



upcoming concerts

**Friday, May 10 &
Saturday, May 11, 2019
7:30 p.m.**

Spring Concerts

Lang Concert Hall

Lang Music Building, Swarthmore College

*Lang Music Building opens to the public at 6:00 p.m.,
and seating for the concert hall begins at 6:45 p.m.*

**Thursday, July 25, 2019
2:00 p.m.**

Summer Concert Matinee

Lang Concert Hall

Lang Music Building, Swarthmore College

**Friday, July 26 &
Saturday, July 27, 2019
7:30 p.m.**

Summer Concerts

Lang Concert Hall

Lang Music Building, Swarthmore College

*Lang Music Building opens to the public at 6:00 p.m.,
and seating for the concert hall begins at 6:45 p.m.*

**Please note tickets are
not required for these concerts.**

**Donations benefit the
Chester Children's Chorus.**

Admission is free—All welcome!

610-328-8180

ccc@swarthmore.edu

The Halls Are Alive With the Sound of...Math?

Weeknights and Saturdays at the Chester Children's

Chorus are busy, joyful and intense. Children are rehearsing with John and Sean, enjoying snack and dinner breaks, and crossing Park Avenue to the CCC offices to practice math.

Chorus members commit to preparing for exceptional concert performances. This academic year, 21 middle and high school students have chosen to make an additional commitment; to meet with a Math Coach twice a week in order to strengthen their understanding of mathematical concepts, improve their grades, and prepare for assessments like the SAT.

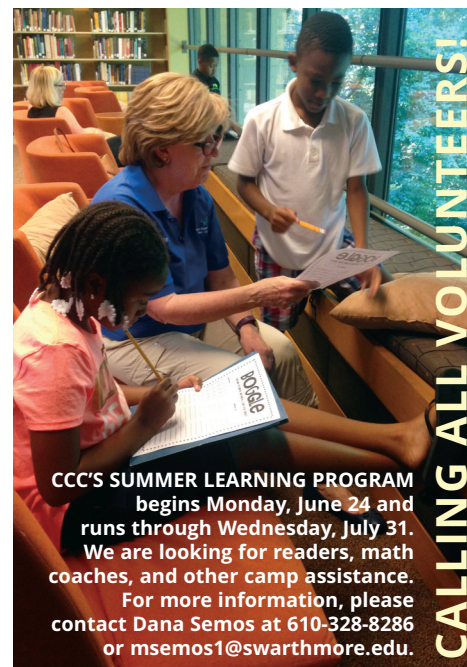
The energy of a busy math practice session is absolutely exhilarating. The children are talking, and laughing with their one-on-one coaches; they have gotten to know each other over the course of the year. Coaches take ownership of teaching so that their students build confidence, learn content, work hard, and have fun. And the children are learning. Each student has focused goals, each coach is delivering targeted instruction, and ongoing assessment highlights the children's accomplishments and guides further instruction.

The Math Practice Program responds to the CCC mission to support chorus members' academic achievement, and the program is just getting started. This summer, as part of their summer learning experience, Training Chorus members will dive right into Math, and individual coaching will continue into the 2019–2020 school year.



Saneya Davis with
Coach Abigail Bautista

Like learning classical music, learning advanced math requires commitment, discipline and a lot of practice. Our children master Handel's *Messiah*; certainly, they can master Advanced Algebra.



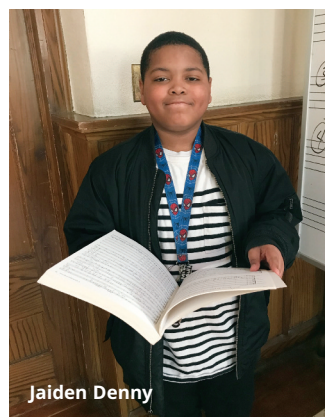
**CCC'S SUMMER LEARNING PROGRAM
begins Monday, June 24 and
runs through Wednesday, July 31.
We are looking for readers, math
coaches, and other camp assistance.
For more information, please
contact Dana Semos at 610-328-8286
or msemos1@swarthmore.edu.**

CALLING ALL VOLUNTEERS!

THIS MUSIC IS BIG

The Concert Choir has spent much of their February rehearsal time learning *The Hallelujah Chorus*, from Handel's *Messiah*. During a Saturday session, after spending several minutes refining the famous passage, "For the Lord God omni—potent reigneth," a bright sixth grade tenor, Jaiden, sighed, "This music is big!" A few of the

other boys giggled behind their hands at the comment. I interrupted, "You're absolutely right, Jaiden. This music is big. It's a depiction of an all-powerful God." I knew that the boys were laughing because they thought that Jaiden was referring to the size of our three-hundred-page *Messiah* vocal score—ah, adolescent boys! After rehearsal, I spoke with lead giggler, explained what Jaiden meant, and asked him to apologize. Then Jaiden and I chatted for a while, and he shared that the music inspired



Jaiden Denny

him to make the comment, and that it is great. *The Hallelujah Chorus* is magnificent; it is spacious, rhythmically thrilling, and its climaxes are perfectly crafted.

