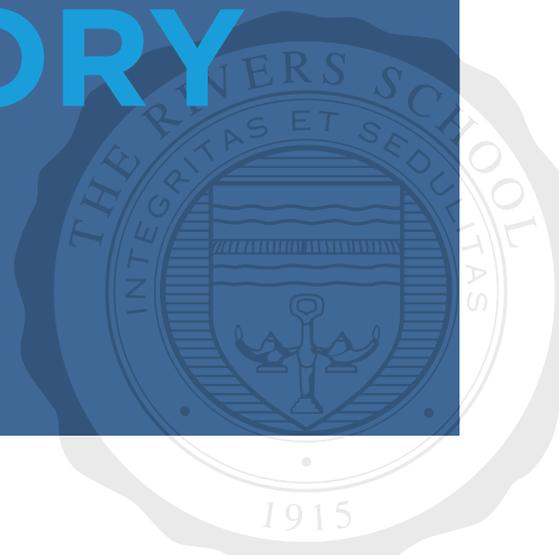


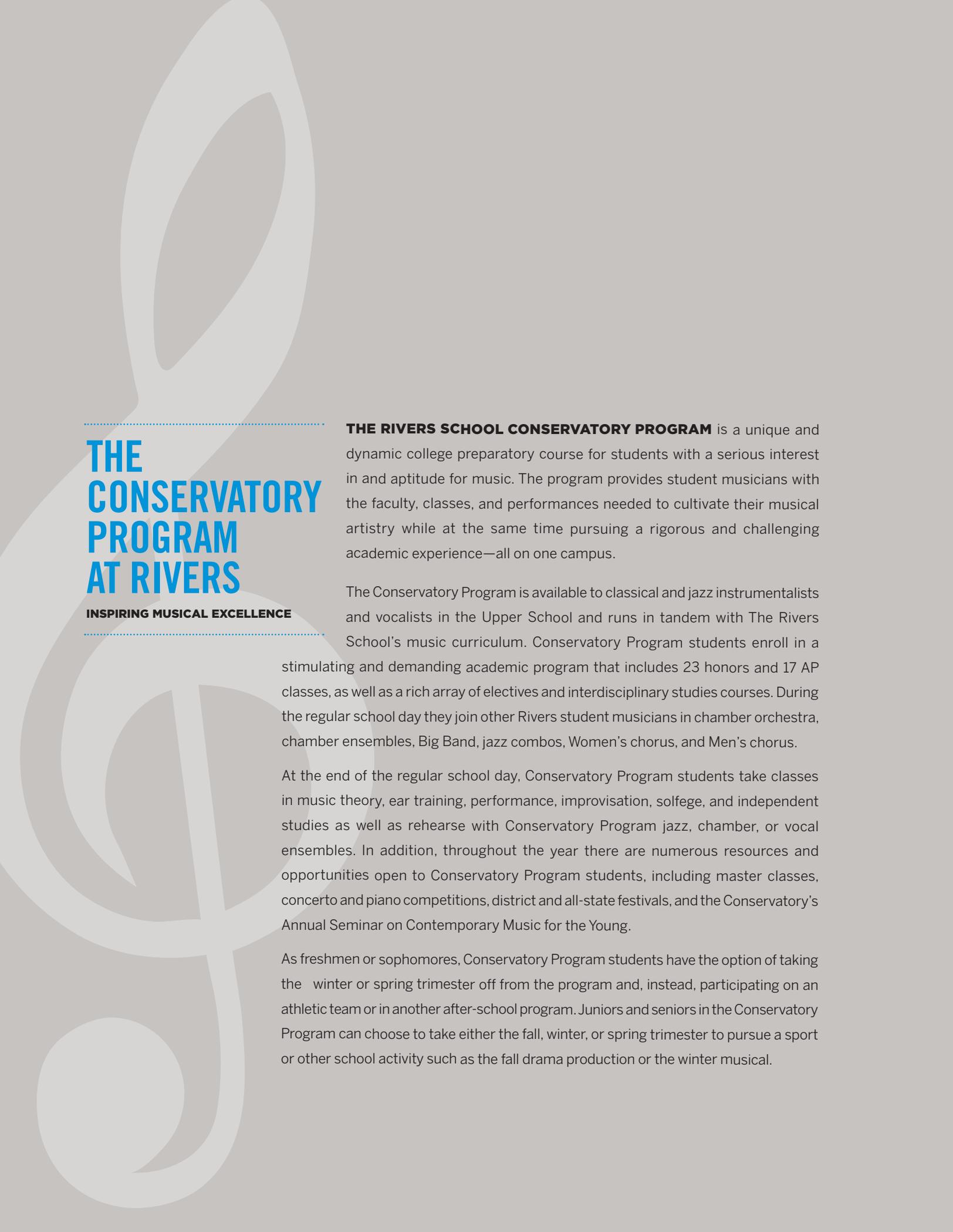


THE RIVERS SCHOOL EXCELLENCE WITH HUMANITY

FALL 2019

# CONSERVATORY PROGRAM





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# THE CONSERVATORY PROGRAM AT RIVERS

**INSPIRING MUSICAL EXCELLENCE**

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**THE RIVERS SCHOOL CONSERVATORY PROGRAM** is a unique and dynamic college preparatory course for students with a serious interest in and aptitude for music. The program provides student musicians with the faculty, classes, and performances needed to cultivate their musical artistry while at the same time pursuing a rigorous and challenging academic experience—all on one campus.

The Conservatory Program is available to classical and jazz instrumentalists and vocalists in the Upper School and runs in tandem with The Rivers School's music curriculum. Conservatory Program students enroll in a stimulating and demanding academic program that includes 23 honors and 17 AP classes, as well as a rich array of electives and interdisciplinary studies courses. During the regular school day they join other Rivers student musicians in chamber orchestra, chamber ensembles, Big Band, jazz combos, Women's chorus, and Men's chorus.

At the end of the regular school day, Conservatory Program students take classes in music theory, ear training, performance, improvisation, solfege, and independent studies as well as rehearse with Conservatory Program jazz, chamber, or vocal ensembles. In addition, throughout the year there are numerous resources and opportunities open to Conservatory Program students, including master classes, concerto and piano competitions, district and all-state festivals, and the Conservatory's Annual Seminar on Contemporary Music for the Young.

As freshmen or sophomores, Conservatory Program students have the option of taking the winter or spring trimester off from the program and, instead, participating on an athletic team or in another after-school program. Juniors and seniors in the Conservatory Program can choose to take either the fall, winter, or spring trimester to pursue a sport or other school activity such as the fall drama production or the winter musical.



