



YOUNG
MUSICIANS
UNITE



2026



THE AMERICAN MOZARTEUM SOCIETY

Championing Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's legacy for generations to come.

Find out more at www.mozarteum-us.org

LETTER FROM OUR CEO

You matter.

It's a simple message, but for many young people it's not something they hear often enough.

Every day, in schools across our community, students walk into classrooms carrying more than backpacks. They carry doubt, pressure, and uncertainty about whether they belong. Then they step into a music room and something begins to change. They are trusted with responsibility, challenged to rise, and encouraged to discover their own voice.

At a time when conversations about education often focus on what to cut, the arts are too often the first to be placed on the chopping block. What many people do not realize is that when you remove music, you are not simply removing an elective. You are removing one of the few spaces where students feel engaged, seen, and able to build confidence in themselves.

I know this is true because I was that student. As a child, I didn't always have the tools to navigate the world around me. Traditional classrooms weren't where I thrived. Music became the place where mentors saw something in me before I could see it in myself. It gave me a space to fail, to try again, and to grow. It gave me a reason to show up.

That experience is why Young Musicians Unite exists.

The student who struggles in other classes but thrives with an instrument in hand. The teenager who finds discipline through rehearsal. The child who learns teamwork not from a lecture, but from listening to the musician beside them and becoming part of something larger than themselves.

Music is a catalyst that builds focus, strengthens school culture, and gives students not only a reason to show up but a reason to stay.

At Young Musicians Unite, we believe every child deserves access to a safe, nurturing space, across entire communities for the long term.

Over the past 13 years, we have mentored more than 36,000 students through the power of music. In the coming 2026–2027 school year, we will serve more than 16,500 students across over 100 schools every single week.

And to every student who walks into one of our music classrooms:

You matter. Your voice matters. Your future matters.

We will continue to protect the spaces where you can discover how powerful you are.

With love,



Sammy Gonzalez Zeira
Founder / CEO

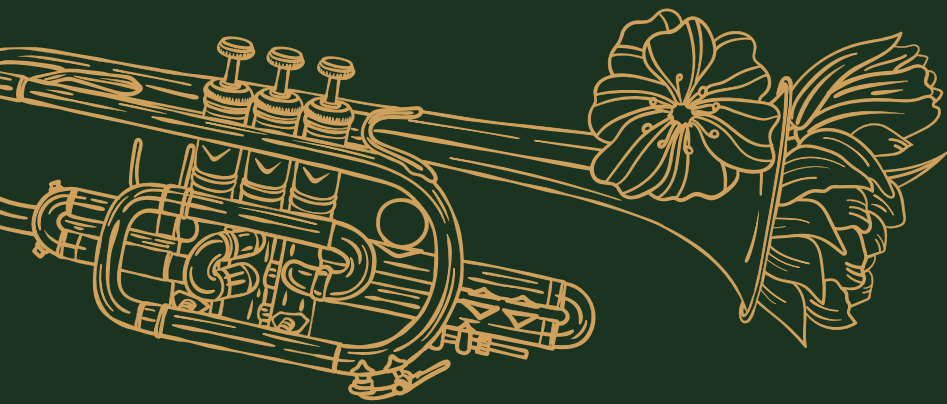
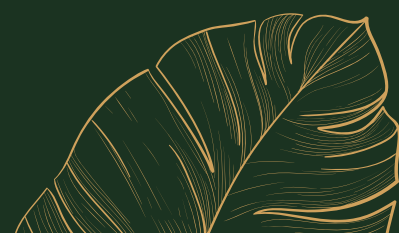


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COVER PHOTO

Mario Garcia | 12th Grade
Southridge Senior High School
Valentina Koehler | 12th Grade
Miami Beach High School
Benjamin Delacruz-German | 10th Grade
Young Men's Preparatory Academy
Lashyra Norwood | 7th Grade
Carol City Middle School
Sam Greenwald | 12th Grade
Miami Beach Senior High School

SHOT BY

Osmany Torres Martin

LOCATION

Vizcaya Museum & Gardens

MAGAZINE PHOTOGRAPHY

Osmany Torres Martin

MAGAZINE DESIGNER

Matthew Urzua

Santiago Delacruz-German | 12th Grade
Young Men's Preparatory Academy

TRANSFORMING LIVES & COMMUNITIES THROUGH MUSIC

MISSION

Young Musicians Unite believes that every child deserves access to high quality music education regardless of socioeconomic background. We collaborate with schools and community partners to provide free music education that inspires personal growth, strengthens communities, and prepares the next generation of leaders.



WHAT WE DO

Young Musicians Unite delivers in-school and after-school music education to Title I schools across Miami-Dade County, serving more than 12,000 students each week across 75 public schools. We provide professional instructors, structured curriculum, instruments, technology, and full program infrastructure to build sustainable, vibrant music programs where access does not exist.

From first notes in elementary school to advanced ensembles in high school, students receive clear pathways for growth, leadership, and opportunity. YMU creates safe, creative spaces where young people build confidence, mentorship, belonging, and real world skills, strengthening engagement and supporting academic success.

37,632

TOTAL STUDENTS SERVED SINCE 2013

12,125+

Students Served 25-26

75

Partnered Schools

441

Classrooms Per Year

\$624

Annual Cost Per Student

HOW WE DO IT

YMU partners with schools across entire feeder patterns to create seamless music pathways from grades 5-12. Our collaborative model aligns schools around a shared vision so students have consistent access to music as they grow.

By strengthening arts programs as a driver of student engagement, YMU increases attendance, builds school pride, and strengthens school culture. As engagement rises, schools experience sustained enrollment and the long-term stability needed to maintain thriving music programs even as public funding shifts.

Phase 1



Partner with school in need



Facilitate 2 in-school classes



Purchase instruments for 50 students

OUTCOME:
Music is introduced in school for the first time

IMPACT:
50
Students

Phase 2



School hires part-time teacher



Facilitate 6 in-school classes



Launch after-school program

OUTCOME:
School matches YMU's investment

IMPACT:
120
Students

Phase 3



School hires full-time teacher



Facilitate 10 in-school classes



Fully sustainable music program

OUTCOME:
School fully embraces a culture of music

IMPACT:
220+
Students

STUDENT SPOTLIGHTS





Agnieszka Zepeda

School: Dr. Henry W. Mack / West Little River K- 8 Center

Grade: 8th

Instrument: Saxophone

I play the saxophone, and every time I pick up my instrument, I feel truly happy. Ever since I started music, my life has changed. Playing is such a beautiful feeling, and seeing other people enjoy the music we create makes it even more special.

Music helps me express feelings that are hard to put into words. It helps me when I'm stressed and supports my mental health. I believe music is important in everyone's life because it gives you a positive way to express yourself and feel understood.

Being in band makes me feel like I'm part of something bigger than myself. I hope to continue playing music in college and beyond because it's become such an important part of who I am.

I'm so grateful to my band director, Mr. Velez, and Mr. Jose for giving me the opportunity to play this instrument and for teaching me everything I know.



Dwight Raymundo

School: Mandarin Lakes K-8 Academy

Grade: 8th

Instrument: Drums

I play the drums, and music represents who I am. It helps me relax and takes the stress off after difficult tasks at home or school. For me, music feels like a safe place. It feels like home.

There's nothing better than having drumsticks in my hands, playing with my friends, having fun, and making new connections. Being in music class gives me something to look forward to during the school day.

I chose music because I wanted a fun way to express myself and connect with others. It's more than just playing, it's about being part of something.

My teacher, Mr. C, makes the class exciting. His games and activities are fun, and he teaches in a hands-on way. He's strict, but in a good way, he pushes us to do our best, and that's what makes the class so special. I'm really grateful to be part of it.



E'syiel Luma

School: Edison Park K-8 Center

Grade: 7th

Instrument: Keyboard

I go to Edison Park Gateway Center, and Young Musicians Unite has been an amazing program for me. It's a great place for anyone who wants to commit to music and really learn how to play an instrument. For me, that instrument is the piano.

When I first started, I wasn't sure how to play or even where to begin. I didn't really understand it yet. But as time went on, I started to love it more and more. The songs we learned in class were fun to play, and every lesson helped me grow. My teacher was really supportive and helped me understand musical notes, music theory, and how everything connects. We went over so much in class, and it made learning exciting.

Now, playing piano makes me want to keep committing to music and getting better. I enjoy many styles of music, especially jazz and blues. I like a lot of different musicians and styles, but overall, I just love music and everything it has taught me.



Ethan Orlowsky

School: Miami Beach Nautilus Middle School

Grade: 8th

Instrument: Electric Guitar

I play electric guitar in the Nautilus Rock Ensemble, where I've learned from an incredible teacher, Mr. Vega, and found a place to express myself after school.

When I joined, I was just starting out. Since then, I've grown as a guitarist and gained confidence in my playing. I started in seventh grade, and this year I performed my first show at the Miami Beach Bandshell, on the main stage in front of the biggest crowd I've played for.

We also perform at school concerts, but the show that stands out most in my mind was our performance on the Clark Douglas Burris Stage. It was a big moment for me and made me even more excited about continuing to perform.

I look up to the Miami Beach High School Rock Ensemble, where my brother plays. Being part of this program has given me a strong start in music, and I hope to continue growing and join the high school ensemble one day.



Liliana Sigmundova

School: Miami Beach Senior High

Grade: 11th

Instrument: Voice

YMU has meant a lot to me ever since I started in fifth grade. I was really young, but the mentors around me really shaped who I am, not just as a musician, but as a person. My music teacher especially pushed me out of my comfort zone, whether it was by giving me bass lessons for Superintendent performances or even encouraging me to sing later on in the middle school rock ensemble when I was nervous. She challenged me to try a lot of new things, and I think mentors are really important because they see potential in you before you fully see it in yourself. It's not just about teaching music, they teach you confidence, growth, and resilience. Singing especially has pushed me to be more vulnerable and to explore more genres and things that I normally wouldn't try. To me, YMU represents possibility and opportunity. Being low-income and not having access to take lessons, and gaining this for free through the Friends of Wynwood School of Music program, has given me the opportunity to grow, have lessons, perform at venues I never would have imagined, and even step into a leadership role by managing the ensemble Fusion.



Kaeline Ruiz

School: Dr. Henry W. Mack West Little River K- 8 Center

Grade: 8th

Instrument: Trombone

I play the saxophone and the trombone, and I'm planning to learn the flute too because I really want to explore more woodwind instruments. I just love learning new sounds and challenging myself. I think music represents how you feel. There are so many different genres, and each one connects to a different emotion. Sometimes when I'm feeling a certain way, music helps me understand it better or express it without even having to say anything. That's why I think music is so important, it really helps with emotions. My teachers are Mr. Velez and Dr. Williams. Mr. Velez really supports his students and pushes us to grow as musicians. I'm currently in the marching band and the jazz band, and being part of both has helped me improve a lot. I'm grateful for everything they've taught me and for the opportunities they've given me to be part of something special.



