

Morning community time with Ms. Camille in full swing!

Summer 2020 will be one to remember!

The COVID-19 pandemic took away a lot of typical summertime activities for many of us this year, but it also provided some new and unexpected opportunities for growth, learning and making new connections. While we all wish we could have gathered together, in person, on the SEED School campus (OrchKids' usual summer home) and traveled to summer camps around the country to play music and make new friends, OrchKids made the most of these challenging times by providing students the opportunity to experience a virtual four-week summer program complete with music lessons, ensemble rehearsals, outside summer programs, fun community time and book clubs! We are excited to share with you all that our amazing students and hardworking staff accomplished this summer:

OrchKids Virtual Summer Programming:

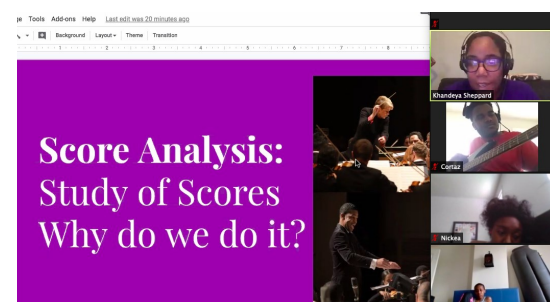
Nothing inspires us more than the consistent dedication and tireless efforts of our OrchKids students and their incredible families. We were thrilled to have successfully transitioned hundreds of students to a virtual learning format last March, providing personalized technical support to families so that their children would have the most successful distance learning experience possible. We are deeply committed

to providing equal access for all of our students so they may have the best chance for success, whether we are in a real classroom or a virtual one.

Thanks to OrchKids' creative and innovative team of teaching artists and program staff, this summer was full of fun, enriching online programming that included musical lessons and productions, ensemble rehearsals, community "hang outs," and even book clubs. Though completely virtual, summer program was a success with **161 students** receiving **800 hours of summer program instruction** including:

- Small group music lessons (50 minute group lessons with no more than 6 students in a class); and some private lessons
- Online Enrichment Classes: These 50 min classes included topics such as music theory, life skills, and mindfulness to support our students musically and emotionally. Due to COVID-19 and other traumas (i.e. gun violence, food insecurity, homelessness, etc.), mindfulness is becoming an integral and engrained component of our programming to help teach our students how to support themselves emotionally and to keep strengthening their over-all health and well-being.
- Creative Composition workshops in which students took the lead to in creating original music, based on a particular topic or theme.

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Students loved Ms. Kay's Score Analysis class!

We Love Our Interns and Volunteers!



Distribution Day!

Volunteers headed to Mary Ann Winterling Elementary to give our students their summer supplies.

Moving to an all virtual platform didn't mean we needed fewer hands on deck—we needed more! And we had some great helping hands this summer. We are grateful to our summer interns and volunteers and their hard work!

Summer Interns:

Zoe Buttler
 Lydia Fields
 Stephen Hanke
 Emily Kennick
 Kiersten Nemac
 Tolliver Wyskiel
 Dominic Yap

Summer Volunteers

Kayla Dennis
 Valentina Ross
 Zoe Woodman

Book Club Volunteers

Will Amland
 Allison Burr- Livingston
 Rebecca Cain
 Caden Choi
 Jackie Connor
 Kimone Kocica
 Sarah Lewandowski
 Matthew Liao

Read about Emily's experience on page 5!

- Lessons on how to use innovative tools like Acapella and Chrome Music Lab for students to have an outlet for musical creativity in an electronic format--teaching new skill sets with recording, editing, etc.
- Book Club and Summer Reading Challenge: Students had the option to sign up for fun book clubs, as well as participate in a summer reading challenge which included reading a minimum of 5 books and earning points for weekly raffle prizes!
- Community Time: Optional drop-in sessions for students to participate in and see their friends and OrchKids community members. This special hang out time included various activities and games, as well as "watch and learns." *Cooking with Camille* was a particular favorite!



Ms. Camille teaching students how to make stuffed French toast!

While this wasn't the summer anyone anticipated or wished for, our students made the most of it! And, with the dedication and support of every teacher, staff member and donor (yes, you!) we are able to report these successful outcomes:

- ◆ Summer program completion rate: 82%
- ◆ Average lesson attendance: 88%
- ◆ Enrichment class attendance: 81%

Creative Composition:



OrchKids collaborated with Collective Conservatory to produce their own music!

If you know OrchKids, you know that we love creative composition workshops where students explore a topic of current interest and work together in groups to write original music and lyrics. Giving our youth an outlet to express their feelings and honor their voice is more important than ever during these extraordinary times. OrchKids students, like so many of their peers around our country, are watching and listening to what is happening in our country. They are paying close attention to what their adult leaders are doing and saying. They are living the Black Lives Matter movement while navigating life during the COVID-19 pandemic - and they are feeling all of the emotions that go with it.