“Studying music through the co-curricular Conservatory Program has allowed me to seamlessly incorporate my music studies into my high school experience.”

**SINGER, PIANIST, AND CONSERVATORY MEMBER APSI BALAMURUGAN '20**

has composed several large and complex pieces that have been performed entirely by her fellow musicians and singers at Rivers. “Having access to a talented base of artists in the men’s and women’s choruses, a full orchestra, and jazz band has allowed me to explore different types of music as a composer,” she says. “I write music to share my experiences and beliefs, and being in a community that is supportive and invested in these projects has been deeply rewarding.”

Now in her senior year at Rivers, Balamurugan has also participated in the annual Seminar on Contemporary Music for the Young since 2013, and last year composed a piece on the subject of the worldwide refugee crisis for the seminar titled “Displaced.” The original composition was featured in WCVB Channel 5’s “A Plus” segment. The piece, which featured original music for the chamber orchestra, the big band, and the chorus, told the plight of refugees based upon Balamurugan’s parents’ experience immigrating to the US from Sri Lanka. “The subject is a very personal one for me. I wanted to pay homage to the refugee crisis by blending musical styles—classical, choral, and jazz—because the refugee crisis is a mixing of cultures,” the young composer said.

Balamurugan has earned three consecutive Composition Department Awards in 2017, 2018, and 2019, Young Artist Diploma Levels I, II, and III in composition, and Young Artist Diploma Levels I, II, and III in piano. At Rivers, Balamurugan also serves as a Red Key tour guide and is co-president of the math department’s teaching assistant program.

“I have benefited from a strong academic curriculum as well as a comprehensive program in music composition, theory, and instrumental piano,” Balamurugan says. “Studying music through the co-curricular Conservatory Program has allowed me to seamlessly incorporate my music studies into my high school experience.”



Nedder continues to excel musically and is pursuing a dual degree in jazz studies and political science from Northwestern University's Bienen School of Music and the Weinberg College of Arts and Sciences.