Kenza Rachid

School: Coral Gable High School

Grade: 10th

Instrument: Voice

I'm a vocalist and a tubist, and I'm part of a performing ensemble called Static Memoir. I'm actually involved in multiple performing groups, including my school choir and marching band. Music has always been part of my life. I started singing when I was a little girl because I loved it, but I didn't seriously pursue it until third grade, when I joined a show choir. I joined my school's choir and marching band, and everything changed. I was even recruited to be the rock singer for a band, which was such an exciting opportunity. Nowadays I really love indie and alternative music, and jazz is one of my absolute favorites to sing. Music means everything to me. It's my passion, the thing that gets me up in the morning. Even on busy school days, I look forward to practicing my instrument, rehearsing with my band, and doing what I love. It drives me every single day. Music gives me life, purpose, and something I care about deeply. I truly can't imagine my world without it.



Julien Lopez

School: Redland Middle School

Grade: 10th

Instrument: Electric Guitar

Music is my stress reliever. Whenever I play, it helps me clear my mind and feel better. I play three instruments, drums, guitar, and bass, and each one means something different to me. Drums are my favorite. I've been playing since I was 13, and I feel like I really belong behind a drum set. I've played in two bands as a drummer, and that's helped me gain confidence and make new friends. I also play guitar in a band, mostly rock and punk rock, which I really enjoy because of the energy. At school, I'm in the orchestra class, where I play bass. I had a performance about a month ago, and it went really well. Music challenges me, connects me with others, and makes me proud of what I can do.



Lucy Francis

School: Edison Park K-8 Center

Grade: 8th

Instrument: Keyboard

I play both piano and drums. Being able to play music has really changed my mood in the best way. Whenever I'm playing, especially with my team, I feel happier and more positive. There's something powerful about creating music together, it's not just about the notes, it's about the connection.

I love music on its own, but playing as a team is what truly means the most to me. We support each other, grow together, and celebrate how far we've come. Every day I walk into the room excited to play piano and drums. Music has helped me more than I can explain, it lifts me up, gives me confidence, and makes me feel like I belong.



Nathaniel Taveras

School: Dr. Henry W. Mack/West Little River K- 8 Center

Grade: 7th

Instrument: Trombone

Music has taught me discipline and perseverance. When I first picked up my instrument, I couldn't even make a sound, and it was really discouraging. There were moments when I wanted to give up. But instead, I decided to practice more and push through the frustration. Little by little, I started improving, and that showed me how good I could become if I stayed committed.

Now, music takes up a big part of my day. I practice for hours because I truly want to master my instrument and keep getting better. My goal is to earn a scholarship to a top music school like Berklee and eventually play in a professional orchestra. For me, that would be the equivalent of making it to the NBA. I know it will take dedication and hard work, but I'm ready to put in the time to make that dream a reality.



Nova Villalta

School: Dr. Henry W. Mack/West Little River K- 8 Centers

Grade: 6th

Instrument: Drums

I play baseball, but music has become a really big part of my life.

One of the things I love most about being in band is learning new music. Every day feels exciting because we're always working on something different and fun. I especially love getting to perform in parades, it's such a great experience to play music outside of school and represent our community.

Our teachers are amazing and help me so much. They really take the time to make sure we understand what we're learning and encourage us to keep improving. I like everyone in the band because we have fun together while also working hard.

I'm honestly obsessed with learning music. It makes me happy, and I love being around people who enjoy it as much as I do. Band has become one of my favorite parts of school.



Trinity Wright

School: Carol City Middle School

Grade: 8th

Instrument: Metal Percussion

My favorite instrument is the bass drum, and my teacher is Mr. Jones. I love music because of the way it connects to emotions. When I listen to it, it can make me feel happy, sad, or even emotions I don't usually talk about. It's my way of processing what I'm feeling.

I've been playing since sixth grade, and over time I really fell in love with it. I enjoy creating sounds that make me feel inspired and emotional.

I may not choose music as a career, but I definitely want to keep it in my life. I want to continue learning new songs and playing throughout school and beyond, even if it's just as a hobby.

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IN-SCHOOL MUSIC EDUCATION



Classes are open to all students in grades 5-12, fostering musical growth, collaboration, confidence, and real-world experience through public performances.

Designed for every child, our in-school programs are fully embedded in partner schools' curricula, providing the skills, resources, and opportunities for students to thrive.

We offer 7 in-school programs, each designed to reflect the diverse backgrounds and musical interests of our students.

All programs are 100% free.

BEGINNING BAND

Designed for first-time musicians, this dynamic brass and woodwind course introduces students to the fundamentals of band performance. From popular hits to marching band anthems and jazz standards, the repertoire offers a rich and diverse musical experience.

Instrumentation: Trumpet, Trombone, Saxophone, Tuba, Baritone Horn, Clarinet, Flute, Percussion
Grades: 6-12

MODERN BAND

This guitar-driven ensemble immerses students in fundamental techniques, chord progressions, and music reading. Blending Spanish-influenced instrumentals with popular songs, the course offers a dynamic and diverse musical experience.

Instrumentation: Acoustic Guitar, Electric Guitar, Bass, Keyboard, Percussion, Voice
Grades: 6-12



DRUMLINE

This fully percussion-based course is one of our most rigorous and disciplined programs, emphasizing teamwork, precision, and musical technique. Students master rudiments, music reading, and cadences, preparing for high-energy performances at sports events, award ceremonies, and public showcases.

Instrumentation: Snare Drum, Bass Drum, Cymbals, Tenor Drums
Grades: 6-12

MUSIC PRODUCTION

This versatile course welcomes beginners with no prior musical training, offering hands-on experience in composing, arranging, and mixing. Using GarageBand on iPads, students create original beats and songs, exploring their unique musical style.

Equipment: iPads, Microphones, Garageband, Recording Station
Grades: 6-12





PITCH & RHYTHM

This engaging and interactive course introduces students to the fundamentals of music through percussion and vocal training. Designed to build a strong musical foundation, it prepares students for a seamless transition into middle school ensembles.

Instrumentation: Voice, Orff Instruments, Snare Drum, Bass Drum, Percussion instruments
Grades: 4-5

ORCHESTRAL STRINGS

This course immerses students in the world of string instruments and orchestral percussion, focusing on technique, intonation, and music reading. With a repertoire spanning classical masterpieces to contemporary favorites, students develop a strong foundation in ensemble performance.

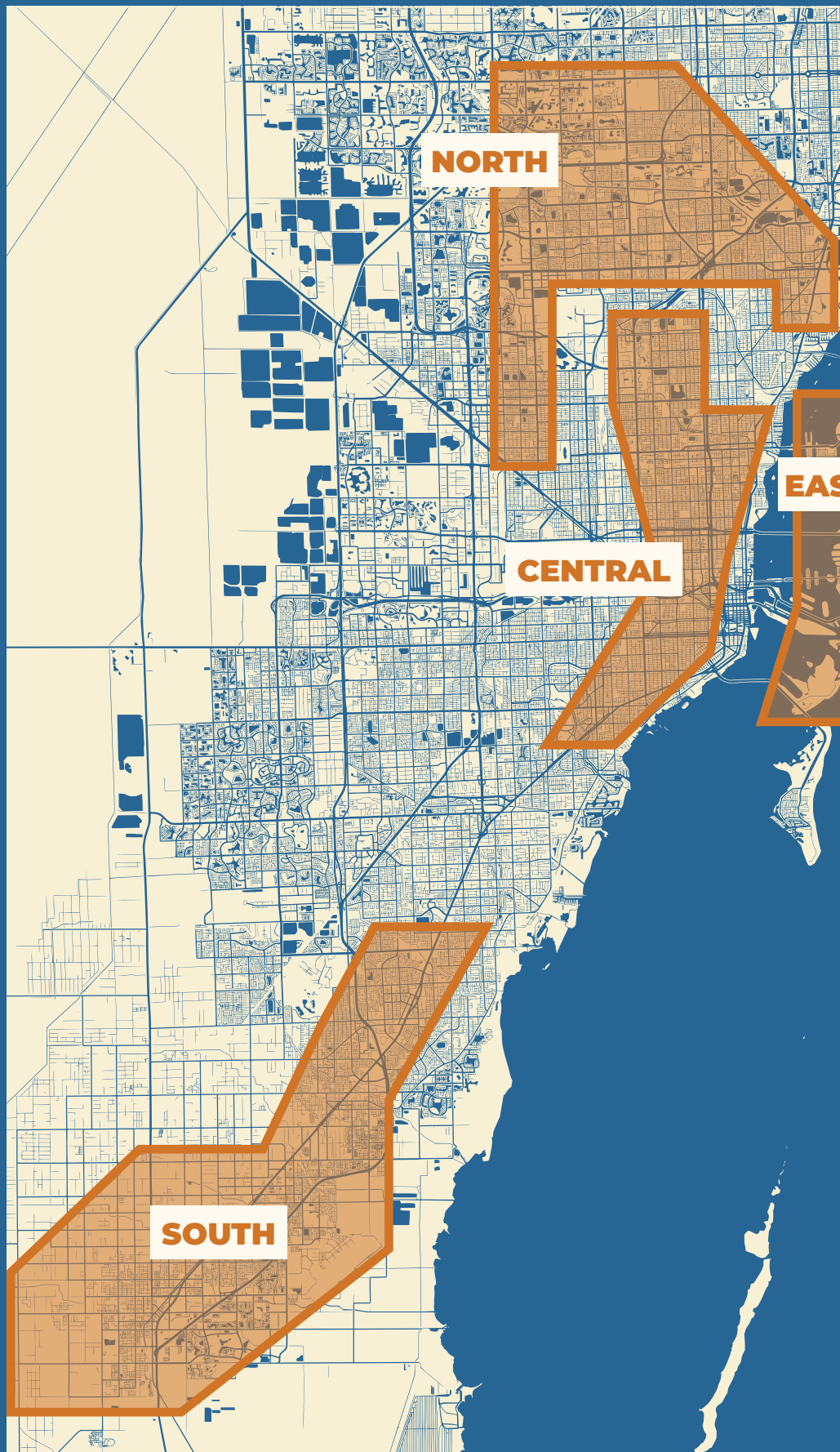
Equipment: Violin, Viola, Cello, Contrabass, Percussion
Grades: 6-12



ADAPTIVE MUSIC PROGRAM

YMU continues to champion neurodivergent learners through its Autism Program at South Dade Middle School in Homestead, Olinda Elementary in Brownsville, and Robert Renick Educational Center in Miami Gardens. The program's Fun Friday sessions, led by dedicated instructors, provide students with a creative space to explore self-expression through their preferred musical instruments while fostering collaboration and connection with peers.

OUR MUSIC FOOTPRINT



NORTH

Alonzo Mourning High
 Barbara Hawkins Elementary
 Beacon College Prep
 Brentwood Elementary
 Carol City Elementary
 Carol City High
 Carol City Middle
 Dr. Frederica
 Wilson/Skyway Elementary
 Henry Filer Middle
 Lake Stevens Elementary
 Lake Stevens Middle
 Miami Gardens Elementary
 Miami Hialeah Lakes
 Senior High
 Myrtle Grove Elementary
 North County K-8
 North Glade Elementary
 Norland Middle
 Norland Senior High
 Robert Renick
 Education Center
 Seed School of Miami

CENTRAL

Booker T. Washington High
 Brownsville Middle
 Citrus Grove K-8
 Coral Gables Senior High
 Dr. Henry Mack/West
 Little River K-8
 Earlington Heights Elementary
 Edison Park K-8
 Horace Mann Middle
 Jose de Diego Middle
 Keisey L. Pharr Elementary
 Liberty City Middle
 Madison Middle
 MAST Academy 6-12
 Miami Central Senior High
 Miami Edison Senior High
 Miami Northwestern
 Senior High
 Morningside K-8
 Olinda Elementary
 Young Men's Prep Academy
 YMU Studio

EAST

EAST

Flenberg Fisher K-8
 Miami Beach Senior High
 Nautilus Middle
 North Beach Elementary
 Treasure Island Elementary

SOUTH

Air Base K-8
 Coconut Palm K-8
 Dr. William Chapman Elementary
 Florida City Elementary
 Gateway Environmental K-8
 Homestead Senior High
 Leisure City K-8
 Mandarin Lakes K-8
 Redland Elementary
 Redland Middle
 Richmond Heights Middle
 South Dade Middle
 South Dade Senior High
 Southridge Senior High
 West Homestead K-8

SOUTH

SMGQ Law Proudly Supports

Young Musicians Unite

and their mission to provide free music education to inspire personal development, foster a sense of community, and prepare our future leaders.

