

Mission statement:

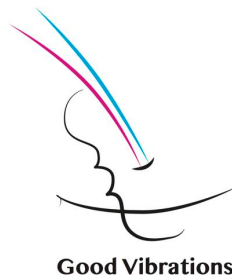
Good Vibrations is a project of the Omaha Chamber Music Society's Education Program. Its goal is to support the purchase, maintenance, and repair of student-owned instruments in Title I schools in the Omaha Public School District.

Description of project: Good Vibrations collects used instruments and professionally repairs and restores them to give to students attending Title I schools in Omaha. We also repair and refurbish instruments owned by these students. Additionally, we provide professional development workshops for teachers and future music teachers about stringed instrument purchase and care, as well as private lessons for string teachers whose main instrument is something other than strings.

Thanks to the outstanding community support of OCMS, Good Vibrations continues to grow and develop according to the needs of the students and teachers in OPS. We receive instrument donations throughout the year, and, thanks to our community partner KVNO, the used instrument drive will be a yearly event!

Our Education Program goes hand in hand with Good Vibrations, tailoring our coaching sessions in the classroom to best suit the needs of that classroom, as determined by the teacher. We send professional musicians to sit in with and coach students in the school's ensemble, led by their teacher. We focus on their classroom's orchestra repertoire to teach a variety of techniques, ways to navigate rehearsals, and personal practice through the art of orchestral playing.

The most important piece of our program is building relationships with students and teachers that will allow music to be a part of their lives forever. What a beautiful language to share!



Changing lives, one instrument at a time.

Instrument repair

Many students in Omaha own stringed instruments that have been passed down through families or were special purchases for the students. The students remember and appreciate who provided them with their instruments, but many are not able to afford the necessary repairs or the routine maintenance that stringed instruments require. That's where we come in. Because of your generous support, we are able to give these instruments the attention they need. Our luthier, Sarah E. Gray Restoration:

<http://sarahgrayrestoration.com/index.htm>



You may have seen this picture before. It's a great example of the before and after. You can see all the wonderful cosmetic repairs that were made to this violin. What you can't see is the fact that the sound post (inside the violin) was trimmed, preventing a crack on the face of the instrument, that could have proved catastrophic. Or that the tuning pegs were redrilled and properly lubricated so the student could tune the violin.

This violin wasn't even playable, since the bridge was missing entirely! Not to mention, there were open seams and it needed a new button, a minor repair, but one that can cause extensive damage to the violin if it's not repaired.



Here's an example of the kind of damage that an ill-fitting button can cause. There's a lot of pressure on that small piece, since it holds all the strings in place. Sarah will fit a new button.

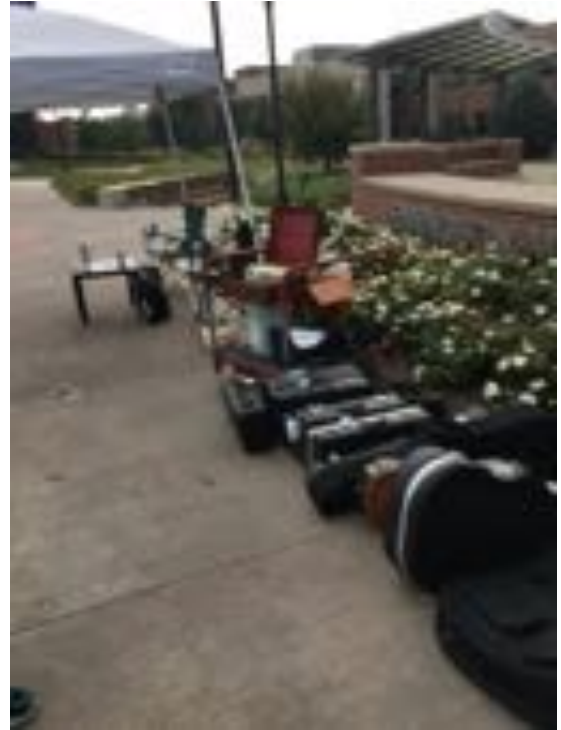


OCMS / KVNO Instrument Drive

In August 2021, with the help of radio station KVNO, 80 instruments were donated to Good Vibrations by the community at a used instrument drive at the University of Nebraska at Omaha.

We have successfully repaired over 65 of them, and they are now in the hands of thrilled young musicians. We are grateful for our partners, luthier Sarah Gray, Schmitt Music and Dietz Music for their beautiful repair work and the generous support of our friends and donors. The total number of repaired instruments has soared to well over 200, and many more are waiting. Performing on refurbished instruments gives young players confidence and self-esteem and instills in them a sense of responsibility and pride.

Many thanks to Sherry Kennedy Brownrigg and Colleen Cook of KVNO and volunteers Rudolf Semar, Avery Thomas, Kelly Beaman, and Jenna Reynard who helped make our first ever instrument drive a big success!



Who thought we'd get this many?!

