



Letter from the Dean

by Jeff Crane & Kianna Znika

This letter was written in collaboration with Kianna Znika, our student writer in the College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences. Kianna is also a senior graduating with a degree in Journalism and Mass Communication.

"If you have this passion for music, you don't stop doing it - it chooses you and doesn't release you."

Tina Weymouth, a member of the iconic new wave group The Talking Heads, once articulated this sentiment that resonates profoundly within the music department here at Cal Poly Humboldt. Here, the dedication of our faculty members extends far beyond the confines of the campus, echoing Weymouth's assertion that music becomes an inseparable part of those truly devoted to it.

The Music Department believes that their mission includes providing opportunities for everyone to hear and make music, whether they're college students on our campus, or children and adults in our communities.

"All these opportunities are valuable both for the community members and for the learning of Cal Poly Humboldt students," Cindy Moyer, Chair of the Department of Dance, Music and Theatre expressed. "Together we help develop a vibrant musical community that enhances the quality of life for everyone in Humboldt county."

Faculty members actively engage with the community, conducting ensembles that blend the talents of students and community members alike in grand collaboration. Consider Rachel Samet, a lecturer of multiple classes, including the Fundamentals of Conducting, and a leading force behind several singing groups within the department. One of those groups is the Humboldt Chorale, containing both students of Cal Poly Humboldt and 70 members of the outside community altogether. Samet explains the benefit of combining her classes with the community, where singers of different ages and backgrounds can come together and learn from one another. It's an aspect that is appreciated by everyone.

You're Invited

Cal Poly Humboldt Music Department Honor Recital

Saturday, February 10 at 8 p.m
Fulkerson Recital Hall

Please email mus@humboldt.edu for free tickets.



A Photo of Dr. Rachel Samet conducting the Cal Poly Humboldt Choir.

In fact, many department ensembles have community participants. Garrick Woods conducts the Humboldt Symphony which has recently combined with a community orchestra. "It helps them work towards a goal and gain a lot of satisfaction," Woods stated, expressing the benefit of having both college students and community members in his ensembles.

Dan Aldag, who welcomes many community members into the Jazz Orchestra, agrees that it's a mutually beneficial situation, allowing students to play in bigger ensembles and community members to participate in groups that would otherwise be financially and logistically hard to do outside of a school setting.

Aside from their respective ensembles and classes, many of our faculty members also offer private lessons to members of the community, from children in elementary school to older generations. Howard Kaufman, lecturer, teaches percussion groups at Fieldbrook Elementary School, where the students are about 10 years old.

Over the summer, the music department hosts a Chamber Music workshop for pre-college age students. For adults, there is a Chamber Music workshop as well as a Brass Chamber workshop.

Aside from their teaching, faculty members actively participate in ensembles and perform on concert series within the community, solely out of passion and love for the craft. Faculty are involved in the Calypso Band, the Eureka Symphony, the Trinidad Bay Arts and Music Festival, the Fortuna Concert Series, Chamber Players of the Redwoods and so much more.

Faculty also perform as soloists, especially guitar faculty Jennifer Trowbridge, and piano faculty Daniela Mineva, who performs everywhere from Humboldt County to China.

Kaufman and Eugene Novotney are even in a band that occasionally plays at The Farmer's Market in Arcata and for various other community events.

Of course, within the department it's not just the teachers who are actively out in the community due to passion; it's also the students.

Take myself, Kianna Znika, a student journalist who is also pursuing a minor in music here at Cal Poly Humboldt. As a music student, I diligently pursue my coursework, including instructional classes in guitar and voice, and actively participate in multiple ensembles such as Humboldt Chorale, Mad River Transit Singers and Guitar Chamber Music. Beyond the academic realm, I assume the role of "Lizzerd Kween," the independent singer-songwriter who is also the guitarist for Humboldt's very own feminist punk band, Heart Eyes. I've played at various venues around the area such as Blondie's, Humbrew's, Siren's Song, and Outer Space, a volunteer-led collective art space in Downtown Arcata.

My musical journey in Humboldt began at an open mic night, surrounded by the supportive, talented community members who live here - my new neighbors. Around me, at different live music events across the area, I've come to realize that a lot of the local bands are made up of other students, such as myself.

Something that makes Humboldt so special is the clear, inspiring passion that lives within the hearts of everyone around us - especially those involved in music. I am especially grateful for the faculty and students of our music department who embody this passion and stay true to their mission of making music accessible for all within this proud, humble community. You are appreciated, truly.