Due to our all-virtual format this summer, students could not gather together in person, but they were eager to come together to discuss and explore how Black Lives Matter and Covid-19 are affecting them. Working with the Collective Conservatory, a new organization led by Dan Trahey and Pete Tashjian, OrchKids students had the opportunity to work in small groups, creating original compositions with a variety of arts professionals such as music producer Charles Williams and artists from the Chicago Poetry Center.

OrchKids student, Janai, who plays the trumpet, contributed a powerful spoken word element to one piece entitled, "Black Lives Matter." During a live drop party on social media, Janai talked about the lyrics which contain the lines:

Black Lives Matter means black lives matter.

It's literal, not political,

Not conservative or liberal.

Janai explained, "Basically, the message is that Black Lives Matter and that's it. There's no ifs, ands or buts about it; and when people make ifs ands or buts about it.... that's when the final line of the spoken word comes in..."

The virus in the lungs of the citizens

Is almost as lethal as the virus in your brains.

Deadly pathogens.

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And because they had the opportunity to learn how to use digital sound editing tools, students not only wrote powerful music – they produced it! OrchKids student, Jelil, helped write the melody to “Black Lives Matter,” added percussion and then mixed it all together to create the final piece. You can view their drop party [here](#).



OrchKids students and Collective Conservatory during their launch party



Book Club volunteer, Kimone, leading her Thursday Book Club

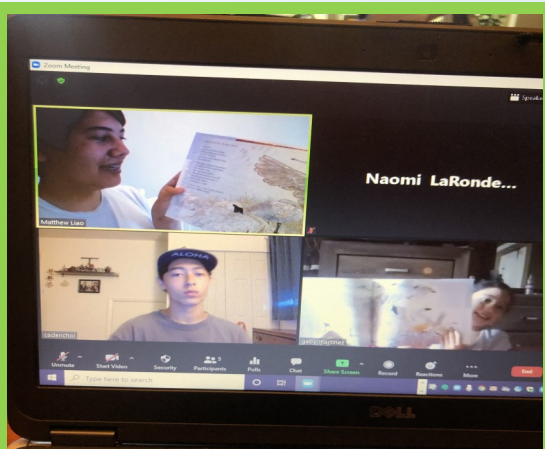
Book Club:

In our last newsletter, we told you about a generous donation of books we received from our friends at the Pratt library, as well as some private donors. The OrchKids team successfully (and safely) delivered bags of books to students’ homes so that they could participate in fun, online book club sessions. OrchKids’ Executive Director, Raquel Gilmer, not only has a passion for OrchKids, she has a passion for reading. What started with one small afterschool club led by Raquel, blossomed into multiple clubs led by multiple volunteers known as “book buddies.” Our awesome team of Book Buddies facilitated weekly summer reading groups of 3-4 students each, giving everyone the opportunity to listen to books, take turns reading books aloud and talk with their friends about the different books they read. It was a huge success and we are excited to be growing our Book Club initiative even more this Fall along with the help of some new volunteer Book Buddies from Imre, one of our corporate supporters. If you or someone you know is interested in volunteering please reach out to Naomi LaRonde-King at nlarondeking@bsomusic.org.

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Special thanks to Señora Sachar and the Calvert School of Baltimore for partnering with us on the OrchKids Summer Book Club!



Book Buddies!
Volunteers Caden and Matthew reading along with OrchKids student Gabriella.

Outside Summer Programs:



Focused:
Jayden is at high attention during program.

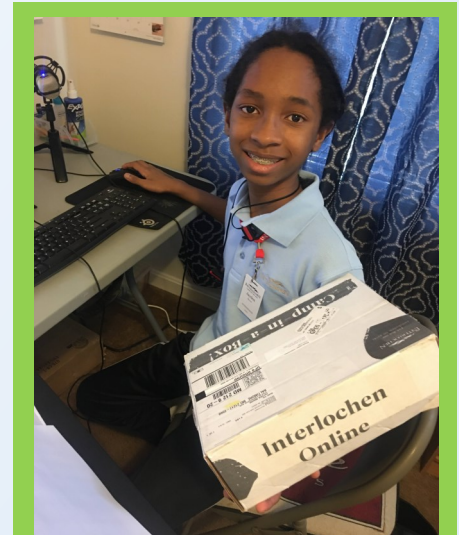
A signature aspect of OrchKids summer programming is providing summer travel opportunities for students to participate in music camps like Interlochen in Michigan, Camp Coda-Encore in Maine, and the YOLA National festival in Los Angeles to name a few. While many summer camps closed due the pandemic, some, like OrchKids, offered alternative virtual programming. OrchKids students may not have had the opportunity to travel to new places in person, but 36 of our students (mostly middle and high school age) did get to travel through the internet for new musical learning opportunities and to make new friends across the country. Online summer camps included:

