

# heart of the city

PIANO PROGRAM

## National Newsletter

Fall 2013



**MISSION** To proactively address the social issue of poverty and social justice by the advancement of a more equitable opportunity for disadvantaged youth to participate in music lessons, through a structured music program that continues throughout the school year. Volunteers are post-secondary students or community members who provide one-on-one piano lessons to students in inner city schools at no charge.

**THANK YOU** Special thanks to Eric Toyota (Vancouver), Connie Luu (Edmonton), Valeria Dimitarova (Ottawa), Jethro Beattie-Booth & David Wu (Montreal) for submitting their branches' updates. Additionally, special thanks to Connie Luu for her fantastic work maintaining the HCPP national website.

# HCPP Montreal

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## OVERVIEW - FALL 2013

Fall 2013 has been a season full of changes and improvements at HCPP Montreal! This semester, we had around 80 volunteers teaching piano in four inner city Montreal schools - two English schools (St. Gabriel & Edward Murphy) and two French schools (École La Mennais & École Champlain).

## VOLUNTEER RECRUITMENT

The year began with a large wave of volunteer recruitment. We tabled at the University Orientation Fair and SSMU Activities night, welcoming new McGillians from across Canada and abroad to the university. Altogether, 90 students signed up, and the events were a great opportunity to promote our program.

We held Volunteer Orientation on September 20th to introduce new volunteers to the program. We started with an introductory presentation by the exec team. We were lucky to be joined by Bettina Choo, the founder and former co-director of MHCPP, who spoke about the history of the program and how to start a volunteer organization. We then split the volunteers into groups to discuss scenarios that could arise during teaching. Overall, the event was a success, but next time we will try to cut down on the presentation time, concentrating more on scenarios and discussions.

## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT DAY 2013

Thanks to our dedicated volunteer coordinators, who spent countless hours scheduling students and organizing lessons, lessons started up the last week of September and first week of October. Like last year, we participated in Community Engagement Day, an event organized by the Social Equity and Diversity Education Office of McGill. To promote community engagement and connect McGill students with Montreal, various community organizations hold workshops and events that McGill students sign up for.

MHCPP held two community events; at École La Mennais, volunteers helped lead a basic music workshop for students at the school and at St. Gabriel School, volunteers put on a show for all students, which included classical piano, classic rock, French folk songs and Irish dancing.

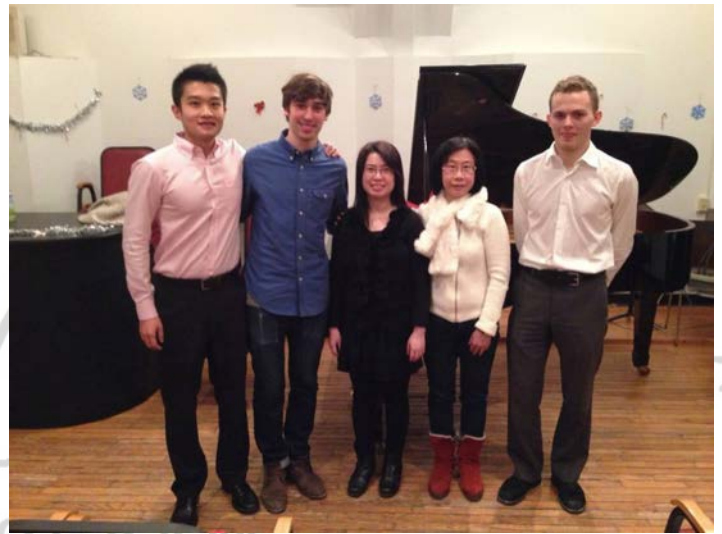


## WINTER MUSIC FESTIVAL

Our biggest event of the semester was the Winter Music Festival. On Saturday November 30, over sixty students in the program brought their friends and families to McGill to show what they had learned over the semester.

