

Saratoga Music Boosters supports Saratoga Union School District (SUSD) and Saratoga High School (SHS) by helping its music directors, where needed, to accomplish their visions to offer the best music programs, music clinics as well as many enriching opportunities to its students. This includes ensuring all music students have the possibility to attend important performances that require travel regardless of their family's financial situation.

There are two beloved fundraisers Saratoga Music Boosters hold every year: the Cookie dough fundraiser and the Pancake Breakfast. All schools participate to help raise funds for the booster. The idea of the Cookie Dough is of course to sell as many cookie dough orders as possible and for the latter the Booster offers a beautiful pancake breakfast where all music programs showcase their talents as pancakes are devoured. These two fundraising events are a student and community favorite.

Over the 2023-24 fiscal year, Saratoga Music Boosters supported the following Saratoga High School music programs and music students:

Band (175 students including Marching and Concert Band), Jazz Band (35 students), Color Guard (31 students), Winter Guard (29 students), Winter Percussion (77 students), Orchestra (167 students), and Choir (41 students).

Not only do the music programs receive SMB support, the initiative by the music directors to offer concerto competitions is also made possible thanks to SMB. This includes the support to invite 5 adjudicators to judge all student performances. The winners of this competition perform at the end of year concert.

SHS musicians reached a level of accomplishment, performances and recognition for which SMB is truly proud of.

Summary of events and achievements recorded for the 2023-2024 academic year for each music program:

**Choir** benefitted from music clinics and trips:

- Choir performed at the WVC Invitational Choral Festival at West Valley College and also had an opportunity to work with Dr Andrea Ramsey.
- 5 students attended the Regional Honor Choir at Chabot college.
- Choir performed at 3 different holiday events: the Saratoga tree lighting ceremony, the Foothill club and the combined concert with Los Gatos High and RMS choir.
- One student was accepted to the All-State choir.

- SHS Choir ensemble attended a Verdi opera 'Rigoletto' at Opera San Jose.
- 6 students performed at the CMEA solo ensemble festival at San Jose State.
- Chamber Choir attended the SJSU choral invitational event.
- Choir students traveled to Seattle where they were conducted by Dr. Giselle Wyers from the University of Washington School of Music. Choir also performed a piece composed by Katerina Gimon as a world premiere event.
- SHS Choir was visited by Pomona College Glee and both groups enjoyed a great educational exchange.

**Jazz band** list of performances:

- Held a November concert which included the collaboration of SHS Choir students.
- Attended the Lincoln Center at Stanford. The last series of concerts featured band, small band, and jazz band where the latter incorporated pieces by Tony Glausi.
- Advanced Jazz II was featured for a second year in a row, as part of the Saratoga Foothill Club Public Event Series: An Evening of Jazz. Alum Charlie Yun formed part of this ensemble for the evening and a SHS student from Choir was a vocalist.
- Homestead Jazz band under the direction of Mr. Burn were invited to the end of year SHS Jazz Band concert.

**Band's, Color Guard and SHS Symphonic Wind ensemble** list of trips and achievements:

- The Symphonic Wind ensemble was accepted into the California All State Music Educators Conference (CASMEC).
- At the Cupertino Tournament of Bands held at Cupertino High School, SHS Marching Band had an overall third place and Color Guard achieved 2nd place.
- At the Foothill Tournament of Bands held at Foothill High School, SHS Marching Band had an overall 1st place and Color Guard achieved 2nd place.
- At the 20th Annual Folsom Fall Festival held at Folsom High School, SHS Marching Band placed 1st in all categories including Color Guard.
- 20 SHS band students were accepted by California All-State Band. Between SHS Band and SHS Orchestra students, SHS were the 3rd most represented and the smallest school in the California All-State. The performance was held in Sacramento.
- 14 kids were accepted into the Santa Clara County Honor Band after auditioning and they will perform under conductor Jerry Junkin, one the world's most highly regarded wind conductors.
- The SHS symphonic wind ensemble was invited to perform at CASMEC. Featured guest artists and conductors included Jason Shiuan, Michael Boitz, Sean Clark, Chavadith Tantavirojn, Dr. John Zarco, Norman Dea, Jonathan Jow, Naoki Taniguchi, Jonathan Hostottle, Michael Pakaluk, John Burn, Craig Bryant, and Aaron Shaul.
- An SHS drum major was invited to perform at the city of London's New Year's Day parade.
- Dr Terry Longshore, clinician, worked with our percussionists.
- SHS hosted CMEA where families are encouraged to attend and watch performances and sight-reading.