- Archipelago
- Interlochen
- Yola National
- Kingdom Flutes
- Allegro (Peabody Prep)
- Creative Leadership (Peabody Prep)

We were excited to hear from students and families that even though they could not go to camp, they still experienced many of

the great things these prestigious summer programs have to offer. Carol Moore, mother of OrchKids' violist, Jayden, who was among our students accepted into Interlochen this summer, reported that even though Jayden was disappointed he didn't get to travel to Michigan, Interlochen made sure their campers still had the finest music instruction and teachers possible. In addition to their classes and chamber groups, Jayden and others also had direct access to phenomenal professional musicians (from Carnegie Hall, the Met, Detroit Symphony Hall, etc.) who taught master classes and interacted in Q&A sessions with students.

AND, it was FUN! Carol shared, "They were sent a Camp-In-A-Box kit with an Interlochen uniform shirt, official ID badge and a host of items to do fun projects on the Virtual Cabin nights. He's made moon dough, learned knot tying, made friendship bracelets and even had a virtual scavenger hunt. The Virtual Cabins mix the kids across disciplines, so they get to find out what other programs are doing at the same time." She continued, "In my opinion, they've done a fantastic job recreating the on-campus experience and then some. It's focused, thoughtful and intense but the kids don't realize that and are just having a ball!"



Jayden's Camp-in-a-Box has
arrived!

OrchKids percussion teacher Murray Piper and his daughters, Morgan and Moriah Piper, wrote a song in celebration of OrchKids' awesome summer!

ORCHKIDS SUMMER SONG

COMPOSED BY MURRAY, MORGAN & MORIAH
PIPER

OrchKids Goes Viral!

By: Emily Kennick



Summer intern, Emily Kennick

As the world has been forced to adapt to a new way of life due to the COVID-19 pandemic, OrchKids four-week, summer program moved completely online for the first time ever! Although the staff missed seeing their students in the classroom, they still worked hard to make sure that students have every possible opportunity to learn and grow at home as they would in person.

For students that are in need of materials, OrchKids staff have been distributing instruments, music method books, instrument supplies, and book club materials to students at their homes. The OrchKids staff has been working tirelessly to ensure that every student is set up for success in their program.

As a first time OrchKids Intern entering my senior year of high school, I had the chance to assist classes and create lesson plans for the “Marin Level” students (ages 5-7), teaching small group percussion classes, leading on-on-one piano classes, and assisting with a weekly book club.

This summer, OrchKids students are able to be a part of group classes or individual one on one lessons. These classes include individual lessons for the student’s instrument, group musicianship classes, group mindfulness classes, music theory, online jam sessions, “life skills” classes, and more. There is also a theme tied in for this

summer’s program: how students can be superheroes in their everyday lives.

OrchKids’ youngest group of students are the Marin Level, led by Mollie Westbrook and Judy Sweet. In addition to the lead teachers, there are special guests that come to class with new and exciting activities. Murray Piper, an OrchKids percussion teacher, teaches his “House Full of Rhythm” class once a week, which is one of the most loved classes of the Marin Level students. In this class, students sing songs, play rhythms, and learn about different styles of music and percussion instruments from around the world. Other activities in the Marin Level class include singing songs, learning musicianship concepts, mindfulness lessons, story time and more.

As well as general music and musicianship classes, there are instrument-focused classes put in place to help students progress on their instrument. In the percussion class that I help to support, for example, students focus on technique, music theory, and percussion rudiments in order to help them obtain proficiency in their instrument.

OrchKids does not stop at music classes; there are also several different book clubs for various reading levels and age groups. In the book club, students talk about the main themes of the book, characters, and lessons they have learned from reading the story. I have had the opportunity to intern with one book club where the group has read the graphic novel “New Kid” by Jerry Craft.

Teaching virtually through Zoom was not what I expected when I accepted this internship. With the onset of the pandemic came many doubts. Never in a million years did I imagine I would be able to successfully teach, learn new things, and brighten the lives of students in the OrchKids program, all over Zoom! Overall, the virtual Orchkids program this summer has been a wonderful experience for staff, interns, and students alike. The mission of OrchKids has stayed the same, to help and encourage students to become stronger musicians as well as citizens in their communities. Nothing could stop the amazing things this program does for its students, not even a pandemic.

In Case You Missed It



Students held a virtual concert on the last day of Summer Program to showcase everything they had learned throughout the summer. Some students performed in groups while others performed their own original songs!

Click [here](#) to watch our students shine!