

CAP String Orchestra students receive the gift of music

In September, the Cathedral Arts Project launched its CAP String Orchestra, an ensemble of current and former CAP string students. Led by String Teaching Artist Fellow Joshua Stone, the program allows students in grades 4 through 12 to collaborate and perform complex pieces of music and further their understanding of both classical and contemporary music.

Just before the holidays, thanks to a grant from the Kids Hope Alliance and the Jacksonville Symphony, every member of the CAP String Orchestra received a Sound Check Card to attend all of the Symphony's Florida Blue Masterworks Series and Coffee Series concerts for the 2019-2020 season.

CAP inspires students by introducing them to professional and diverse working artists in the community. These opportunities allow students to connect with local, regional and national arts professionals across all arts disciplines, providing gateway experiences that illustrate what a life informed by arts and culture looks and feels like. This exposure ensures students see the possibilities for creative careers, understand the importance of public investment in the arts and imagine their own futures in an arts-rich community.

Performance opportunities are provided throughout the year for the full CAP String Orchestra, as well as smaller chamber ensembles. The students, who attend homeschools, Hogan-Spring Glen Elementary School, LaVilla School of the Arts and Douglas Anderson School of the Arts, rehearse regularly at the Ritz Theatre and Museum in Downtown Jacksonville and will perform next month at the Duval County Public School Board meeting.

The CAP String Orchestra is led by Joshua Stone, a graduate of the University of North Florida with a Bachelor of Music Education and Performance and a Master of Music with a concentration in conducting. He has performed and participated in masterclasses with many of today's leading artists and ensembles, including acclaimed clarinetist Richard Stoltzman.

For more than a decade, Joshua has been an advocate for the expansion of music education, specifically for string instruments, in local public schools. He joined CAP as a part-time teaching artist in 2013 while working as a full-time music educator for Duval County Public Schools. In 2019 he became a full-time string teaching artist for CAP, teaching classes at multiple elementary and middle schools throughout Duval County.