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Thank you for demonstrating the power of music to transform lives and strengthen communities.

Mark Meland proudly serves as Chair of YMU's Board of Trustees.

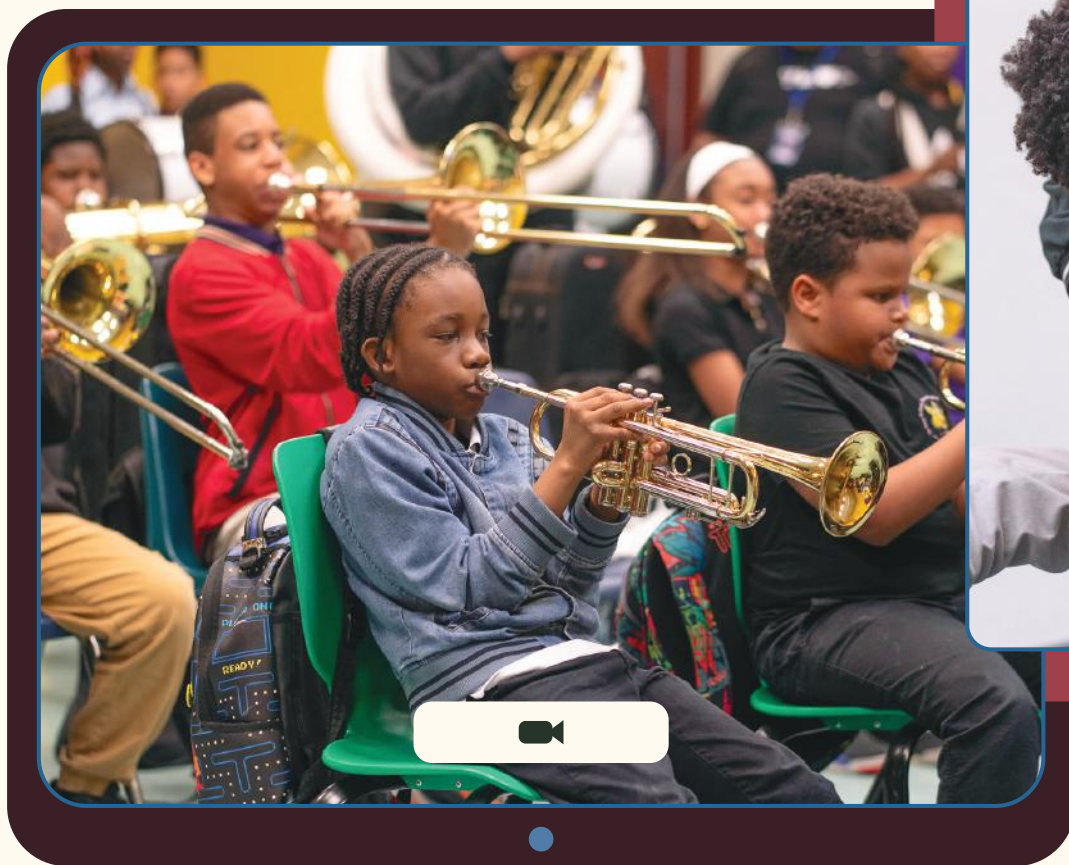
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Meland Budwick, P.A. is a Miami-based litigation and business law firm serving corporate and individual clients. Founded in 1993, the firm is recognized for providing strategic, results-driven counsel with a personalized, client-centric approach.



YMU CLASSROOM

THE DIGITAL PLATFORM POWERING MUSIC EDUCATION



YMU Classroom is the central system where our teachers train, prepare, and access everything they need to deliver high-quality instruction. Through YMU Classroom, educators access organized curriculum, classroom tools, training modules, policies, instructional resources, and practical guides.

By centralizing resources and communication in one place, the platform reduces fragmentation, minimizes daily friction, and allows teachers to resolve both instructional and operational needs efficiently, both inside and outside the classroom.

The platform supports teachers not only during instruction, but also in preparation and ongoing professional growth.

YMU CLASSROOM ENABLES OUR TEACHERS TO:

- Access structured professional development and training modules
- Find curriculum materials and ready-to-use instructional resources
- Prepare clearly and confidently for each class
- Locate key policies and procedures without relying on multiple channels
- Address academic and operational questions quickly and effectively

At the same time, YMU Classroom provides students with access to music, resources, and tools that strengthen their learning experience and classroom performance, helping ensure that music education is consistent, engaging, and impactful.

In essence, YMU Classroom integrates training, curriculum, communication, and instructional tools into one cohesive system. This strengthens instructional quality, enhances direct connection with stakeholders including teachers, school leaders, families, and internal teams, and allows us to evolve intentionally with technology while keeping the human experience of learning music at the center.

AFTER-SCHOOL PATHWAYS

After school programs extend learning beyond the classroom through performance, mentorship, and real world creative experiences. Students develop transferable skills such as discipline, teamwork, and leadership while gaining exposure to college pathways and careers in the creative industries.

These programs serve as a workforce development pipeline, equipping students with the technical skills, industry knowledge, and professional experience needed to secure employment or pursue higher education in music. Through hands-on training in performance, production, and music business, students graduate with competitive portfolios that strengthen college applications and scholarship eligibility.

Beyond musical development, YMU fosters academic success and career readiness by offering mentorship, tutoring, and a structured support system.

Students receive guidance on college applications, audition preparation, and industry networking, ensuring they are fully prepared to transition into higher education or professional careers in music, arts, and media.

In partnership with and funded by The Children's Trust and the City of Miami Beach, YMU offers After-School performing ensemble programs that are open to the community. Designed for students seeking Rock Ensembles, Jazz Combos, and Stage Production teams. As part of our annual concert season, our performing ensembles take the stage in over 200 performances, providing invaluable real world experience in the music industry.



AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAMS

Carol City Middle School
(Jazz Band & Marching Band)

Carol City High School (Marching Band)

Dr. Henry Mack/West Little River K-8
(Jazz & Marching Band)

Fienberg Fisher K-8 (Rock Ensemble)

Miami Beach Senior High School (Rock Ensemble)

Nautilus Middle School (Rock Ensemble)

Young Men's Preparatory Academy
(Jazz & Rock Ensemble)

Coral Gables Senior High School (Rock Ensemble)

YMU INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

PREPARING THE NEXT GENERATION OF MUSIC INDUSTRY LEADERS

YMU's Internship Program provides students with hands-on experience and practical skills in key areas of the music industry, including audio recording, artist and studio management, marketing, social media, operations, pedagogy, grants, and development.

Through real-world training and mentorship, students gain valuable industry knowledge while building meaningful connections with professionals and the community. By equipping them with technical expertise, business acumen, and career readiness, YMU internships serve as a launchpad for future industry leaders, preparing students for college, scholarships, and professional careers in music, arts, and media.



YMU STUDIO

FREE YOUTH RECORDING STUDIO BREAKING BARRIERS TO THE MUSIC INDUSTRY

YMU Studio is a professional recording studio and record label offering youth with free access to industry-grade tools, mentorship, and creative support. In an industry where studio time is costly, YMU Studio eliminates barriers—giving all students the chance to write, record, and release music professionally. Led by music industry pros, students take their first steps in a safe, supportive setting, where they keep full ownership of their songs.

SONGWRITING & BEAT-MAKING CLASS

Held every Tuesday and Thursday, these sessions give students in grades 5–12 the chance to write, produce, and record original music using pro-level audio gear.

Working solo or with peers, students learn songwriting, beat-making, and recording techniques in a hands-on, supportive space.

Each participant is guided through the release process by the YMU record label, learning what it takes to launch original music and navigate the industry.



STUDIO RECORDING SESSIONS

Students can schedule free recording sessions to produce covers, original music, audition material, music videos, podcasts, live streams, and performances. With expert guidance from our studio team, they learn the full production process, from recording and mixing to distribution, release, and promotion—all within a professional studio environment that removes the high-cost barrier to entry.

Visit [YMU.ORG/ymustudio](https://ymu.org/ymustudio)

for more information about our studio, how to book a free session, or to join our beat making class.

PERFORMING ENSEMBLES



MIAMI BEACH ROCK ENSEMBLE

The Miami Beach Rock Ensemble was founded in 1972 at Miami Beach Senior High School by the late Doug Burris. It holds the distinction of being the first high school rock ensemble in U.S. history.

This student-led program brings together musicians, stage crew, and a dedicated sound engineering team. Performing both classic and contemporary rock, the Rock Ensemble offers students hands-on vocational experience

by immersing them in professional-level production environments at an early age.

Over its remarkable 54-year legacy, the program has helped launch the careers of numerous professional musicians and sound engineers. Notable alumni include Ann Curless of Exposé, Grammy-nominated singer-songwriter and producer Amber Mark, guitarist Fernando Perdomo, and Adam Chester, rehearsal pianist for Elton John.



YMU JAZZ COLLECTIVE

This premier ensemble features Miami's most advanced high school jazz musicians.

Students remain in the group throughout their high school years, forming a tight-knit ensemble while tackling advanced repertoire and maintaining a rigorous performance schedule. The Collective operates at a pre-professional level, emphasizing discipline, artistry, and musical cohesion.

Recent highlights include recording an original album with Shaun Martin, performing alongside Andrea Bocelli, and headlining an international festival in Brazil.



4TUNE

4Tune is an advanced audition-based ensemble made up of Young Musicians Unite students from all over Miami Dade County. Uniquely, this YMU-supported group is student-run, creating an opportunity for students to grow as musicians and leaders. By blending genres, the band maintains a versatile repertoire for various performances throughout the school year.



UNDERCOVER

Formed by YMU board member Gabrielle Anwar, this dynamic band of YMU students and alumni brings electrifying energy to the stage with a repertoire of crowd-favorite covers. Blending the timeless grooves of Disco, Pop, Funk, and Motown, the group delivers a lively performance full of rhythm, soul, and nonstop fun that keeps audiences dancing and celebrating all night long.



MIAMI BEACH FUSION

The Miami Beach Fusion Ensemble is a student group formed this year that performs funk, soul, and R&B. With saxophones, guitars, piano, percussion, and vocalists, the ensemble brings energetic grooves and powerful horn lines together in a dynamic live sound.



