I are eager to represent Charlottesville, Virginia, and the United States in Ireland next summer. I am so proud of the accomplishments of our young people, and know that they will be exemplary ambassadors.”

— LAURA MULLIGAN THOMAS

Financial Overview

THE CHSO STRING ENSEMBLE'S EIGHT-DAY TRIP TO IRELAND REPRESENTS A FUNDRAISING challenge that will require significant community support. CHSO students and parents aim to raise a substantial portion of the necessary funds through student-directed activities such as car washes, quartet performances, poinsettia sales, a benefit concert, and other events and activities. The String Ensemble hopes to raise the remaining funds through donations, including gifts to a scholarship fund to support students in financial need. Donations to the general campaign and to the scholarship fund are all tax-deductible.

Cost per student <i>Includes airfare, hotels, meals, ground transportation, and insurance in Ireland for 8 days</i>	\$3,381 (x 55)	\$185,955
Rental of cello/basses in Ireland		\$7,500
Ground transportation to and from Dulles International Airport		\$3,800
TOTAL COSTS		\$197,255
<i>Each student has pledged to raise at least \$1,000 through ongoing fundraising efforts.</i>		
Goal for fundraising through student activities		\$55,000
Goal for Scholarship Fund		\$20,000
Goal for general campaign, including the Scholarship Fund		\$142,255
TOTAL NEEDED		\$197,255



Micah Hunter-Chang presciently busks in Paris in 2014



France-bound CHSO members at Dulles Airport, June 2014



CHSO String Ensemble performs in Besançon, France



CHSO String Ensemble in Geneva, 2014

Help These Talented Kids Put Charlottesville on the Map

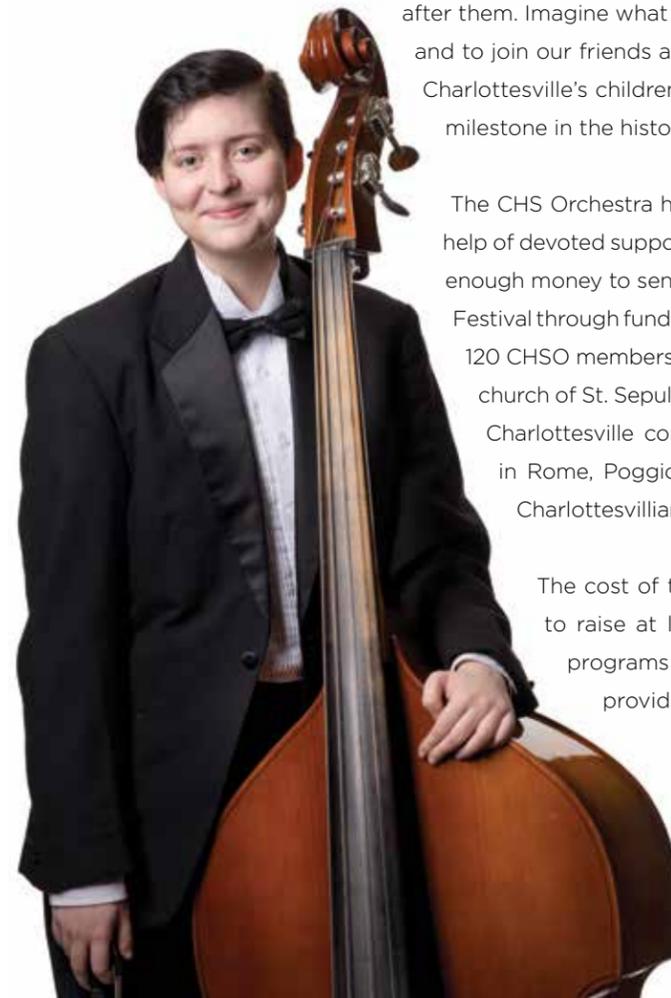
THE SUCCESS OF THE CHARLOTTESVILLE HIGH SCHOOL ORCHESTRA IS A STELLAR EXAMPLE of what is right with our schools and our community. It vividly reminds us that our schools can nourish and expect excellence of the highest order. It is cause for celebration that a diverse group of students from all backgrounds can work together as a team to meet an ambitious challenge. These teenagers are Charlottesville's best possible representatives to the world.

Performing in Ireland will have long-lasting consequences, both for these children—many of whom have never flown, never been out of the country—and for their families, friends, and the students who come after them. Imagine what a thrill it will be for these young musicians to perform in an ancient castle, and to join our friends across the pond in an Irish music jam session! This concert tour will inspire Charlottesville's children long after this generation of young musicians has graduated. It will be a milestone in the history of our schools and our community.