Thanks to Prof. Sara Laimon and the Schulic School Music, the students were able to perform on grand pianos in real concert halls. They were joined by five adjudicators, including McGill Graduates Dr. Angela Chan and Ms. Teresa Tang. Students were divided into four recitals, based on language and playing level. At the end of each recital, adjudicators gave master classes, providing constructive advice to all of the participants. Finally, the students were presented with certificates of recognition.

This was a great chance to thank some very important partners and sponsors of our program: Dan and Carl, from Abbey Lane, a Beatles tribute band who put on a charity concert to raise money for MHCPP, and the Malouf family, who has donated generously to the program. We would like to thank Prof. Laimon, Prof. Mdivani and all the volunteers who have worked countless hours to make the event a success!



## VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION NIGHT

After the Winter Music Festival, the volunteers of the program got together to celebrate the end of semester with pizza and snacks. This was a great chance to discuss the past semester and reflect on the semester coming up. Finally, a big thank you to all the volunteers who have dedicated their time and effort into making the program what it is and making a difference in the lives of the young musicians.



# HCPP Ottawa

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## FALL SEMESTER PROGRESS

The HCPP Ottawa Chapter presented certificates in order to show our sincere appreciation to the various schools participating in our program over a number of years. These schools include: Vincent Massey, Manor Park, Connaught Queen Mary and York Street Public Schools. We congratulate all staff and students for taking the time to let the children learn music outside of their regular classes with our dedicated volunteer piano teachers! We look forward to many more years of collaboration with these schools!

## FUTURE STEPS

We are looking to improve the quality of student learning by lending piano keyboards to our students, so they may practice at home. This will give them time and equipment to help to master their pieces to their full potential. We aim to begin distributing keyboards in January 2014, to help prepare for our annual recital in the spring!

## VOLUNTEER RECRUITMENT

Efforts to recruit new volunteers at the University of Ottawa during the clubs week in September resulted in many new volunteers; this will help us reach out to even more students! With a total of 45 students participating in the Heart of the City Piano Program Ottawa Chapter along with our dedicated 18 volunteers, we hope to recruit more volunteers for the winter semester!



# HCPP Edmonton

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Facebook: [www.facebook.com/uahcpp](http://www.facebook.com/uahcpp)

Twitter, Instagram: @HCPPEdmonton

## FALL RECRUITMENT

This year was one of our most successful years in terms of recruitment with over 60 volunteers applying to volunteer for the fall semester, the majority of which will continue into the winter semester. Our guitar program especially has grown in leaps and bounds, from one volunteer at one school in the winter 2012 semester to five volunteers at three schools now.

On September 19, 2013, we welcomed back old volunteers and trained new volunteers at our Volunteer Orientation. Following a presentation by the executive team, we split the volunteers up by school for small group discussions. We ended the night with a teaching tips seminar from Min, our Performance Troupe Director.



## SPECIAL LESSON

Our volunteers got into the Christmas spirit a little early this year. On November 12, we held a drop-in event for volunteers to make reindeer gift bags and Christmas cards to give to their students during their special lessons. Pencils were donated from Long & McQuade and small toys from Grammas' Toy Shop.

We also purchased some chocolate and candy canes to put in the bags. It was our first time doing the gifts this way (previously we bought small items from the dollar store that volunteers would come pick up), so we weren't sure what the response from volunteers would be. Almost everyone ended up coming, so we will likely need to book a larger classroom for the event next year. The volunteers had a great time making the gifts and meeting other volunteers!

## SATURDAY PROGRAM

We are incredibly honoured to have been selected as one of fifteen recipients across Canada of the 2013 MusiCounts TD Community Music grants. This grant allowed us to purchase equipment (6 keyboards, 2 digital pianos, and music books) to kick off our new Saturday program at the Norwood Child & Family Resource Centre.