Over the next year, our middle and high school singers will learn twelve of the twenty *Messiah* choruses for our March 2020 per-

formance with community adults, and professional soloists and orchestra. Please know that even if we could, we would never perform a complete *Messiah*, which, if read attentively, is aggressively polemical. Using texts from two *Messiah* movements that we have cut from our performance, I always explain to audiences that the Sons of Levi don't need to be Purified, and we are not Breaking anyone In Pieces With Rods of Iron. These texts should never have been included in the piece. Many of you readers will be singing *Messiah* with us next March, and I look forward to the magic that happens when our children are surrounded by thoughtful and encouraging adults. Our performance will be thrilling, and big...very big.

—John Alston

Executive & Artistic Director



Chasing CCC

Every spring, between Valentine's Day and the end of March, Sean Tripline and I visit all twenty-five Chester second grade classes, in search of the musically talented children that will become the CCC Training Chorus the following summer. In every class, after leading a playful round of hand clapping and melodic call and response, I'll ask, "Is there anyone who would like to show me how good you are and sing by yourself?" The room fills with groans of "Not me" and "I'm scared." But almost always, there are a few children who want to try. On average, there are three students in a class who sing well enough to earn a CCC invitation—they match pitch perfectly, sing with clear voice, and are happy when they land on the final note.

Recently, after auditioning one class, I was waiting in the hall for the next audition. A little girl came running up to me and said earnestly, "I asked my teacher if I could sing for you out in the hall, because I was too scared to sing in the class." "Of course you can," I replied, "but it's noisy here, so let's move away from the classroom." As we walked to the end of the hall, she told me her name was Nylaa, and that she was nervous, but really likes to sing. I told her how brave she was to run after me and ask for



Sean Tripline & John Alston

an opportunity. After singing back a few simple phrases, it was clear that Nylaa was exceptionally talented. I then sang a jagged, intentionally unmusical phrase for her to repeat, which she did easily and perfectly. I shouted, "Oh my gosh, you sing like an angel!" and her face filled with a radiant, gentle smile.

We are so lucky that the world is filled with precious, courageous, and optimistic children. Your gifts and faith have made it possible for the CCC to be a place where children like Nylaa can sing, learn, thrive. Thank you.

—J.A.

JOIN US: THE CCC TURNS 25 THIS FALL!

*Celebrating 25 Years of
Strong Voices, Strong Minds and Strong Spirits*

25th Anniversary Honoree Cordelia Delson

**Saturday, October 26, 2019
Gala at Swarthmore College**



A Night to Remember... Concert Choir Excursion to Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater

On Saturday, March 2, the Concert Choir ventured to Philadelphia to experience a moving and inspiring performance of the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater. The company is "*renowned for celebrating the human spirit through the African-American cultural experience and the American modern dance tradition.*" The extraordinary dancers, breathtaking stage sets, and musical repertoire exceeded the children's (& adults'!) expectations.

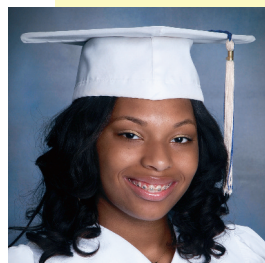
Following afternoon rehearsal, the Concert Choir boarded the CCC vans, and went to a pre-show dinner at Chickie's and Pete's. From the restaurant, the vans drove up Broad Street to the grand Academy of Music. The children were unsure of what to expect. They took their seats in the beautiful concert hall, with its enormous crystal chandelier, ornate woodwork, and an excited buzz in the air. The audience was treated to an incredible show, that included *Ella*, an energetic, fast-paced, and precise duet performed to a live concert recording of Ella Fitzgerald's acrobatic scat singing in "Airmail Special." The conclusion was Ailey's seminal work, *Revelations*, a mesmerizing, and sweeping piece that left the children—and the entire audience—awestruck.

The CCC extends a sincere thank you to the HBE Foundation and Trustee Bruce Brown for supporting this incredible experience for the Concert Choir.

Pre-show smiles from Tasia, Raelyn and Kanazja



CONGRATULATIONS! 2019 SENIORS



TASIA GREEN

Tasia can't remember a time in her life when she didn't sing. Her family loves to sing, and she says she started humming when she was three...and she hasn't stopped. She joined the CCC as a rising third grader, while attending Chester Community Charter School.

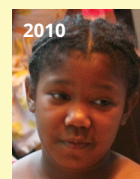
During her time with the CCC, in addition to singing Alto in the Concert Choir, she has taken voice and piano lessons. Tasia serves as a junior counselor for the Training Chorus and Junior Choir, and she tells the younger chorus members, "If your heart is in it, you can sing. If you want to balance your love for singing with friendship, then this place is for you. The chorus is an actual family."