LOUNGE BAND

The Lounge Band delivers a sophisticated live sound perfect for intimate and social settings. Blending the smooth elegance of Jazz, the warm rhythms of Bossa Nova, and the relaxed grooves of Lounge music, the group creates an atmosphere that is both refined and inviting. With tasteful melodies and a polished performance style, The Cocktail Ensemble provides the perfect soundtrack for evenings that call for style, conversation, and effortless musical charm.

Join an Ensemble or Book a Band at YMU.ORG



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YOUNG MUSICIANS UNITE
AND ITS HAVANA NIGHTS GALA**

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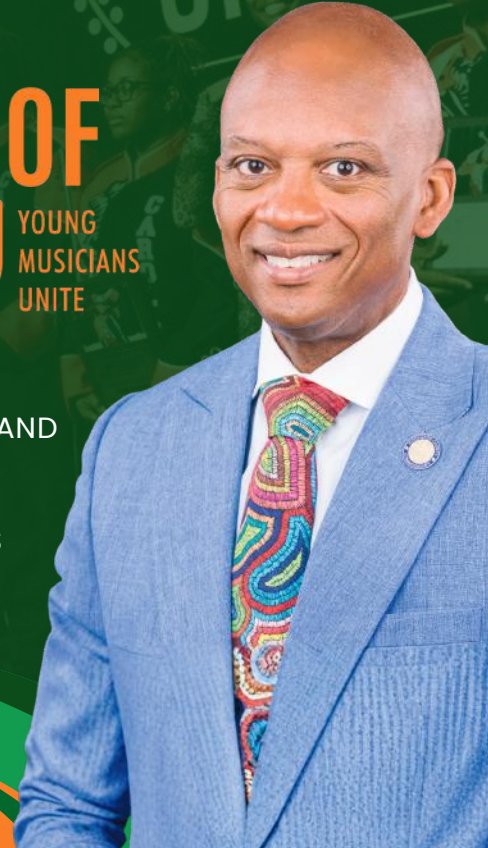
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Arts Access



UNITING MIAMI THROUGH THE POWER OF ARTS EDUCATION

Arts Access Miami began in 2020 with a bold idea: to guarantee arts education for every child – not through isolated programs, but through coordination across schools, nonprofits, and community partners. The work started in Miami Gardens, where only 27% of students were participating in arts education. By aligning organizations around a unified K-12 strategy, participation in music education grew to more than 80%, demonstrating what is possible when communities plan and lead together.

Today, Arts Access Miami operates at a scale unmatched by any coordinated arts education system in the country. The initiative unites 25 local music and arts nonprofit organizations into a single system delivering free, high-quality arts education to more than 14,000 students each week across 66 locations – with an expansion underway to reach 150 schools across 5 regional alliances and serve over 40,000 students weekly by 2030.



POWERED BY



THE MIAMI FOUNDATION

SCALING IMPACT: FROM NORTH DADE TO THE COUNTYWIDE EXPANSION

Arts Access Miami has transformed arts education in Miami Gardens, expanding its proven model to South Dade and attracting national interest for replication.

AAM is implementing a district-wide strategy to ensure seamless access to music and arts education across all 29 feeder patterns and over 300 schools in Miami-Dade County.



NORTH DADE ARTS ALLIANCE

Arts Access Miami began in North Dade, where five organizations aligned to serve in the Carol City and Norland feeder patterns. Within five years, participation in arts education grew from 27% to 80% in Carol City feeder pattern across 12 schools – demonstrating that coordinated strategy drives measurable results.

SOUTH DADE ARTS ALLIANCE

Building on this success, the South Dade Arts Alliance launched in 2023, expanding into Homestead and surrounding communities. In just one year, participation increased from 15% to 40% in the Homestead and South Dade feeder patterns, spanning 23 schools, accelerating access across an entire region.

CENTRAL DADE ARTS ALLIANCE

In the 2026–2027 school year, Arts Access Miami will launch the Central Dade Arts Alliance, serving 22 schools and approximately 3,000 students in neighborhoods including Brownsville, Allapattah, Liberty City, West Little River, and Gladeview. This expansion focuses on high-quality music and arts education paired with positive behavioral development – ensuring measurable impact both in and beyond the classroom.

NATIONAL EXPANSION

What began as a regional pilot has become a national model. Arts Access Miami is actively exploring partnerships to replicate its coordinated, feeder-pattern strategy in other communities across the country – demonstrating that sustained arts access at scale is not only possible, but practical.



IMPACT AND REACH





YOUTH MUSIC FESTIVALS

Each year, the work of Arts Access Miami comes to life at our Youth Music Festivals — vibrant, family-friendly celebrations where students take the stage and entire communities gather to experience the power of music and the arts.

Hosted in Miami Gardens and South Dade, the festivals showcase hundreds of young performers representing schools across each regional alliance. What begins as coordinated instruction in classrooms throughout the year culminates in a joyful public

moment — students performing with confidence, families cheering from the crowd, and communities united around shared pride.

The Youth Music Festivals are a reflection of what is possible when schools, nonprofit organizations, local leaders, and families move together as one system. They are a celebration of growth, access, and opportunity — and a reminder that when we invest in young people, entire communities thrive.

STATS

50+

Ensembles

1,650+

Performers

4,500+

Attendees

60+

Organizations

ARTS ACCESS IS FUNDED BY

DAN LEWIS & VALERIE DILLON



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Thank You *Young Musicians Unite*

You bring the universal language of music to uplift students and connect them to their own talent, humanity, and to one another.



**Congratulations YMU,
on all your success!**

Thank you for all you have given
to so many students and
to our family.

The Rosenbergs



PARENT SPOTLIGHT

ALFREDO VILLALTA

Father of Nova Villalta, student at Dr Henry Mack/West Little River K-8 Center

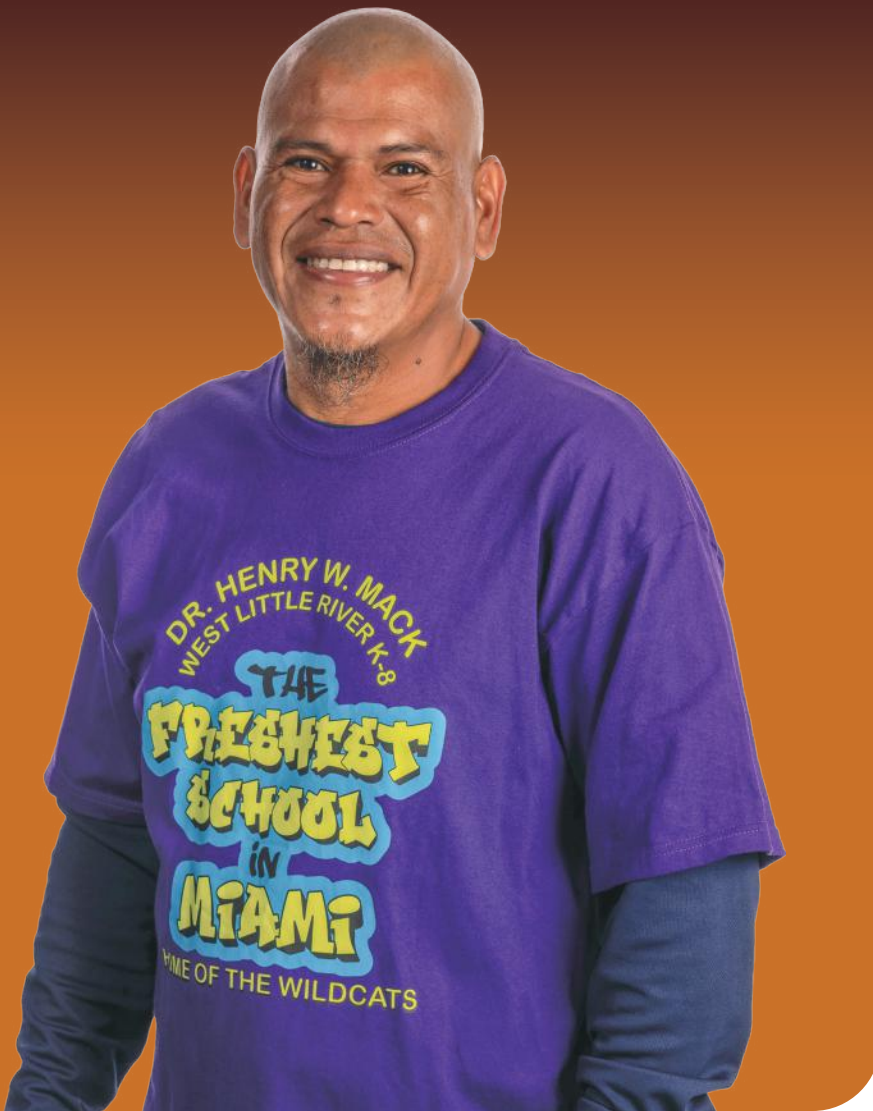
I'm very proud of the school band. They started just about two years ago and have been doing an amazing job since day one. My daughter plays the drums. She chose the instrument herself and absolutely loves it.

Music relaxes her. It helps her at home, especially during difficult moments. Her grandfather recently passed away, and listening to music has helped her process her emotions and ease the sadness. It gives her comfort.

We first heard about Young Musicians Unite when Mr. Velez came to the school as the first instructor. Since then, the program has grown beautifully. She was excited from the beginning—music runs in the family. Her mom and I both play drums, so you could say it's in her blood.

I'm incredibly proud of the school for building this band program. I want to give full credit to Mr. Velez and Dr. Williams, the principal. Without their support, this would not have been possible.

Thank you, Young Musicians Unite, for bringing music to our children.



TEACHER SPOTLIGHT

REINALDO VELEZ

Band Director at Dr. Henry W. Mack/West Little River K-8 and Homestead Middle School

When I think about music and everything it's given me, that alone is enough motivation to teach for a lifetime. In middle school, I didn't have the consistency of a steady music teacher, and eventually I didn't have one at all. Instead of letting that stop me, I put together a small drumline on my own and created something meaningful from a place where little was expected. That moment showed me, as a seventh grader, that I was capable—and it planted the seed of becoming the teacher I once needed.

That belief lives in the band room today. Band is more than music. It's structure, confidence, discipline, and community. It's a space where students are challenged, supported, and reminded of their worth. When students understand their "why," the magic happens—and my "why" has always been clear: to give back, to uplift, and to make sure every child knows they are capable of more than they imagine.





EDUCATOR SPOTLIGHT

JUDITH GERENA-BURGOS

Principal, Homestead Middle School

“I am the proud principal of Homestead Middle School,” shares Judith Gerena-Burgos. “Our school has deep roots in this community, and we’ve worked incredibly hard to strengthen our academic standing.”

After fluctuating for more than 15 years between lower performance grades, Homestead Middle has achieved and sustained a B rating school rating, and is now just a few points away from reaching an A.

“We’re closer to an A than a C,” she says proudly. “And we’re determined to accomplish that this year.”

But for Principal Gerena-Burgos, academic growth starts with something deeper.

“At Homestead Middle, we take care of the whole child. We are a family. We have big hearts. You cannot expect students to learn English, math, and science if their basic and emotional needs aren’t met.”

That commitment is strengthened through strong partnerships. The school collaborates with organizations such as Young Musicians Unite (YMU), Guitars Over Guns, Girl Power, Community Partnership Schools, Florida International University,

and Miami-Dade College — all working together to support students beyond the classroom.

When it comes to music education, Principal Burles is especially passionate.