**VOCALIST, PIANIST, AND TROMBONIST JOSEPH NEDDER '18** joined the Middle School Conservatory Program in 2012. His commitment to the Conservatory Program continued from that point on, marked by participation in the Upper School Conservatory Program, Rivers Honors Big Band, Rivers Select 1 Combo, and Conservatory Program Vocal Ensemble. During his eight years of study at The Rivers School Conservatory and seven years as a Rivers student, Joseph earned numerous distinctions, including the Frances Brockman Lanier Music Award in 2018, the David Killam Instrumental Music Prize in 2018, and the Rivers Conservatory Jazz Award in 2018. His outstanding musicianship also earned recognition from prestigious musical institutions, including the Massachusetts Association for Jazz Education, which recognized him for Outstanding Musicianship in 2014 through 2018, and the Berklee High School Jazz Festival, which awarded him the Individual Judge's Choice Award in 2016, 2017, and 2018. Nedder, who also starred in several musical theater productions while at Rivers, continues to excel musically and is pursuing a dual degree in jazz studies and political science from Northwestern University's Bienen School of Music and the Weinberg College of Arts and Sciences. In his free time, Nedder writes, produces, and records original music, manages and arranges for the all-male a capella group Freshman Fifteen at Northwestern, and performs with the Northwestern Jazz Orchestra and Small Jazz Ensemble.



**LINDY BILLHARDT '19**, who joined Rivers in the 6th grade, spent four years in the Conservatory Program, taking part in both jazz and classical performance classes and theory. She played upright bass for four years in the Rivers Chamber Orchestra and trombone for two years in the Rivers Honors Big Band. Additionally, she was a member of the Rivers Youth Orchestra program for five years and the Youth Symphony for three. In 2018, Billhardt was accepted into the Boston University Tanglewood Institute's 2018 Young Artist Orchestra. Then, in 2019, she won first place in the RYO concerto competition with the first movement of the Koussevitzky Concerto. Other highlights of her RSC career include sitting principal chair in the Boston Youth Symphony 2018-2019 season and at the 2019 Massachusetts All-State Festival, attending the 2019 All-Eastern Orchestra in Pittsburgh, playing the full Koussevitzky Concerto at Jordan Hall in May 2019 with the Youth Symphony, and winning the Frances Brockman Lanier Award. Billhardt is now enrolled at Boston University and studying with third chair Boston Symphony bassist Ben Levy. As she continues her musical journey, she says her favorite memories from the Conservatory Program are playing with the Youth Symphony at Cartoon Fest in Boston's Symphony Hall and RSC fundraisers, as well as soloing with The Rivers School Conservatory at Regis and Jordan Hall.



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the past two years, she has performed as a soloist with several orchestras, including the Rivers Symphony Orchestra and the Massachusetts Youth Symphony Project. In 2019, she won third prize at the Yamaha USASU International Piano Competition and first prize at the X Chopin International Piano Competition. Most recently, Liu participated in the Cliburn Junior Festival as one of 14 selected pianists and won first prize at the Rosewood Fanning International Piano competition. Liu has worked with many great international pianists and musicians including Dorothy Shi, A. Ramón Rivera, Alexander Ghindin, Sean Chen, Valery Kuleshov, Wha Kyung Byun, Caroline Oltmanns, Krystian Tkaczewski, and Maestro Ruth Reinhardt. Liu currently studies with HaeSun Paik at New England Conservatory and participates in The Conservatory Program at Rivers.

**KATHERINE LIU '23** began her impressive musical journey at age three and performed publicly at Boston's Steinway Hall one year later. She has received top prizes in numerous regional and international piano competitions, including Grand Prix at the Chopin International Piano Competition in Connecticut and the Soloists of New England Competition, and first place at the III Krystian Tkaczewski International Piano Competition in Poland, the NEPTA Mildred Freiberg Middle

School Competition, the Martha B. Sosman Concerto Competition, the Rivers Symphony Orchestra Concerto Competition, the Brockton Symphony Orchestra Concerto Competition, the Steinway Society Piano Competition, and the Bay State Piano Competition, among many others. Liu was also selected to compete in the prestigious Cleveland International Piano Competition for Young Artists, where she advanced to the semi-finals. Liu joined Rivers in the sixth grade, and over



