



TIGER TALK

An occasional newsletter for parents and friends of the Gifford Youth Orchestra (GYO)

April 2018, Vol. 1, No. 1

MARGARET'S CORNER By Margaret Thornton

As a Board member, I thought it would be interesting to hear the comments of the students as well as the parents concerning the Gifford Youth Orchestra program. So without hesitation, I set out on a quest to interview as many willing candidates as possible. First to be interviewed was the Program Director, **Mrs. Iva Powell-Perry**, who has been with the program for approximately seven years.

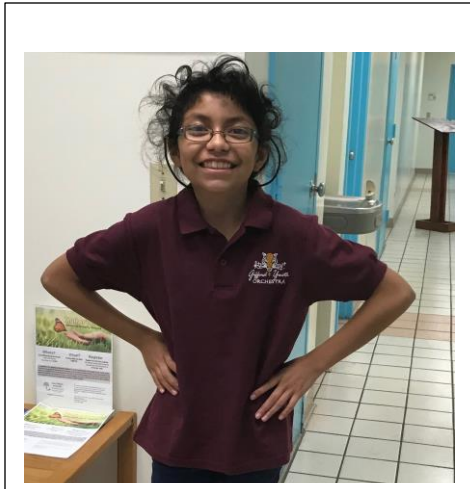


When asked how she became involved, Mrs. Powell, replied with a smile, "I was in a store and ran into Dr. Bujol who introduced me to the program. She invited me to become a part. I have been here ever since." Inspired by the other parents and how they interacted with each other and the students, she began volunteering with Mrs. Reason, Mrs. Pelt, and others and loved it. When asked about her aspirations and expectations for GYO, Mrs. Powell offered valuable input. She suggested

several things to do, such as; getting more parents involved, having more publicity, soliciting to gain more children in the program, having our own building. That way students would be able to practice in a single building, rather than two or more, and we could open our doors for practice two to three times a week. As we concluded our interview, Mrs. Powell busily prepared an evening meal for the students while wearing a priceless smile of satisfaction and pride.

I was amazed to see the eagerness of the students to be interviewed about their experience in the GYO. Read what they had to say:

Stephon Basden is a newcomer to the program, but says he likes what he has seen so far. He is hoping to create his own music. He is a 9th grader at the FLC.



Isabella Cruz, (Left) a beginner, says that it is a fun place, and it helps her to learn more. She likes to show her music teacher what she has learned.

Rebekkah Dougall commented that the program is really very nice. It is a little challenging, but for the most part, it is easy to play. She is hoping to get paid to play for events. She feels that Mrs. Haar is a very good teacher and has taught her well.

Alex Powell. An eighth grader who has been with the program for six years, Alex said she feels good about the program. It helps her to learn in school and keeps her motivated mentally. And it's a fun way to get out of the house.

Tatianna Wallace started in second grade and is now in seventh. She likes learning the different types of songs, and she looks forward to playing the violin to assist her in getting a scholarship for her future career as a Forensic Scientist.

And it wasn't only the students who had plenty to say. Their parents chimed in as well:

Dayde Gallaardo feels that her daughter is doing very well in the program and that it is helping her to learn better in school. She is very happy with the program and is thankful that it exists.

Noemie Joseph feels that the GYO benefits her daughter by causing her to be a better person. It advances her ability to play the violin as well as the clarinet. She says that her daughter performs better in school, getting better grades. She is being challenged to advance to the first chair. In the future, she hopes to play in

the marching band or an orchestra. She is committed until she is 18 years old. Mrs. Joseph loves the program and tries to expose her daughter to as many cultural activities as possible.

Michelle Ward says she has known Mrs. Haar for years and followed her to the GYO so that she could teach her son. Her son has been with the program since first grade. It benefits him because he is dyslectic and playing the instrument helps him to build confidence. She is pleased with the musicians who come in to teach the lessons.



New February 2018 Class Orientation with Students and Parents

Alexis Krasotkin has had her granddaughter, Tatiana, in the GYO program since third grade, which has been five years. Mrs. Haar taught her how to play and now she is in the orchestra in of her Middle School. Mrs. Krasotkin is very pleased with the program.

SPECIAL MARCH ACTIVITY

Citra, Florida Violin Clinic, March 23 – 24, 2018



Photo of the students who attended enjoyed the March the music camp includes eleven GYO students. It was somewhat challenging, but very educational.

EXCELLENCE: A GYO VALUE By Dr. Crystal Bujol

No question that our children are part of the Gifford Youth Orchestra to learn how to play their instruments. That's first. But they're here for something more as well. They're here to learn more about their world and how to succeed in it. As parents, teachers, staff and volunteers, one of our jobs is to model certain values for them. And high up on the list of those values is excellence. We need to remember what Colin Powell said about this value:

“If you are going to achieve excellence in big things, you develop the habit in little matters. Excellence is not an exception, it is a prevailing attitude.”

Of course, the General and former Defense Secretary is absolutely right. He might have added that excellence is not something one learns all at once. It's something that through observation and striving, through repetition and encouragement, becomes part of who we are.

Children especially learn through observation. They watch what others around them do and they draw conclusions about what others in their lives think is important in life. In front of a child, an adult is always on stage.

That's why we challenge our teachers to constantly work to improve themselves as well as their students. It's why we encourage our team to always do their best -- and then to try to do better. We know we can't always expect to come out on top. But, that should be acceptable to us only if we know we have truly done our personal best. That is something we want our children -- and our adults -- to understand.

My mother, Rev. Dr. Ruth Bujol, was a great source of inspiration to me and she had many teachings. As we moved from elementary to middle school and on to high school and beyond, students had autograph books for teachers, parents, and friends to write their thoughts. Much like Facebook is now. My mother's inscription was always, “Good, better, best. Never let it rest. Until your good is better and your better is best!” These are words I live by and encourage my staff to live up to. This is the value I espouse for our students to work toward.

Your good is good. Your better is better. And, your best is best!