Lessons run from 10 AM – 4 PM every Saturday with two or three volunteers teaching at once. This new program has allowed us to accept an additional 14 volunteers who do not have the availability to teach in our school program, and has also raised our student intake by 40 students! The majority of our current students are referrals from the Norwood Child & Family Resource Centre, but we will also be taking students who have graduated from our school program.

Students will need to reapply to the program each August, and acceptance will depend on the evaluations from their piano teachers and attendance, as spots are limited and we want to ensure that we are providing lessons to those most in need and that will benefit most from the program. We also implemented a book order program with our Saturday students that we hope to do with all of our students next year.

## HEART & SOUL CONCERT

We held our second annual Heart & Soul Concert on November 19, 2013 at the Alberta College Conservatory of Music Muttart Hall. Performances ranged from solo piano to singing to dance, all of which incorporated piano in some way. We also held a silent auction in the lobby before the concert and during intermission, with over 30 items donated by local businesses. Approximately 150 people were in attendance, contributing to a fundraising total of over \$1500!

More pictures from the event can be viewed on our Facebook page. Also check out our YouTube channel for videos of some of the performances including a cover of “Cups” by our Performance Troupe!



## PERFORMANCE TROUPE

Our Performance Troupe Director, Creative Director, and Community Outreach Director have been working together to actively promote our Performance Troupe and find performance opportunities. Through the creation of a Performance Troupe specific brochure and connecting with local wedding and event planners on Twitter, we are starting to raise our profile in the community. We have had three performances so far this year, at the Norwood Child & Family Resource Centre 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration, the Heart & Soul Concert, and at West Edmonton Mall for Christmas. Our hard work has really paid off, as we've recently begun receiving inquiries about performance opportunities for various events on and off campus. Next year, we'll be playing in our first wedding!

## SOCIAL MEDIA

HCPP Edmonton is now on Twitter and Instagram! If you use either of these social media networks, please follow us @HCPPEdmonton and we'll be sure to follow you back. We've also uploaded some videos onto YouTube from our Heart & Soul Concert, and of our Performance Troupe playing at the recital – check it out!



# HCPP Vancouver

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The Vancouver branch of HCPP at the University of British Columbia has experienced yet another successful first term. This is our branch's sixth year in operation, and we currently operate at five elementary schools in Vancouver's inner-city district and one high school for adolescents with serious mental health concerns. This term we have successfully recruited just over 30 teacher-volunteers, allowing our program to provide free piano lessons to over 70 elementary students and adolescents.

The majority of our recruitment was carried out by means of booths at Imagine Day, our university's orientation day to first year students, and at clubs fairs. We promote our club through a large poster display, promotional stickers, and club executives on standby to talk about HCPP. We also promote our club through e-mails to previous volunteers, and other constituencies on campus who we think might be a good fit for HCPP.

In late September, we held our Volunteer Orientation Session where we orientated and trained our volunteers both new and returning. During this event, we served pizza, gave the history of our club, traded teaching tips and experiences, and went over lesson logistics. A couple months later we hosted a Christmas Craft Party where our volunteers joined the executives to create some holiday crafts for the students. At this event, we played Christmas music while snacking on cookies and drinking hot chocolate. This turned out to be a great opportunity to enhance club cohesiveness and create a stronger community among our volunteers and the executive team.

To finish off the term, we held an HCPP Charity Concert where advanced pianists from both within and outside our club performed musical acts for donations. Several executives also brought home baked goods to sell at this event. The concert proved to be successful as we raised significant funds towards our club, as well as promoted ourselves to the student body. Overall this term has been a highly successful term for our branch and we look forward to another year of HCPP in 2014.



*Volunteer teachers arrive at our Christmas Craft Fair where volunteers make Christmas ornaments for their students while snacking on hot chocolate and cookies.*





*Some of the club executives pose at the Heart of the City's Fall Charity Concert hosted in the Student Union Building.*



*A poster for the Heart of the City's Fall Charity Concert. Proceeds go towards buying new piano books for the schools as well as running various other events for the program.*