“I wish I were musically inclined — but I’m not,” she laughs. “However, I deeply cherish music education. I even have my own son in a music program because it develops a different part of the brain. Our students need exposure to everything.”

She believes students don’t just come to school for core academics.

“They don’t come to school just for English or science. They come for music class, for art... For something they connect to.”

“They’re becoming part of a community, part of something greater than themselves.”

She recalls a recent moment that perfectly captured that transformation: the marching band’s first small community parade.

“They had been playing for less than two weeks. They only had two notes,” she smiles. “But Mr. Velez assured me, ‘We’re ready. We can do this.’ And they stole

the show.”

The pride on the students’ faces was unforgettable.

“They were so proud of themselves. So proud of their community.”

And that pride, she explains, directly impacts academic success.

“When students feel connected — when they believe in themselves — that’s what pushes the measurable results. Higher math scores. Increased reading levels. Music helps develop another part of the brain, but more importantly, it builds confidence.”

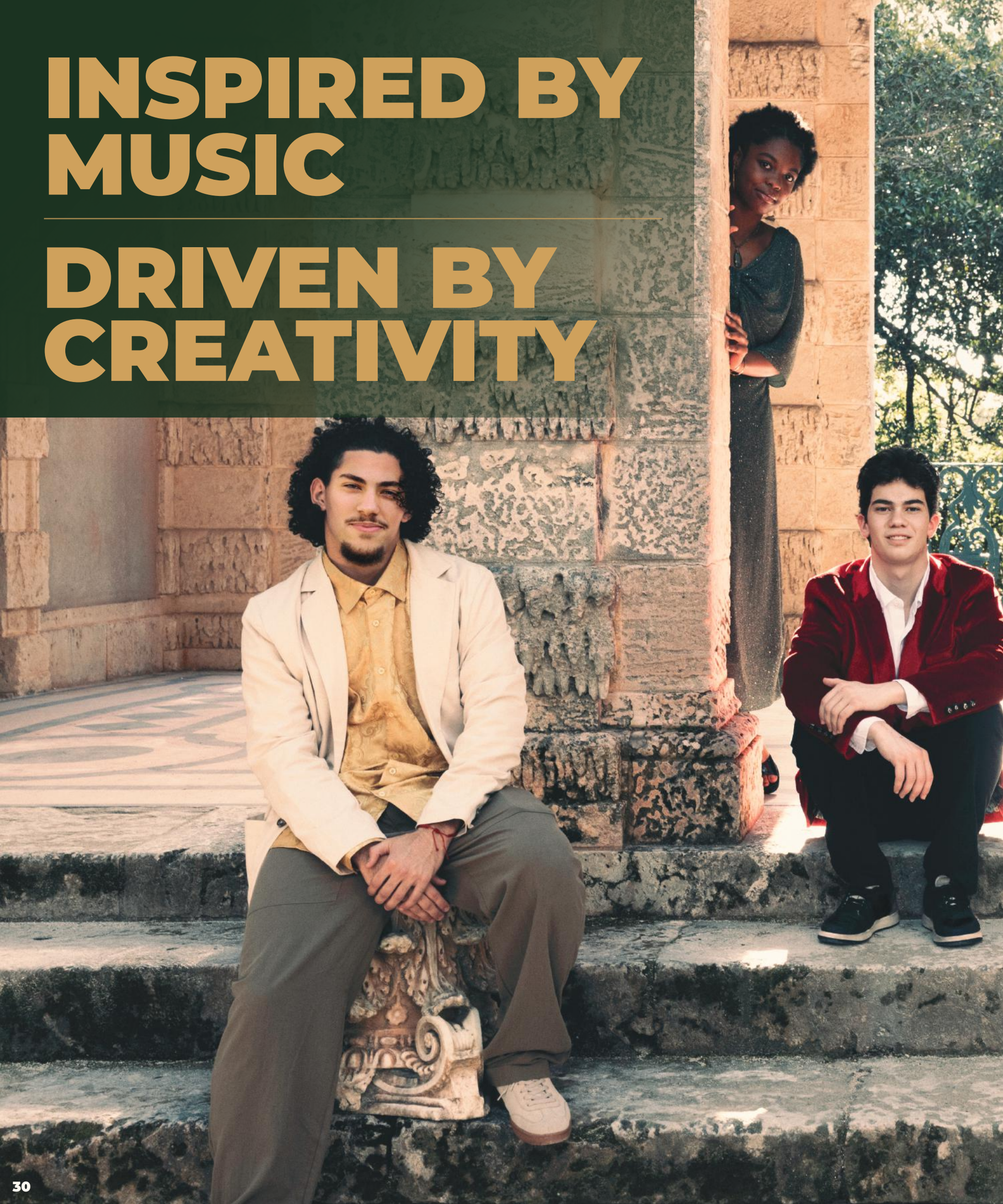
Belonging fuels achievement.

“When students are proud of what they do for their school, when they’re proud of themselves... That’s when real growth happens.”

And at Homestead Middle School, that growth is happening — note by note.

**INSPIRED BY
MUSIC**

**DRIVEN BY
CREATIVITY**







VALENTINA KOEHLER

Valentina's connection to music began long before she ever imagined herself performing.

"I feel like music has been part of my life since I was born. My mom always says I used to harmonize with the sound of the vacuum cleaner. My grandpa was very musical too—music was always part of who he was—so I grew up surrounded by that energy. When I realized I had the opportunity to sing, and that I could actually do it, I decided to embrace it."

For Valentina, inspiration doesn't have to come from something dramatic or monumental. Often, it's the small, everyday moments that spark creativity.

"Inspiration doesn't always have to be something big or grand. Sometimes it's the little things, like a bird flying across the sky or a cloud moving. Those simple moments can inspire you just as much."

She also reflects on the way music connects generations, carrying creative ideas and emotions across time.

"Music isn't only about what's being created today. It's everything that came before it, and everything before that. I think it's fascinating to discover new sources of inspiration and find ways to grow from them."

For Valentina, music is deeply woven into the rhythm of everyday life and personal growth. "Knowing that there's always more to learn and discover motivates me to keep growing."

"I think music is the soundtrack of life. No matter what you're doing, there's always a song playing somewhere... Or one stuck in your head."

Valentina Koehler is a 12th-grade senior at Miami Beach Senior High. She plays guitar, piano, sings, and writes her own music.





Both Benjamin and Valentina show that music is more than performance—it is creativity, reflection, and connection. Whether through discovering new sounds or finding inspiration in everyday moments, their stories highlight how music continues to shape who they are and who they hope to become.



BENJAMIN DELACRUZ-GERMAN

Benjamin's musical journey began in sixth grade, when he first stepped into a music classroom at Young Men's Preparatory. What started as a new class quickly became something much more meaningful.

"I started music when I joined Young Men's Preparatory in sixth grade. I was placed in a music class, and since then it's been an amazing experience. I've really fallen in love with it—every part of it."

For Benjamin, one of the most exciting aspects of being a musician is discovering new sounds and letting them spark new ideas. Listening to music fuels his curiosity and inspires him to explore new possibilities on his instruments.

"When I start listening to music, especially something new, I get really excited. I start thinking, 'I can try playing this. I can experiment with it.' What inspires me most is realizing how creative I can be, and then actually putting that creativity into action."

Looking ahead, Benjamin sees music continuing to play an important role in his life. Whether as a passion or a profession, he knows it will always be part of his journey.

"Music is something I definitely want to keep in my life. Even if it's not my main job, I would love to do it as a side career. Being around musicians and being part of that world is something I really enjoy."

For Benjamin, music is a creative outlet, a source of inspiration, and a community he hopes to remain connected to for years to come.

Benjamin Delacruz-German is a 10th-grade student at the Young Men's Preparatory Academy. He plays flute, oboe, upright bass, and electric bass.



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Berkadia is proud to support **Young Musicians Unite** and the **YMU Gala**, helping bring free, high-quality music education to students in underserved communities. We celebrate the power of music to inspire personal growth, build community, and create opportunity for every student.



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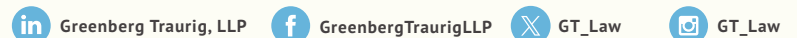
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ALUMNI SPOTLIGHTS



LUA LAMOUNIER

I was born and raised in Miami and grew up playing music. I started taking piano lessons at a young age and attended Miami Arts Charter from 6th-12th grade where I played flute in middle school and bassoon in high school for the band and full orchestra. Although I love classical music, my passions lay in rock and alternative music. I played in a bunch of bands at the School of Rock from Radiohead to nu metal and loved playing guitar, bass, keys, and singing so my friends and I started a rock band called Hypnotika! We recorded our first single 'Veins' at YMU and I absolutely loved the place and everything it did for students like my band, so I began interning at the studio!

Interning at YMU was such an educational experience that helped me so much expand my knowledge of the industry and open up opportunities in the future. I got so much hands-on experience in both music and video-recording studios which has been incredibly helpful while pursuing music.

I am currently living in New York City attending The New School. I double major in Jazz and Contemporary music with a focus on bass and politics. Here, I found best friends who came together with me to start a band called Misery & Company and I am very excited to see where I go next!

“ Interning at YMU was such an educational experience that helped me so much expand my knowledge of the industry and open up opportunities in the future. ”



LEVI GANS

I started taking guitar lessons with Sammy Gonzalez in third grade. Before him, I had a few short-lived stints with other teachers, but nothing ever stuck. Sammy made an immediate impact, not just as an instructor, but as a mentor. Back then, his Afro was probably taller than I was (though it's shrunk year by year as he's gotten older).

As an only child, I naturally gravitated toward Sammy as an older brother figure. But our relationship went beyond just playing music. He taught me how to approach life with passion, resilience, and joy. Before YMU and the Wynwood School of Music, Sammy spent his days driving all over Miami, from Key Biscayne to Coconut Grove to Miami Beach, showing up to every lesson with the same infectious energy. No matter how long his day had been, he'd arrive with a smile, ready to teach me "Hey There Delilah" or "Break on Through". Every lesson had meaning, and you could see that dedication in every student he mentored when the recitals came around.

In fifth grade, Sammy came to me with the idea of starting a band. Our first practices were in Harry Schwartz's bedroom. Just me, Adam Chopp on guitar, and Harry on drums, rocking out to "Blitzkrieg Bop", "Seven Nation Army", and "Smells Like Teen Spirit" on repeat. Eventually we realized we needed more members to cram into that tiny room every Sunday.

Our first show was at the Wynwood Yard, with Sammy playing bass alongside us as we performed "Take Me to Church". Over the next eight years, our practice spaces changed five times, our audience grew with every performance, and we played at bigger, more notable venues. Arrowhead expanded to include some of the best young musicians in Miami, and we inspired younger students across the city to start forming their own groups within YMU, like Avalanche and Not Yet Published. None of it would have been possible without Sammy showing up every Sunday to mentor us and the YMU team creating incredible opportunities for us along the way.

After high school, everyone in Arrowhead pursued a path in the music industry except me. I went to Penn to compete as a student-athlete. But after freshman year, I realized something was missing. That summer, I applied to transfer into Wharton, determined to get a business degree that would lead me back to music.