## **Winter Percussion (WP) and Winter Guard**

For a second year in a row, due to popular demand, Winter Percussion has two groups: Winter Percussion Open (WP O) and Winter Percussion A (WP A). WP A is the novice group.

- The Varsity team (WP O) and WP A attended the first WP NCPA Show at Fremont High School. Our varsity guard took second place and Winter Percussion A took third place in their respective groups
- Winter Percussion performed at American Canyon High School for the second WP NCPA.
- Winter Guard competed at Fremont High School.
- Winter Guard also performed at the WGI Regional at James Logan High School.
- Winter Percussion attended the WGI SoCal Power Regional (World class) competition.
- Winter Percussion attended the WGI world championships in Dayton, Ohio with excellent results. They made it to the finals placing 9th out of 110 groups. The last time SHS went to WGI was in 2015 achieving a semifinals ranking.
- SHS Winter Percussion applied and was accepted to attend the Midwest Clinic in Chicago this December, 2024 which will take place during the upcoming academic year.

## **Orchestra's year in review:**

- Eight California All-State Band and Orchestra students from SHS were accepted
- A concert exchange with Dublin HS Chamber Orchestra was a true joy to have
- SHS Orchestra attends the Homestead Music Festival where not only do they perform, they exercise their musical vocabulary in real time by writing things down as they listen to others perform
- Saratoga Strings were invited to perform at the Midwest Clinic in December. The Midwest Clinic is an international conference that has been going on for nearly 80 years with 18-20k international attendees annually. All 50 US states and over 40 countries are represented at the conference. With 150 colleges and universities represented, past students have been recruited by colleges from the performance at the event. Pieces performed include "Songs from my Ohma", composed by Dr Soo Han, Director of Orchestral Studies at the Reva and Sid Dewberry Family School of Music at George Mason University, "Be Ever The Hope" by composer Jay Kennedy, also performed was a composition for String Orchestra and Jazz Combo by an alum and internationally renowned Trumpeter and Band Leader, Tony Glausi.
- During the Midwest Clinic SHS Orchestra was able to work in partnership with Charles Yun (Violin, SHS 2019) as he joined the Tony Glausi Quartet, another alum Thomas Lim joined SHS Orchestra when they performed "Showstopper" apart from the multiple students who were also featured throughout the program.
- Ms. Isabel McPherson will conduct a piece on the program for Saratoga Strings at the Midwest clinic.
- SHS Student pianist Eric L. was invited to the Rice University piano concert in Texas

- Chamber Music by the Bay's 11th Season Concert was held at the SHS Music Building. The organization was founded by our own alum Jessica Chang. After she graduated from SHS in 2004, she has been playing with a professional quartet, and is an amazing musician. They dedicate a week every year to Chamber Music by the Bay. They visit local schools and libraries and perform there. Thomas Lim will be playing cello at the concert. They will perform a piece that includes an SHS orchestra player from each section.
- Participated in the SHS hosted CMEA festival

Saratoga Music Boosters is proud to report a slight uptick in music student enrollment at Redwood Middle School (RMS) even though general school enrollment is on the decline.

The numbers are as follows:

5th grade instrumental: 135 (this includes all three elementary schools Saratoga, Foothill and Argonaut)

RMS Bands (Woodwind, Brass, Percussion, Marching): 186

RMS Choir: 25

RMS Orchestra: 170

Color Guard: 12

In summary RMS band, orchestra, and choir in school at Redwood spread across 13 different classes/sections. This translates to having over 400 students enrolled in in-school music classes at Redwood. One of the beloved opportunities offered by the program is the ability to travel to Disney and the RMS band and orchestra students performed and behaved so wonderfully that Disney has extended the invitation for their return participation in the next year.