The CHS Orchestra has paid its way to every competition in which it has participated, with the help of devoted supporters, parents, and orchestra members themselves. In 1998, the CHSO raised enough money to send 80 students to Vienna to participate in the International Youth and Music Festival through fundraising activities and generous donations from community members. In 2007, 120 CHSO members traveled to London and performed at the Royal Academy of Music and the church of St. Sepulchre, thanks to the generous support of benefactors throughout the greater Charlottesville community. In 2011, 52 members of the CHSO String Ensemble performed in Rome, Poggio a Caiano, and Florence, and in 2014—again, with the help of generous Charlottesvilleans—55 CHSO members performed in Paris and at Chartres Cathedral.

The cost of the 8-day trip to Ireland is \$3,381 per student. Each student has pledged to raise at least \$1,000. It's up to the many in our community who support music programs for our students and who appreciate this extraordinary opportunity to provide the remainder.

Please help us make this world-class opportunity a reality for our young performers. By sustaining and challenging our youth, we nurture our future.



Left: Leo Thomas, bass



What the Students Say about Music and Going to Ireland

When I first heard the CHS Orchestra play *Peter and the Wolf* at the Paramount Theatre, I was six years old and they were preparing for their trip to London. At the instrument petting zoo after the performance, I decided that I wanted to be part of that ensemble. Now, I'm lucky enough to be a member of that group and have the opportunity to travel to Ireland and spread the amazement I felt when I first heard the CHS Orchestra to the Emerald Isle.

—TALIA MARSHALL, CELLO



Orchestra class is something that I look forward to everyday I am at school. The environment and people are amazing, and the music we create is even more amazing. Going to Ireland will be an exciting and new experience for many of the musicians in String Ensemble. This trip will surely help us grow as individual artists and a whole orchestra. We are so blessed to have this opportunity to travel the world!

—ELIZABETH BAMBURY, VIOLA



I had the opportunity to accompany the String Ensemble on their trip to Italy when my older sisters were at CHS. It was such a great experience to see how the local audiences enjoyed the concerts and how excited they were to welcome the orchestra. I have been looking forward to being part of a String Ensemble trip myself and going to Ireland will be a great end to my time at CHS.

—GRAHAM KEELEY, CELLO



This Charlottesville music community is something rare. It is diverse and manifold, yet collaborative and cohesive; it is an integral part of this city's culture. The CHS Orchestra is indicative of this kind of passion and connectivity. Each student is brimming with different inspirations, yet the sound that Ms. Thomas extracts is as harmonious and exquisite as the musical environment surrounding us. The music created in the high school mirrors the artistic niche that grows from it: a community that in turn shapes the minds of future generations of students. As the CHS Orchestra travels beyond the boundaries of the city to Ireland, we will bring just a small part of the huge sound and musical depth that envelopes Charlottesville, allowing us to connect with people in a truly beautiful way.

—STELLA SOKOLOWSKI, CELLO



As students, we are all incredibly lucky to have had the opportunity to play with the Charlottesville City School orchestras—from Walker to Buford, and culminating in the CHSO String Ensemble. Not many people our age have access to the breadth of musical expertise that we have and to have the chance to share all that we have learned and worked on over the past several years of our lives is immensely gratifying. I can't wait to travel to Ireland. It will be the experience of a lifetime.

—MOLLIE PEPPER, VIOLIN

The Charlottesville High School Orchestra has provided me with a wonderful experience that no young musician should miss. From quartets performing at private venues to large orchestral pieces performed for competitions, it offers many unique opportunities to become more involved in the musical world. With our upcoming trip to Ireland, Ms. Thomas has given us the chance to share our music with an international audience. Ms. Thomas is a great conductor, as well as a fabulous teacher; my classmates and I have already learned so much from her. I am very proud to be part of the CHS Orchestra.

—NOAH ROBINSON, VIOLIN



The orchestra program at Charlottesville High School fosters both individual growth and a powerful sense of community. Students at CHS are proud to be a part of a wonderful program with a legacy of achievement. The trip to Ireland is an opportunity for dedicated students to showcase to the world the product of years of excellent education and commitment.

—ELIZABETH BELING, VIOLA



Being in the orchestra has been the center point of all my experiences at school, my friends and activities, and even my day! I've been working hard to learn the violin for eight years and along the way I have grown so much as a person. The Ireland trip is going to be the perfect culmination of the class for me, as I will be a senior saying goodbye to the program. That memorable experience will absolutely stay with my for the rest of my life.

—RACHEL MANTO, VIOLIN



Left: Kiki Dowell, violin Back cover: Parker Sullivan, violin



“On countless occasions, the music of the Charlottesville High School Orchestra, under the direction of Laura Mulligan Thomas, has nourished our souls, renewed our spirit, and captivated our imagination. For the school division and the entire community, the local, state, national, and international prominence of the Orchestra continues to be a source of great pride.”

— ROSA S. ATKINS, SUPERINTENDENT, CHARLOTTESVILLE CITY SCHOOLS



CHARLOTTESVILLE HIGH SCHOOL

Orchestra

1400 Melbourne Road

Charlottesville, Virginia 22901

434-245-2726

www.chsorchestra.org