

Meet Trevor Klutz, a Teacher Full of Surprises

If you haven't yet tuned into the Rootabega video ([Rootabega Sessions // Trevor Klutz](#)) to hear GYO violin instructor Trevor Klutz playing with former Vero Beach High fiddler Laura Douglas, do so immediately after you finish this story.

The first surprise will be that Trevor is playing not the violin, but the guitar. The second will be his technical mastery. As it turns out, we shouldn't be surprised. Trevor is a wildly talented multi-instrumentalist, handling not only the violin and guitar but the mandolin and bass with the skills of a prodigy.

He started violin at the same age as many of our GYO students, 12. He was at Gifford Middle School when he and his mother attended a program designed to grab the attention of new string students.

At his request, Trevor's mother signed him up on the spot. It was the beginning of a relationship with music that was to take him through Vero Beach High and South Plains College in Texas for a degree in music performance and turn him into a professional musician.

The young Trevor knew about the Gifford Youth Orchestra "forever." But it was at Vero Beach High when he was looking for ways to earn his mandatory volunteer hours, that it occurred to him to get in touch with Dr. Bujol to see if he could help teach students to fulfill his requirements. He's never really stopped.

Today he teaches the younger students, a job he especially looks forward to. "Helping get the kids off on the right track is very important," he says.

He finds their response to his teaching to be very positive. Most are motivated and willing to put in the time necessary to make progress. Trevor recalls that his own first teacher was very sensitive to the needs of new learners and their anxieties, and he tries to incorporate her example into his teaching. "All the kids want to get better and that makes it easier," he says.

He also finds their parents uniformly supportive. "I like to talk with them when they pick their kids up," he says. "They all want their children to do their best."

While their professional lives have led them in different directions, Trevor attended Vero Beach High with fellow GYO violin teacher Safa El-Zein. They played together both in and outside school and became good friends. That friendship serves them well today as Safa sometimes calls on Trevor to help with her intermediate level students. "Among the teachers," he says, "everyone supports everyone else." The point is to give the students the best learning environment possible.

Like all professionals, Trevor continues to work consistently at his instruments. He practices a minimum of an hour daily and usually longer. It's a way not only of improving but of keeping his edge as a performer. And he continues to look for ways to improve his already impressive skills.

"I attended the annual Mike Block string camp here in Vero last summer, and I intend to be there again this year," he points out. "The level of the instructors Mike brings in is really high and they have so much to offer."

So Trevor will join a number of GYO students who will also be at the July 2018 learning event, to which string players from all over the country flock each year. In this, and in his easy-going manner that serves to counterpoint his commitment to excellence, he models for the students of the Gifford Youth Orchestra what it means to be a real musician.