**RMS Orchestra:** another great year for upper strings education where RMS' Orchestra winter and end of year concert performances are held and enjoyed by the community.

- String students prepare for All-State auditions
- 10 RMS students were accepted into the California All State - 4 from band and 6 from Orchestra. This is the second year in row where at least one orchestra player made it into every section.
- 8 kids have signed up to Bass Club (four 6th graders and the rest are 7th graders)
- Advanced and Chamber classes performed Halloween-themed lunchtime performances
- Students were prepared for CMEA so they understand what they will be evaluated
- CMEA was a wonderful opportunity not only to receive adjudicator feedback but to listen to other orchestras: Advanced listened to Monta Vista's orchestra, and Chamber listened to Fisher MS's chamber orchestra.

- The advanced orchestra ensemble had a Zoom clinic with Dr Soo Han since they performed a piece composed by him at the CMEA festival.
- 90 RMS Orchestra students were able to take the Southern California trip which included a successful performance in Disney
- RMS Orchestra Students loved attending and participating in the annual Pancake Breakfast Fundraiser

**RMS Band and Color Guard:** another successful year for our Band and Color Guard students.

- RMS Marching Band has once again picked up a tradition thwarted by COVID: Perform during the Los Gatos Holiday Parade.
- Instrument sectional coaches were made available all year round with specialized instruction every couple of weeks. Mr. Keefe Ismael coached low brass, and Mr. Michael Downing worked with percussionists.
- Color Guard is under the direction of Mr. Cece Renteria
- RMS Band prepared 11-12 pieces for CMEA
- 4 RMS Band students were accepted in California All-State
- Color Guard attended the CCGC Live Oak HS competition to observe the more advanced students compete/perform
- RMS Band students loved performing in Pancake Breakfast and play the much anticipated finale where they play alongside SHS Band students

**RMS Choir** first year it is offered in school day:

- Learning basics, sight-reading and practicing pieces in choir
- Choir is taking lessons from the Kodaly Elementary 333 Choral Method book and this knowledge is reinforced with the music theory book, A young singer's journey.
- Choir worked on a piece by Shubert and added some footstomps.
- Choir also attended CMEA
- RMS Choir students shared during pancake breakfast
- Techniques were explored to work on audiation, to learn how to connect audiation work/skills with singing in harmony. The game solfège Sally was used to work on audiation/dictation.

**5th Grade Music:** This year every student was offered an instrument. True statement from our elementary music director: 'Thank you to SMB for buying us additional instruments. I was interviewed for a podcast – where I was questioned “What do you do when you don't have enough instruments?” I realized I have not been in this position; I can ask for more if I need it SMB will support it. I feel fortunate to be here supported by this community.'

- 5th graders learn to play two types of instruments throughout the year: Stings and Wind.

- 5th grade students enjoy playing their instruments and some actually take them home to practice.

### **Pedagogy Workshops**

SMB approved the request from two directors to attend the online Bornoff Pedagogy Workshop

### **SMB Instruments**

This year this organization was pleased to purchase instruments as the music programs in its schools noted an uptick in attendance. This allowed all students the possibility to have an instrument in their hands and enjoy the full benefit of class instruction.

2 Harps, 2 Full Size Violas, 6 Cellos (Used), 14 Cello Travel Cases, Replaced 14 Cello Bows, Marching Percussion Equipment Battery Equipment (Used) from Drum Corps, Rosewood Key Marimbas (Used), Update Sound System and Tech (Used), 1 Tuba (Used), 35 Violins, 39 Violas, 15 shoulder rests.

### **Grant Requests and Scholarships**

SMB is proud to offer the music directors the grants and student scholarships they need to make music opportunities accessible to all the students as well as bring outside music talents into the classroom and this year was another great success story.