That's when I founded Music Business at Penn, Wharton's first ever music business club, to give students the insight and career pathways that hadn't existed at a finance-driven university before. Building it, I kept reflecting on my time with YMU, on what it meant to create something from the ground up, to foster community, and to open doors for others. Since launching MBUPenn, two other YMU alumni have started similar organizations at Emory and Texas, extending the movement even further.

YMU didn't just teach me how to play music. It taught me about teamwork, leadership, and the power of giving back. It showed me firsthand how music can transform lives and build communities. I believe in YMU's mission to provide free music education to students across Miami, and I'm committed to supporting that for the rest of my life.

“That's why I created the Music Matters Scholarship Fund, to help YMU students continue their journey...”

That's why I created the Music Matters Scholarship Fund, to help YMU students continue their journey by attending top music programs across the country. My hope is to keep providing this opportunity for many more students. Nine graduates are now studying at Berklee College of Music and The New School on full-ride scholarships, and YMU's legacy is already reaching far beyond Miami.

OUR TEACHERS



Arnold Hill - Afterschool Rock Ensemble
Alejandra Pizarro - Modern Band, Beginning Band
Andrea Coiro - Modern Band, Afterschool Jazz
Brett Karner - Beginning Band
Camila Olmos - Pitch and Rhythm
Catalina Londono - Afterschool Rock Ensemble
Cornya Floyd - Afterschool Marching Band
Dave Madden - Beginning Band
Deion Hampton - Pitch & Rhythm
Demian Martinez - Beginning Band
Diego Cuta - Modern Band
Dylan Fraticelli - Modern Band

Emilio Medrano - Modern Band, Music Production
Eric Panizalez - Modern Band, Afterschool Rock Ensemble
Ethan Franke - Drumline
Gabriela Rios - Afterschool Rock Ensemble
Gahains Florvil - Music Production
Giacomo Bacigalupo - Modern Band
Ivan Parra - Beginning Band, Afterschool Jazz
Jahnae McKenzie - Pitch & Rhythm
Jefferson Joseph - Modern Band
Jose Heredia - Beginning Band, Afterschool Jazz
Joyceline Soto - Pitch and Rhythm



Juan Jaimes - Modern Band
Kalil Bohannon - Drumline
Kevin Bodniza - Music Production
Kevin Perez - Pitch and Rhythm
Lorenzo Coviello - Pitch & Rhythm
Luis Ocasio - Music Production
Mackenson Orne - Beginning Band
Mark Pollock - Beginning Band, Afterschool Jazz
Marvin Clairsaint - Drumline
Michael McNamee - Afterschool Rock Ensemble
Nolan Slate - Beginning Band
Oswaldo Lichtenzveig - Beginning Band

Patricio Acevedo - Orchestral Strings
Phillip Capuzzi - Pitch & Rhythm
Rachelle Jovane - Drumline
Reinaldo Velez - Marching Band
Renzo Vargas - Drumline
Richard Padron - Modern Band, Afterschool Jazz Ensemble
Robby Robinette - Modern Band
Rodrigo Tavara - Drumline
Sarahi Matheuz - Pitch and Rhythm
Taylor Vega - Afterschool Rock Ensemble
Tim Birkett - Music Production

OUR TEAM



SAMMY GONZALEZ ZEIRA

Founder & Chief Executive Officer

Young Musicians Unite was founded by Sammy Gonzalez Zeira, a Miami-born, internationally acclaimed musician and mentor. After witnessing the lack of consistent music education in many of Miami's underserved communities, Sammy created YMU to restore access and build long-term opportunity through music.

With more than 22 years of experience in music education, Sammy has been teaching since 2004. Under his leadership, YMU has impacted more than 36,000 students since 2013 and now serves over 12,000 students weekly across 75 public schools.

His students have gone on to excel at institutions including New World School of the Arts, Juilliard, Harvard, NYU, Georgetown, Cornell, Vanderbilt, and Penn State. Sammy has helped secure more than \$35 million to expand and sustain free music education.



ZACH LARMER

Chief Operating Officer

Zach Larmer is an internationally acclaimed jazz musician and educator. As a performer and composer, Zach has received three Grammy awards and embarked on numerous world tours. He has had the chance to work alongside artists such as Pat Metheny, John Scofield, and Steve Miller Band. Zach is also the guitarist on American Dreamers: Voices of Hope and Freedom, an album that gained bipartisan support in the House and Senate for its advocacy of citizenship for DACA recipients.

As a music educator over the last 9 years, Zach has focused on creating an infrastructure for musicians to support their growth as they transform into fully capable artists.



MELANIE GREENWALD

Chief Financial Officer

A New York native, Melanie relocated to Miami Beach with her husband Eric in 2001. Melanie began as a CPA working in a finance and accounting capacity at a variety of firms, including a major accounting firm and Fortune 500 company. She joined YMU as its first employee in 2016 and has served as Chief Financial Officer since 2018. Melanie loves the people she works with, and more importantly, the incredible work YMU does for our community.

Melanie and Eric have three children—Eliza, Sydney, and Sam—all of whom have been involved in YMU. Sydney is currently studying Music Production at NYU Steinhardt, thanks to her mentor, Sammy Gonzalez, and her involvement with YMU for 10 years.



PEDRO DIAZ

Chief Programs Officer

A Guatemalan native, Pedro Diaz has over 20 years of experience in cultural promotion, filmmaking, and symphony orchestra production across Central America and Miami. His work in nonprofits, academia, and government reflects his commitment to using the arts to empower communities. Rooted in his multicultural upbringing, Pedro understands the power of arts education in bridging communities.

As Chief Programs Officer, he ensures YMU's initiatives are impactful and inclusive, expanding access to free music education and fostering artistic excellence in underserved communities.

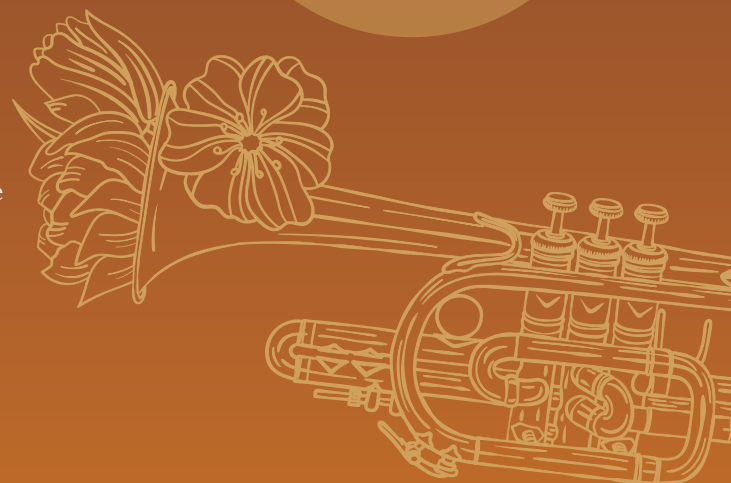


LUCIANA PAVAN

Chief Marketing Officer

Born in Brazil, she brings over 25 years of experience in marketing, digital media, and digital business development across the United States, Europe, and Latin America. Her career spans the media industry, working with global brands including Viacom (MTV, Nickelodeon, VH1), A&E Networks (History Channel, A&E, Lifetime), HBO, and various nonprofit organizations in Miami.

As Chief Marketing Officer, she is currently building and structuring a high-performing marketing department, developing strategy, systems, and scalable initiatives to drive sustainable growth.





ALAN VALADARES

Arts Access Director

Alan Valladares is a Mexican-born guitarist and educator. He earned a full scholarship to study Classical Guitar at New World School of the Arts and later completed his Master's in Music at the University of Miami's Frost School of Music. From 2013 to 2020, Alan held several roles at Young Musicians Unite, including Director of Shows and Events.



DR. ANDREA BOTERO

Art Access Director of Impact & Storytelling

Dr. Andrea Botero is the Director of Impact and Storytelling at Young Musicians Unite. In this role, Dr. Botero oversees AAM's data and storytelling strategies. Dr. Botero is a trained community psychologist with over a decade of experience in the nonprofit sector and academia, specializing in program evaluation.



COCO BROWN

Arts Access Operations Coordinator

Coco is a graduate of the music industry program at the Frost School of Music at the University of Miami, where she studied violin. As a violinist she has performed at Carnegie Hall, the Adrienne Arsht Center, and the Kimmel Center. She worked at music non-profit organizations such as Project 440 and Bravo!



JUAN ALVAREZ

Director of Operations

Operations leader with 8+ years of experience managing high-volume culinary and hospitality establishments across diverse markets. Proven expertise in streamlining processes, developing high-performing teams, and delivering exceptional customer experiences.



KATHERINE MENENDEZ

Operations Manager

Born in Havana, Cuba, Katherine Menendez was surrounded by the arts from an early age. Her grandmother, a music teacher, introduced her to countless instruments and instilled in her a deep love for music. While music shaped her childhood, Katherine gravitated toward dance and became a competitive dancer during her teenage years.



MARLON LLANES

Office Manager

Born in Cuba and raised in Miami, Marlon Llanes is currently studying Leadership and Innovation and brings experience from fast-paced, data-driven environments where organization and efficiency are essential. Much of Marlon's work focuses on administrative coordination and HR operations, helping teams stay organized.



LUISANA SALAZAR-MARTINEZ

Director of Development

Mission-driven development leader with 15+ years of experience spanning the nonprofit and entertainment worlds. From the music and entertainment industry to building organizations that create lasting community impact.



MIMI CHACIN

Development Manager

Born in Spain and raised in Venezuela, Mimi brings a deep appreciation for culture, community, and diversity. She is a mission-driven nonprofit development professional who is passionate about expanding access to arts and educational opportunities that empower and inspire young people.



JENNIFER DIFIGLIA

Grant Writer

Jennifer began her non-profit career with the belief that access to the arts is transformational—not just for aspiring artists, but for any young person seeking purpose, possibility, and power. As Chief Program Officer at several leading youth arts organizations, Jennifer led high-impact initiatives that reached tens of thousands of students.



ERIC LEVY

Miami Gardens Regional Manager

Eric is a percussionist, educator, and composer with 18+ years of experience in performance and instruction. He has directed and arranged for WGI Finalist REEF Independent Percussion Ensemble, the Miami Heat Drumline, and Palm Beach State College, among others.



JUAN PELAEZ

Academic Manager

Juan Pelaez was born and raised in Medellin, Colombia, where he got his first guitar at the age of 12, and just a year later he was playing in his first band and writing songs. Music played such an important part in his life that he decided to move to the United States to study Jazz Guitar and Music Production at Miami Dade College.



JULIAN BERMUDEZ

South Dade Regional Manager

Julian is a multi-instrumentalist from Miami, FL. He started playing Piano at the age of 5 at the encouragement of his grandmother and would eventually learn to play the saxophone as well in high school. He's a jazz-lover at heart who is interested in many other genres ranging from Salsa to Rock to RnB/Soul.



EMILIO MEDRANO

Central Regional Manager

Emilio Medrano is a Dominican composer, producer, pianist, singer, educator, and software engineer from Jarabacoa. He trained at the National Conservatory of the Dominican Republic and Berklee Online. He founded Medrano Music Academy and co-founded the Genesis Music Group label.



MARIA PULGARIN

Afterschool Manager

Maria is a Colombian guitarist, singer, composer, producer, and educator, and a graduate of the National University of Colombia. Since moving to New York City in 2017, she has led her own quintet, blending jazz with Afro-Colombian traditions from the Caribbean and Pacific coasts, incorporating instruments like gaitas, millo flute, and alegre drums.