This spring, Tasia graduates from the Christian Academy. She plans to study vocal performance, though she has not yet decided which college she will attend.



NAYOMI HARRISON

When Nayomi was invited to join the chorus as a rising third grader, she got excited by watching CCC videos on YouTube. Nayomi sings Soprano in the Concert Choir, and she says, "It's too hard to choose one favorite song," but her favorite performance memory is singing at Governor Tom Wolf's inauguration ceremony in Harrisburg in January 2015; "the greatest day ever." A favorite summer memory is, "every year, on John's birthday, when everyone tries to prank him." Nayomi is particularly grateful for the opportunity to learn classical music. She believes her CCC experience has made her able to understand and get along with different kinds of people.



Nayomi graduates this spring from Archbishop John Carroll High School. She has been accepted to the University of Pittsburgh, the University of Hartford, and Widener University. Nayomi plans to study architecture or civil engineering, though she has not yet decided which college she will attend.



SAVE THE DATE:

**Second Annual Pre-Matinee Luncheon
for Senior Communities
Thursday, July 25, 12:00-1:30 p.m.
Lang Performing Arts Center (LPAC)
Swarthmore College, Swarthmore, PA**

SUPPORT US! I am pleased to make a contribution to the Chester Children's Chorus in the amount of \$ _____.

☐ Enclosed is a check (Check made payable to "Swarthmore College" with "Chester Children's Chorus" in memo field.)

☐ I would like to make a monthly gift of \$ _____

☐ I have remembered the CCC in my will.

☐ Please charge my gift to

- ☐ Visa ☐ Mastercard
☐ Discover ☐ American Express

Card # _____

Expires: _____ / _____

☐ My gift will be matched by my employer.
(Please enclose your signed matching gift form.)

Name _____

Street _____

City, State, Zip _____

Email _____

Phone number _____

To give online, visit our website
www.chesterchildrenschorus.org,
and select "Volunteer or Give!"

For information, call director of development
Cynthia Staniszewski at (610) 690-5533.
Please return this form to our address below.



THANK YOU!

CHESTER CHILDREN'S CHORUS

John Alston, Executive & Artistic Director, and Founder
Sean Tripline, Assistant Music Director
Dana Semos, Managing Education Director
Cynthia Staniszewski, Director of Development
Elisa DeNofio, Administrative Assistant

Voice credits:

Editors: John Alston and Dana Semos

Designer: Karlyn Rosen Aires

Photography: John Wehmiller and CCC Staff

If you have received an extra copy of this newsletter, please notify us at 610-328-8180 and share the copy with a friend.

THE CCC CHECK IN: K'Yana Reeves

KK, as she prefers to be called, sang with the CCC for ten years before graduating last year. Now she attends Salem College, in Winston-Salem, NC, where she is earning her undergraduate degree in vocal music performance. KK practices voice and piano at least ninety minutes every day, and is developing the skills she'll need to become an accomplished singer and conductor. Not surprisingly, KK is earning mostly A-s in her music classes. She loves voice lessons, and this semester is singing songs in German, Italian, and English, including "Come Unto Him," from *Messiah*, and "Summertime," from *Porgy and Bess*. KK keeps busy, singing in several choral ensembles and participating in the African Student Organization Dance program. KK tells us she is adjusting to college life. "The biggest chal-



lenge is learning to balance work, sleep, and activities; and eating well. I admit sometimes I procrastinated a bit with classwork in my first semester. I'm learning to manage my time."

KK wanted to share some advice with our

CCC students who are thinking about studying music in college, "Practice as much as you can, and work on your music-reading skills, it's so important.

Right now, I'm not the worst sight-reader in the choir, but I'm not the best, either. Be productive and be on time," she adds, emphatically. Last summer,

KK was a terrific CCC junior

counselor, leading small group musicianship sessions with our middle school students.

We hope she'll return this summer to help teach sight-reading and help our future music majors prepare for college. We've already offered her a job.

"NOTE-ABLES"

Congratulations to **Sky Brooks**, Concert Choir Soprano and first year student at the Philadelphia High School for Creative and Performing Arts (CAPA). Sky placed as a Semi-Finalist in the 2019 Hal Leonard Vocal Competition in the Early Teen Voices Art Song category. Watch her beautiful performance of *Non Posso Disperar* by Giovanni Bononcini, and *Slumber Song* by Alexander Gretchaninoff, by entering "HL Art Song 2019 Sky Brooks" in the YouTube search bar.



Please join the CCC community in welcoming **Nathan Jay Posey-Alston**! Nathan arrived on August 25, 2018, to proud and happy parents, Sara & John. If you are lucky, you may get a glimpse of his sweet, smiling face at an upcoming concert!



FAMILIES: COME SIGN UP FOR OUR 2019-2020 SEASON!

Registration & Open House

Friday, April 26, 2019, 6:00-8:00 p.m.

CCC Offices, 112 Park Avenue, Swarthmore, PA 19081