**MICHAEL MANASSEH '19** Started his nine years of study and performance at The Rivers School Conservatory in fourth grade, joining the Conservatory Program in seventh grade when he started as a student in the Rivers Middle School. His very first jazz ensemble was under the direction of Bill Jones. He then continued to participate in various RSC jazz ensembles under the leadership of Jamie Stewardson, Sean Farias, and Philippe Crettien. As a member of the Conservatory Program, Manasseh took courses in jazz composition, transcription, improvisation, and AP music theory. He also served as a teaching assistant for RSC Summer Jazz in 2016, played in the Mingus Competition in New York City in seventh through ninth grade, and was a member of NEC Youth Jazz Orchestra as a senior. Manasseh has received many honors at the local, regional, and national levels, including the MAJE Outstanding Musicianship Award for three consecutive years, first place with an Outstanding Musicianship Award at the National Berklee High School Jazz Competition, and participation in the All-State Festival for two years. In 2018, he was awarded the Berklee Five-Week Jazz Scholarship and was selected to join the Vail Jazz All-Stars with performances at the Vail Jazz Festival in Vail, CO. Manasseh is continuing his pursuit of musical and academic excellence at Columbia University.

# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

## What kind of musicians apply to The Conservatory Program?

Students entering grades 9, 10 or 11, who play any classical or jazz instrument or are vocalists.

## How big is the program?

There are approximately 35 students enrolled in the Conservatory Program.

## What are the ensembles I can play in?

Classical instrumentalists play in the Chamber Orchestra during the school day and are assigned to chamber ensembles ranging from two to six students each in the Conservatory Program after school. Jazz students are assigned to jazz combos (four to six students) and/or the Honors Big Band (18 students) during the school day and to Conservatory Program combos after school. Vocalists sing with the Men's or Women's Choruses during the school day and form a vocal chamber ensemble in the after-school program.

## How are Conservatory students integrated with the rest of the student body?

The Rivers School has extensive opportunities for students to socialize with students who have varying interests and talents. These include clubs, class orientation trips, advisory groups, and social outings.

## What is the time commitment required in The Conservatory Program?

Conservatory Program students spend about 4 to 5 hours per week in after-school classes and rehearsals (in addition to 3 ¼ hours per week in orchestra, jazz band or chorus during the academic day). Conservatory Program students also typically have between three and six performances during a school year — some on campus and some off campus. Practice time needed for Conservatory Program commitments varies from student to student.

## What are the benefits of being in The Conservatory Program at Rivers?

- Multiple classes and competitions every year
- Dynamic combination of outstanding academic and music programs
- A community that values both academic and musical excellence
- Small academic class sizes (average of 12) and teacher to student ratio (1:6)
- Orchestra, chorus, and jazz ensembles that are scheduled during the academic day
- Time for lessons and practicing during the school day and/or after school
- Conservatory Program administration oversight and management of student workload
- Additional performances in vocal and chamber ensembles or jazz combos

## Who is The Rivers School Conservatory Program for?

- Students who want to further develop a passion for jazz, classical, or vocal music
- Students who want to work in depth with outstanding and distinguished classical and jazz faculty
- Those who wish to join an elite and select group of academically and musically motivated students

## How do I apply?

Students must apply to both The Rivers School and The Conservatory Program (two separate applications). Visit [www.rivers.org](http://www.rivers.org) for more information on both applications and Conservatory Program audition requirements.

## What kind of academic profile do I need?

The Conservatory Program seeks students with excellent academic records from their current school, strong SSAT scores, and teacher recommendations referencing intellectual passion and strong character.

## FACULTY HIGHLIGHTS

Marta Zurad  
Junko Watanabe  
Lois Shapiro  
Lucia May  
Steve Sussman  
Dan Shaud  
Ana Sorina Popa  
Marc Ryser

Emmanuel Feldman  
Mark Churchill  
Vytautas J. Baksys  
Ann Bobo  
Eve Budnick  
Erin Lindsey  
Ian Lindsey  
Kenneth Mok

Jin-Kyung Joen  
Steven Laven  
Bruce Coppock  
Anne Hooper Webb  
Christopher Memoli  
Susan Memoli  
Lindsey Robb  
Colleen MacDonald

A. Ramón Rivera  
Magdalena Richter  
Liana Zaretsky  
Gillian Rogell  
Elizabeth Foulser  
Ethel Farny  
Dan Loschen  
Klaudia Szlachta

Kelly Barr  
Ronald Lowry  
Bill Jones  
Philippe Crettien  
Sarah Tenney  
Timur Rubinshteyn  
Susan Emmanouilidis