KWABENA BEMPONG

Arts Access Program Manager

With nearly a decade of experience in Miami, Kwabena Bempong has worked across education-focused nonprofits supporting workforce development, academic and social-emotional learning, and community impact, all rooted in expanding access and uplifting others.



LUIS BOLAÑOS

Marketing Coordinator

Luis Bolaños is a multimedia producer and musician from Nicaragua who blends music, storytelling, and visual production to bring creative campaigns to life. He has collaborated with brands like McDonald's and PepsiCo and co-created El Cuartito Sessions, a live performance series highlighting Miami's artistic community.



JOHNNY SANCHEZ

Senior Graphic Designer

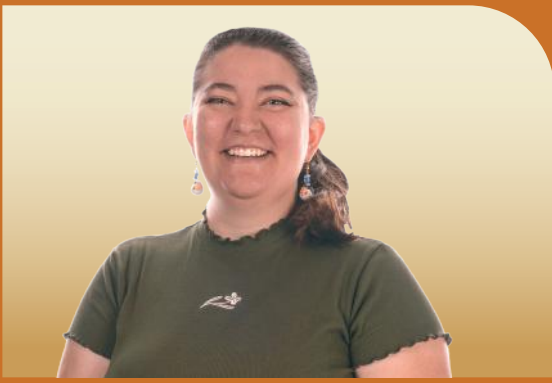
Johnny Sanchez is a Senior Graphic Designer born in the Dominican Republic. He moved to Miami in 2015 to expand his career in the creative industry. Since arriving in Miami, he has worked across multiple industries including technology, fashion, and entertainment, collaborating with companies such as Rich, Elite Media & Marketing.



SEVERINA YOTOVA

Music Industry Consultant

Founder of Music Avenue, artist manager to Grammy-winning musicians, and a music executive producer. She served as Interim Marketing Director and Special Events Manager for Young Musicians Unite in 2025 and currently serves on the organization's Marketing Committee and Music Industry Committee.



DIANA FERNANDEZ

Studio Manager

Diana Fernandez is a multiple-woodwind musician with a B.A. in music performance from Florida International University, Private lessons instructor, and Twitch Affiliate. She has 4 years of arts administration experience at Performance Management International LLC, representing artists such as Shesh Besh of the Israel Philharmonic.



CARLO BARBACCI

Audio Engineer

Carlo Barbacci is a Peruvian-born Songwriter and Audio Engineer. Before moving to Miami at 23, Carlo produced independent songwriters in Peru like Camille Jackson, Santino amigo, Elisa Tokeshi, and Paco Barriga. He also toured internationally with his Beatles Tribute band "Los Rigbys," named the Best Beatles Tribute Band of South America in 2015.



HECTOR MENDEZ

Entertainment Industry Coordinator

Hector J. Mendez is an entertainment executive and is a second-generation immigrant with Cuban and Mexican roots. Hector is known for being passionate about two things – sports and being a dad. He is a proud graduate of FIU and Johnson & Wales in Culinary Arts and Hospitality Management and was the first in his family to graduate.



ESTELLE MORALES

Shows Manager

Estelle, a Miami native, has had a lifelong passion for the arts. As a proud YMU alumna, she understands firsthand the impact of performance and creative opportunities on young artists. Now a key member of the team, Estelle works within the Shows Department, where she produces and manages all engaging performances for students.



THEO BRAUN

Shows Technical Director

Theodore Braun is a Miami-raised technical director, music producer, and audio engineer who specializes in live events and complex productions. He works across both the creative and technical sides major concerts, music festivals, luxury private events, recorded music, film and live experiences, focusing on productions that run seamlessly while delivering a strong creative impact.



DAVID SEXTON

Creative Consultant

David Sexton believes DEEPLY in the transformative powers of Art and Culture. He is currently the Chair of the Miami Beach Cultural Arts Council, The President of the Normandy Fountain Business Association. He sits on the Miami Dade Art in Public Places Trust, the Miami Beach GO Bond Committee and the North Beach CRA Committee.



JULIE BRUGGNER

Finance Associate

Julie Bruggner is YMU's Finance Associate who is passionate about supporting the organization's mission and contributing to its growth. With experience in the financial field, an MBA in Business Intelligence Analytics and a passion for music and art, Julie is eager to apply her skills to drive strategic initiatives and help the company thrive.



TASHA MARTINEZ

Executive Assistant

Tasha Martinez is a music-loving professional with a passion for blending creativity and business. With a background in Music Production & Engineering from Berklee College of Music and an MBA in Music Business, she's all about making things run smoothly—whether in a recording studio, an office, or behind the scenes of a big project.



BOWIE GONZALEZ

Vibes Coordinator

Super chill guy that accepts scratches and pets as payment.

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Miami-Dade County, District 8

I AM PROUD TO SUPPORT THE YOUNG MUSICIANS UNITE AND THEIR MISSION TO EXPAND ACCESS TO MUSIC EDUCATION ACROSS MIAMI-DADE COUNTY. THEIR GOAL OF RAISING \$2 MILLION WILL BRING FREE, HIGH QUALITY MUSIC EDUCATION TO MORE THAN 15,000 STUDENTS IN OVER 105 SCHOOLS. INVESTING IN MUSIC EDUCATION INSPIRES CREATIVITY, BUILDS CONFIDENCE, AND OPENS DOORS OF OPPORTUNITY FOR THE NEXT GENERATION.

@DanielleCohenHiggins



COMMUNITY LEADERS



EILEEN HIGGINS

**Mayor
City of Miami**

“Access to music education is an investment in our city’s future. It builds confidence, creativity, and opportunity for our kids. Organizations like Young Musicians Unite help ensure that students across Miami have access to the arts for expression and lifelong learning, strengthening our schools, uplifting our neighborhoods, and inspiring the next generation of leaders through the sense of belonging that comes from making music together.”



DAVID LAWRENCE JR.

**Founder, The Children’s Movement of Florida
Retired publisher of the Miami Herald**

“Investment in children is the crucial ingredient to the long-term health of our republic. Access to the arts is vital – and not a luxury, but rather a splendid path to building relationships, self-confidence, and lifelong learning.”

“Young Musicians Unite understands that bringing high-quality music education to public schools nurtures talent and strengthens student connections to education. Children given opportunities to create, perform, and express themselves mean stronger students and a stronger Miami.”



STUDENT ACCOLADES

INTERLOCHEN SCHOOL OF THE ARTS, MICHIGAN

Established in 1928, Interlochen is one of the most prestigious arts high schools in the country. Fifteen YMU students have been awarded full, all-inclusive scholarships to attend its renowned Summer Camp. Established in 1928, Interlochen is one of the most prestigious arts high schools in the country.

RECIPIENTS

Aaliyah Hurtado, Abel Soler, Adrian Sierra, Alberto Pelaez, Benjamin Delacruz, Britney Bhatti, Jaiden DeBose, Jioma Hernandez, Josue Hernandez, Kevin Gabriel, Lenscky Merilus, Nataly Ponce, Nathan Raleigh, Nicholas Nguyen, Santiago Delacruz, Valens Jonasaint, Victor Lazzaro

MUSIC MATTERS SCHOLARSHIP

The Music Matters Scholarship Fund, founded by Levi Gans, allows highly talented, under-resourced students who would otherwise not be able to afford private lessons to take their musical talents to the next level through a three-month intensive one-on-one program with a highly educated instructor at the Wynwood School of Music.

RECIPIENTS

Alberto Almarza, Angel Cerra, Bea Marie Corral, Gabriella Cimring, Ignacio Castillo, Isabella Velasquez, Magdalena Ruseva, Martin Bentancor, Matthew House, Nathan Raleigh, Pierre Sendra Jr., Webber Druckerman

COLLEGE ACCEPTANCES

Arianna Rhoden - Air Force
Armando Segrera - Pace University in Manhattan
Christian Barcelata - Berklee College of Music
Giomannys Garcia - Center of Cinematography Arts and Television
Jiomar Hernandez - Bethune-Cookman University

Micaela Godoy - The New School in New York
Reid Rosenberg - University of Maryland
Sophia Frank - Berklee College of Music
Stella Rodriguez - The New School in New York
Taniyah Shackelton - Florida A&M University (FAMU)
Ty'reek Bryant - Florida Agriculture & Mechanical University

SUPERINTENDENT'S HONORS JAZZ BAND FBA SOLO AND ENSEMBLES

Nautilus Music Program - Student Achievements 25-26

- FBA District 16 Jazz Band Music Performance Assessment
Nautilus Jazz Band
- Straight Superior Ratings
- FBA District 16 Solo and Ensemble Festival

Superior Ratings

- Alto Saxophone- Juliette Largeau, Aaliyah Ellis, Ian Muncy (8th GR)
Clarinet- Lola Lark (8th GR)
Trombone- La'Rya Lark (6th GR)
- Superintendent's Honors Middle School Jazz Band
Dylan Perez (8th)- Trumpet
Ryan Willis (7th)- Piano
Leah Singh (8th)- Trombone
- Superintendent's Honors Middle School Orchestra
Cedric Moog (8th)- Cello
- School Board Meeting Performance on 03/11/26
Ryan Willis- Solo Piano



YOUNG MEN'S PREPARATORY ACADEMY

DISTRICT HONORS ENSEMBLES

Miami-Dade County Public Schools Middle School Honors Jazz Band:

Nathaniel Taveras — 1st Chair Trombone
Yassir Herrera — 2nd Chair Alto Saxophone

Outstanding Individual Achievement

Benjamin Delacruz-German - Grade 5 flute soloist and received a Superior rating, qualifying the performance to advance to State Solo & Ensemble MPA.

FBA JAZZ BAND MPA

Superior Rating at District Jazz MPA

Young Men's Preparatory Academy - Jazz Band/Superior Rating at District Jazz MPA. (Qualifying the ensemble to advance to the State Jazz MPA)

STUDENT AMBASSADORS

Through Young Musicians Unite's Student Ambassador Program, students and families step into leadership roles that reach far beyond the classroom. What begins as music education evolves into mentorship, philanthropy, and community impact.

Our ambassadors lead peer-to-peer fundraising campaigns, perform throughout the community, share the stage with YMU students, launch scholarship initiatives, and mentor younger musicians who are just beginning their journey.

They are proof that when young people are given opportunity, they do not just grow. They give back.



AVALANCHE

(Left to right) Zach Kryss, Angel Cerra, Alice Mocci, Devlin Guttridge, Abraham Kassin, Hannah Linder, Lily Poses, Bella Ranawat and Drea Buchman



NOT YET PUBLISHED

(Left to right) Lily Calli, Valentina Koehler, London Roth, Ella Arnold, Matthew House, Noah Orlovsky and Sammy Greenwald

“ Student Ambassadors have raised more than **\$2.1 Million** for free music education & mentorship. ”

STUDENT AMBASSADOR SPOTLIGHTS



HANNAH LINDER

Being a YMU student ambassador has changed my life. As a member of multiple bands that pushed me to improve my technique and tone, and master my stage presence. This experience has given me endless opportunities that I would've never imagined for myself just a couple of years ago.

