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Kathie Stamps



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*Kevin Williams, center, is flanked by Beth Ellen Rosenbaum, who donated her time as the piano accompanist for his senior recital. and cellist Leah Hagel-Kahmann, his cello instructor at Central Music Academy.*

LEXINGTON, Ky. (6/9/14) — Cello student Kevin Williams is the first Central Music Academy student to give a full senior recital in the program's ten year history.

He graduated last week from the SCAPA program at Lafayette High School. Williams has been studying at CMA for five years, with cellist Leah Hagel-Kahmann. He will be attending Eastern Kentucky University this fall on a music scholarship, one of the first in his family to attend college. The opportunity for Williams to further his education at ECU came about through free cello lessons.

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*Central Music Academy is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization whose instructors give private music lessons to kids who can't afford them. CMA has given 25,000 free music lessons to more than 800*

*children in the past decade, ages 8 to 18 who qualify for free or reduced school lunches.*

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In May 2014, CMA was accepted as an associate member of the Berklee City Music Network. Based in Boston at the Berklee College of Music, the Berklee network is also a 501(c)(3) providing music instruction to under-served young people. Central Music Academy is one of 45 member organizations of the Berklee City Music Network across the country.

The sounds of drums and steel pans are coming to Central Music Academy in downtown Lexington this July, as 20 students attend the World Percussion Camp on full scholarship at CMA, which is located in the former Mayor's Training Center at 105 Spruce Street.

CMA's summer camp, July 14-18, is for low-income kids who will be entering fourth through twelfth grades this fall. The World Percussion Camp is led by CMA director Erin Walker Bliss, herself a percussionist. She holds a doctoral of musical arts degree in percussion performance from UK.

"When these kids learn to play a musical instrument, the educational effects extend far beyond the notes and time signatures on the page," Bliss said. "They are learning math and physics, individual discipline and group dynamics, trust, camaraderie and community. These lessons last for life."

Through June 30, a private foundation is matching dollar-for-dollar donations, up to \$20,000, for anyone who donates to the **CMA scholarship fund**. These scholarships are funded entirely from grants and private donations. Students who qualify for a scholarship can attend the World Percussion Camp or take individual or group music lessons throughout the year in cello, guitar, violin and other strings; flute and other woodwinds; horn, trumpet and other brass; and piano and percussion instruments. There are also instructors giving voice lessons.

## About Central Music Academy:

**Central Music Academy** emerged out of Central Christian Church in 2004. CMA is a 501(c)(3) organization providing individual and group music lessons for disadvantaged youth ages 8 to 18. Erin Walker was hired as CMA director in March 2005. She is a 2008 graduate of UK with a Doctor of Musical Arts degree in percussion performance, and is currently all but dissertation on a Ph.D. in ethnomusicology at UK.K.

SurfKY News

Information provided by Kathie Stamps

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