



Post Fellowship Reporting - Project Summary

Report Title: Inspiring Orchestra Students through Chamber Music
Name: Kevin Black

Other Team Members:

Program: Greater Houston Area Program

Trip Dates: 11/30/-0001 - 11/30/-0001

Location Visited: Palo Alto, CA

Post Fellowship Reporting Template: PFR Template 02

Project Summary: This summer I spent 10 days in Palo Alto, CA. I had the unique opportunity of working with the St. Lawrence String Quartet at their Chamber Music Seminar at Stanford University. As one of 80-plus string players, I was selected to study and perform a piano quintet with four other musicians of varying experiences. During this intensive seminar, we spent several hours per day rehearsing the music, being coached on the music by members of the artistic faculty, and attending concerts and lectures focusing on the unique genre of chamber music performance. As a high school orchestra director, I have the pleasure of working with 240-plus young musicians every day. I am their director and make most of the musical decisions for them. This is regarding repertoire selection, musical phrasing and shaping, instrumental techniques, and a great deal of musical ideology. However, once at the seminar, it was necessary for me to take my seat as a student. Although most of our rehearsals were self-directed within my ensemble, I was fortunate to have my eyes and ears opened through the teamwork of my colleagues and the direction of the artistic staff. I grew as a musician and am highly motivated to enrich the musical lives of my students, even beyond their high school years.

Career Impact: *Studied and performed a major chamber music work with four other musicians with varying degrees of experiences and skills. We were able to master this composition in the span of 10 days and perform with great success.

*Attended "What makes it great" with Rob Kapilow, a former director of the New York Philharmonic Orchestra. His seminar focused on performing and presenting musical works that help make the composition more relevant to the typical audience that may or may not have any experience in musical study.

*Attended a chamber music festival in Hattiesburg, MS. During this week, I was able to attend several performances that local community members attended, some as simple as "noon-time" concerts, and evening concerts that featured nationally recognized performers.

Classroom/Community Impact: The orchestra program takes great pride in the academic and extracurricular efforts and successes of all of its students. Students who are enrolled in the school orchestra program score higher on the SAT, are less likely to drop out of school, and are more likely to continue their education in a college or university. The orchestra program also provides its students with a sense of belonging.

With a successful chamber music program, the results will be evident as the standard of performance reaches new levels. I will share my experience with the members of TODA and TMEA and inspire other music teachers to look for other opportunities to reach their students. With my training, I am excited to start this new chapter in my orchestra program. Through this program, we will reach many different facets of the community, including government, educational centers, assisted living facilities, and many other locations.

Open Response: I have only reached the tip of the iceberg. I am excited to implement this new experience into my program, and have only begun to discover the ways in which I can implement this within my existing program. I am researching and networking with experienced teachers on how I may schedule rehearsals, including repertoire, location and rehearsal times. One of the major problems I may face is room for rehearsing. With 50 students in each class, I have limited space, I am researching creative ways to have students break off and rehearse together. I am currently writing proposals to music publishers to have them donate materials in which I may pilot a successful chamber music program. I hope to take what I have learned to a summer convention after its initial year of trial. Through this, I know my students will be successful and grow from this experience.

Quote: I know that through what I have learned through the study of chamber music, my students will find a new love of the art of instrumental performance.

Photos:



First day orchestra practice



Sightreading Mendelssohn at 10 PM!



Coaching with Jamie Parker



"What Makes it Great" with Rob Kapilow



The St. Lawrence Quartet in concert



2010 SLSQ Seminar at Stanford University



July 4 Chamber Music Party!



Russian Quartet in Masterclass