Prior to joining YMU, I was unsure what I wanted to do for the rest of my life; I had bounced back and forth between multiple career ideas and hadn't found myself as a person yet. Once I began performing in rock bands and gaining leadership opportunities, my confidence skyrocketed, inspiring me to see my life in a new way.

YMU has also given me the gift of mentoring young musicians like myself who remind me of why I fell in love with performing in the first place. From jumping and dancing around the stage with the rest of my bandmates to belting colorful vocal harmonies, I would do it all over again in a heartbeat.



LONDON ROTH

As a Student Ambassador, I've had the opportunity to grow both as a musician and as a person. I joined the program at age 11, playing keyboard and singing backup vocals, and it quickly became a place where I could truly express my love for music.

Being part of this community has allowed me to connect with people who share the same passion while also giving me the chance to support and encourage others along their musical journeys.

Through performing and collaborating with other students, I've gained confidence both on and off the stage while developing leadership skills and a deeper appreciation for teamwork. More than anything, this experience has shown me how music can bring people together and create a positive environment where everyone can grow.



NOAH ORLOWSKY

I'm a senior at Miami Beach Senior High School, where I play bass guitar. Being part of Young Musicians Unite and serving as a band manager has been an incredible experience. I currently perform in 4Tune, Not Yet Published, Miami Beach Rock Ensemble, YMU Jazz Collective, and Undercover.

My journey started at the Wynwood School of Music, where I began taking private bass lessons and discovered YMU by watching the Student Ambassador bands perform at showcases. Inspired by what I saw, I joined Not Yet Published in 10th grade after being invited by Sammy Gonzalez Zeira, and everything really took off from there.

With Zach Larmer at the YMU Jazz Collective, I grew not only as a musician but also as a leader. One of the most unforgettable experiences was traveling to Brazil, where we had the opportunity to headline a major international music festival.

MENTORSHIP PROGRAM



Young Musicians Unite's Peer-to-Peer Mentorship Program creates meaningful connections between experienced student musicians and younger students who are beginning their musical journey. Through structured sessions, student mentors guide mentees in developing instrumental and vocal skills, improving rhythm and timing, and learning how to perform and collaborate within an ensemble. Mentors demonstrate techniques, share practice strategies, and help students navigate rehearsal dynamics, song arrangement, and performance preparation. This hands-on guidance allows younger students to build confidence, strengthen their musicianship, and feel supported by peers who understand their learning process.

Beyond musical growth, the program fosters leadership, collaboration, and a sense of community within YMU's network of schools. Mentors serve as role models, demonstrating discipline, teamwork, and dedication while encouraging constructive communication and problem-solving. By creating opportunities for students to teach, learn, and grow together, the Mentorship Program strengthens the culture of support that defines Young Musicians Unite—empowering students not only to improve as musicians, but also to develop the confidence and responsibility needed to lead and inspire others.

MICK DUCHON

AT THE CORCORAN GROUP

📷 @mick_duchon
www.mickduchon.com



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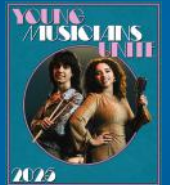
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WE ARE PROUD TO SUPPORT YOUNG MUSICIANS UNITE





OUR IMPACT 2024 2025

YMU is the largest nonprofit provider of free music education in the state of Florida.

STUDENT DEVELOPMENT INSIGHTS



84%
Students reported that their creativity increased.

84%
Students said they feel more confident stepping outside their comfort zone.

92%
Students reported improving their musical skills.

88%
Students said they feel better at setting and achieving personal goals.

84%
Students reported feeling more motivated to do well academically.

84%
Students said they feel more hopeful and positive about their future.

81%
Students reported having more positive interactions with peers.

80%
Students said they improved their ability to work well in groups.

75%
Students reported being better at resisting negative peer pressure.

STEAM +

18
Masterclasses

672
Interactions

1,217
Lesson Hours

\$660

Annual Cost Per Student

714,000

Lesson Hours Taught



1,050

Teacher Training Hours

340

Weekly Classes

24K+

Interactions

12

Course Offerings

95

ASD Program Students

\$198,000

Additional Scholarships Distributed

38

Teachers

61

Schools

6

After School Programs

SHOWS

201

Performances

88K+

Audience Members



YMU STUDIO

198

Recording Sessions

792

Studio Recording Hours

182

Songwriting & Beatmaking Class Hours

52

Student Songs Released

8.6M

Student Song Streams

838K

YouTube Views



We are proud to partner with Young Musicians Unite
lifting up the voices of youth across Miami-Dade



Voices For Change

Uniting youth choirs around the globe, this album brings together hundreds of collaborators to spread a message of peace, solidarity, and hope. Your voice matters. Visual album coming in April 2026.



SCAN ME

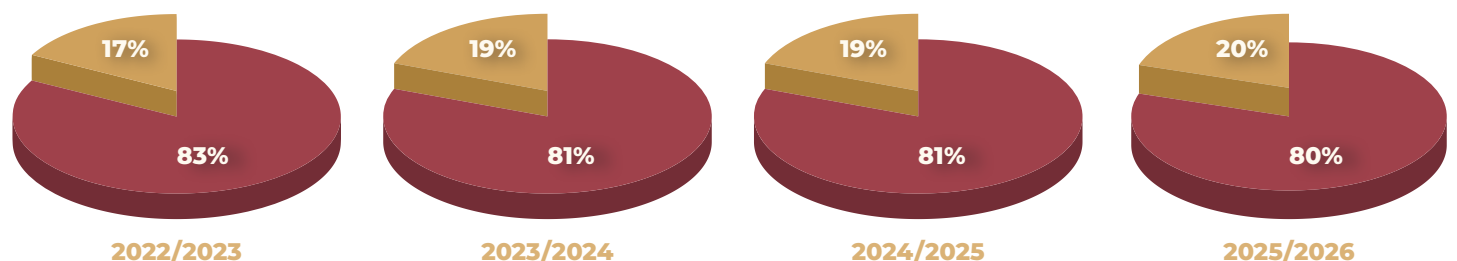


ANNUAL FINANCIAL SUMMARY

REVENUE	2022/2023*		2023/2024*		2024/2025*		2025/2026 Projections	
	FY23 Actuals	% of Total	FY24 Actuals	% of Total	FY25 Actuals	% of Total	FY26 Budget	% of Total
Grant and Foundation Revenue	\$1,072,811	50%	\$1,373,061	32%	\$1,400,772	22%	\$1,955,070	25%
Arts Access Miami	\$0	0%	\$1,088,000	25%	\$2,093,492	34%	\$2,605,368	34%
Special Event Revenue	\$531,732	25%	\$892,237	21%	\$1,544,467	25%	\$1,930,000	25%
Contribution Revenue	\$130,479	6%	\$151,289	4%	\$212,661	3%	\$130,000	2%
Fee for Service	\$62,978	3%	\$2,265	0%	\$0	0%	\$50,000	1%
In Kind Contributions	\$353,957	16%	\$780,473	18%	\$980,259	16%	\$1,000,000	13%
TOTAL REVENUE	\$2,151,957	100%	\$4,287,325	100%	\$6,231,651	100%	\$7,670,438	100%
EXPENSES								
Program Services	\$1,738,835	83%	\$3,170,300	81%	\$4,832,733	81%	\$6,039,068	80%
Marketing and Fundraising	\$64,721	3%	\$297,131	8%	\$418,882	7%	\$623,495	8%
General and Administrative	\$287,028	14%	\$422,774	11%	\$730,197	12%	\$904,638	12%
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$2,090,584	100%	\$3,890,205	100%	\$5,981,812	100%	\$7,567,201	100%
NET SURPLUS	\$61,373		\$397,120		\$249,839		\$103,237	
YMU Students (Direct Impact)	3,812		4,900		9,062		12,125	
Annual Cost Per Student	\$548		\$794		\$660		\$624	

ADMIN VS. PROGRAM RATIO

▼ Admin
● Program



*Audited Financial Numbers

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Cultural Affairs
Miami Dade County
The Miami Foundation

\$250,000 – \$999,999

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Florida Division of Cultural Affairs
Kirk Foundation
The Children's Trust
The City of Miami Beach
The Jorge M. Pérez Family Foundation

\$100,000 – \$249,999

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ONErpm
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Playing For Change
Robert Pittman
Templeton Family Foundation
The Batchelor Foundation
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Claudia Potamkin
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Seminole Hard Rock
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Southern Glazer's Wine and Spirits
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\$25,000 – \$49,999

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Boucher Brothers
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Roth Family
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Symphonettes
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\$10,000 – \$24,999

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Reverb Gives
Rick Hubbard
Robert and Jane Toll Foundation
Roe Foundation/Greg Manocherian
Sam Englehardt
Segrera Family
Singing for Change Foundation
Todd Michaels
Tricap

\$5,000 – \$9,999

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Aleman Family
Ansin Foundation
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Every great performance starts with someone who believes.

At Gunster, we know that talent thrives when it is nurtured. That is why we are proud to support Young Musicians Unite and its mission to empower the next generation of artists through music education, mentorship, and opportunity.



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3



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7



8



9



10



11



12



13



14



15



16



17



18



19



20

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Co-Founder
Meland Budwick, P.A.

2. Jose B. Aleman
(Vice Chair)
Managing Partner
Axeso Strategies

3. Sammy Gonzalez Zeira
CEO & Founder
Young Musicians Unite

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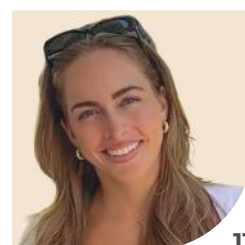
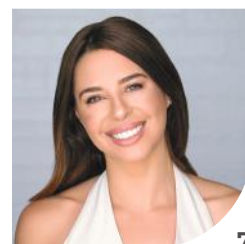
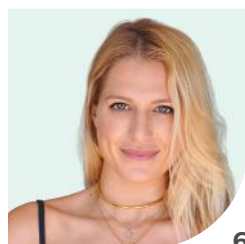
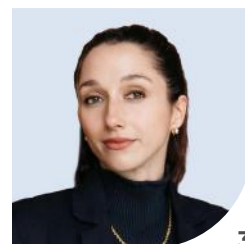
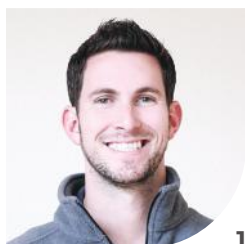
17. Roger Cuevas
Former Superintendent
Miami-Dade County
Public Schools

18. Richard Bressler
President, COO & CFO
iHeartMedia

19. Randolph Gumenick
Owner
Gumenick Properties

20. Richard Kilstock
Co-Founder &
Managing Principal
Arkadia Property Group

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2. Shari Gurkin Zeira (Vice Chair)

3. Anna Sapra

4. Ariel Cohen

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6. Danielle Dinte

7. Nathalia Llama

8. Shelly Bressler

9. Haley Edelson Cohen

10. Dave Ervolina

11. Lauren Devine

12. Mikhael Porter

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© 2024. Consulte Player's Club para obtener más detalles. Debes tener veintiún (21) años o más para jugar a las máquinas tragamonedas y a los juegos de mesa. Debes tener al menos dieciocho (18) años o más para jugar al bingo, al póker en vivo o para recibir los beneficios de Unity. ¿Te preocupa tu adicción al juego? Llama o envía un mensaje de texto al 1.833.PLAYWISE.



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