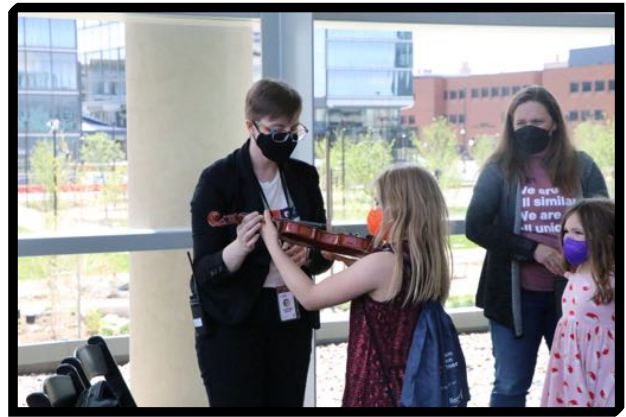


OPS teacher, Rudolf Semar poses with a beautiful euphonium!

Students from Omaha South High School play on some of the guitars and, yes, even a banjo donated to Good Vibrations. A few electric guitars, electric basses, and amplifiers were donated, too. Some went to South High and a couple to the Integrated Learning Program for Omaha Public Schools. The Integrated Learning Program (ILP) provides a specialized program for students with social, emotional, behavioral, and learning deficits. The music therapist there is starting a rock band. Many thanks to Schmitt Music and Dietz Music for their expert repairs!



Students from MARRS Middle School pose with their donated instruments and their grateful teacher, Katherine Stier. These students were proud participants in the All City Jazz Festival.



These donated instruments were used in a petting zoo as part of the Common Senses Festival, an interactive concert by the Omaha Symphony for children with autism and their families. They were the perfect size for these children, and they sounded amazing!



Students from Completely Kids perform at the Holland Center before an Omaha Symphony concert on instruments given to their program by Good Vibrations.



Photo op with their extraordinary teacher, Anne Nagosky—Omaha Symphony violinist, violin teacher with an outstanding private studio, and avid Good Vibrations supporter and friend!

OCMS Education Team

This year, our OCMS Education Team continued its residency at Bryan Middle School, working closely with orchestra teacher Rudolph Semar. Our Residency Team does everything from coaching the entire ensemble to playing alongside the students. They cover the basics of string playing, as well as more complex elements like phrasing and musicianship. Working on their orchestra music, the students really benefit from sitting right next to professionals. Being able to hear how their parts fit in and how the various passages are negotiated by professionals gives the students great insight that they can use going forward. Our Team also coached at Omaha South and Omaha North high schools.



Strum performance at North High School

We sent a string quintet to Omaha North and Bryan Middle to perform *Strum* by the critically acclaimed, much-honored African-American composer Jessie Montgomery complete with a video greeting from her!

The students were thrilled to hear such a spectacular piece of music, written by a living composer and played beautifully by our musician-coaches.

Shout out to Rose Rydberg (Omaha North) and Rudolph Semar (Bryan Middle School), orchestra teachers extraordinaire!



Coaching at North High School

After the performances, our musicians sat in and coached the orchestra for the remainder of class time.

For many of these students, it was their first time hearing a professional string quintet. You may remember Jessie Montgomery's *Strum* from the Summer Concert Series last year. It's virtuosic in nature, and the students were absolutely amazed to hear it played up close. They sat in stunned silence during the performance, applauding uproariously at the end.



Strum performance at Bryan Middle School

The Omaha Chamber Music Society values and is deeply grateful to the Sherwood Foundation and our generous donors for their vital support of our education programs.



BRYAN MIDDLE SCHOOL

8210 SOUTH 42 STREET OMAHA, NEBRASKA 68147-1705

5/19/2022

Omaha Chamber Music Society and Sarah Gray Restoration,

Your work this year with the students at Bryan Middle School has been nothing short of incredible. I cannot express in strong enough terms how thankful my students and I are for your commitment to improving the musical education of young people in our area and to making excellent instruments available to students with lesser means.

Your education team travelled to Bryan MS this year for more than a half dozen coaching sessions. My students heard the quintet perform Jessie Montgomery's "Strum" and were visited via video by the composer herself. They received instruction on many aspects of playing from hand position all the way through to vibrato and playing expressively. Students got to know the coaches with the large number of visits they were able to make and became more comfortable with learning from them. Their excitement when they saw the coaches walk in was infectious. I was excited too!

The Good Vibrations program and Sarah Gray Restoration adjusted and repaired 11 student owned instruments this year, all owned by students who could not otherwise afford work by a luthier of her quality. Good Vibrations was also able to completely replace an instrument for a student through their instrument donation program when repair was not possible. The students are so grateful for your immaculate work and they love how their sound immediately improves when they receive their instruments back from Sarah's shop. I am certain several students continued in orchestra where they otherwise would not have because of Ms. Gray's dedication to treating these student instruments as she would any other commission. The students felt valued in a way they don't always get to experience. What a powerful message to these young people!

Thank you. You are changing lives and preserving our art for the future.

Mr. Rudy Semar
Director of Bands and Orchestras
Bryan Middle School & Bryan High School
531.299.6856
rudolf.semar@ops.org

The Flatiron

Our space at the Flatiron Building. OCMS received a greatly-appreciated donation of a baby grand piano from Charles Adams (thank you, Charles!) and a harpsichord from the Omaha Symphony (thank you, Symphony!) Our new home is ready for rehearsals and small gatherings. If you missed our recent open house, fear not! There will be more opportunities in the future!



Many shelves for donated instruments. Let's fill them up, and empty them again!

Thank you for taking this extraordinary journey with OCMS and Good Vibrations!