Interview with Dean Edward Kocher

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This year, we begin our interview by following up on one of the topics from last year’s issue of Tempo.

**Please update us on the status of the history of the music school.**

A year ago, Dr. Joseph Rishel agreed to update his summary of the history of the music school as chronicled in the 1989 Duquesne University Press publication *The Spirit Who Gives Life*. Once Dr. Rishel began research to chronicle events of the 80s, 90s and 21st century, he felt compelled to enhance and rewrite the early history of the school to create a more complete and comprehensive history. He currently has 100 pages describing our past up to our present. Our next step is to comb the University archives and the considerable photo cache of my wife, Kamie, and publish a complete, illustrated history of the Mary Pappert School of Music. We are anticipating that this delightful account of our school will be completed soon.

**How does the newly remodeled PNC Recital Hall and Pappert Center lobby contribute to the music making environment at the school?**

Pittsburgh enjoys national attention through a top-rated baseball stadium, PNC Park. But the PNC name extends beyond sports through its Foundation’s support of the arts at Duquesne University. The Mary Pappert School of Music is earning plaudits for our superb 250-seat PNC Recital Hall that hosts professional faculty chamber music concerts, recordings for broadcast, student recitals, opera scenes and Saturdays filled with the joyful sounds of children making music in City Music Center. The recent dedication of PNC Recital Hall was the culmination of an excellent team effort and the generosity of corporations and foundations, facilities management, architects, contractors, music school staff, faculty and students. Over the past decade, thanks largely to the artistic vision and virtuosity of professors David Allen Wehr and Charles Stegeman, we have cultivated and inspired a loyal following of chamber music enthusiasts. The support of PNC Bank represents a powerful validation of our artistic and advocacy work, and the early reviews of the newly enhanced performance space are gratifying. When our students attend professional quality faculty performances, they gain a sense of possibility and increased motivation. This inspiration fuels them to higher levels of performance for their own recitals. PNC Recital Hall is located on the first floor ground level of the music building. On the top floor of our building, we are also enjoying a lovely new lobby entrance to our stunning Dr. Thomas D. Pappert Center for Performance and Innovation. In its inaugural year of operation, the Pappert Center has provided an unparallel learning environment for our faculty and students to perform, record and video stream a broad spectrum of creative work. We are very pleased to offer our students these two excellent performing spaces.

**The American and European economies remain weak, and higher education is challenged. How is the music school responding to current economic realities?**

Our music school boasts solid human underpinnings and formidable intellectual capital. Our faculty and staff offer a storehouse of wisdom and experience to our students and the broader community. We remain grateful for a solid enrollment of talented, intelligent and motivated students. We have energetic new leadership for the Duquesne University Symphony Orchestra and our treasure for children, the City Music Center. This year our guitar program celebrated a glorious 25th Anniversary. Artistically, the summer guitar and bass workshop was the best ever, and that bodes well for the future.
The Music Career Services Office has been a distinguishing feature of the Mary Pappert School of Music for over a decade. Throughout our history, graduates of our school have achieved successful careers as professional musicians, instructors and administrators. A representative list of employers of our graduates appears in this publication. In the current climate of “careerism,” our students and their families are more concerned than ever about achieving gainful employment. To that end, we are increasing investment in our Office of Career Services in collaboration with an enhanced effort from the University Office of Career Services.

Higher education is increasingly concerned about the sustainability of current cost structures. Once again this year, our music school received a robust pool of applications for admission. Owing largely to families’ unease about the economy, converting accepted students into enrolled students was a greater challenge than ever, and we expect that challenge to continue throughout the foreseeable future. In the long run, we believe that our single greatest need is to provide scholarship opportunities for talented musicians. To that end, we ask all of our friends, and especially graduates, to contribute to our music scholarship funds.

At Duquesne, we serve God by serving students. With the support of our friends, we will continue to provide learning experiences that enable our students to gain the knowledge and abilities needed to succeed in their chosen field and to work, adapt and blossom in a dynamically evolving economy for many decades. We are committed to preparing students to work in conditions we cannot fully predict, with things we don’t fully understand and with challenges we cannot fully anticipate. Sustained global competitiveness in the fields of professional music will rely on critical thinking skills, exemplary problem solving abilities, communication skills, collaborative skills and creativity and innovation. At Duquesne, in response to our Mission, we are giving great effort to create a learning environment where students are immersed in experiences that cultivate and foster those qualities.

**Support the School of Music**

The Mary Pappert School of Music offers many opportunities for your generosity to make a real difference for the next generation of great musicians:

- Deans Discretionary Fund
- Music Performance Fund
- Music Education Fund
- Music Technology Fund
- Music Therapy Fund
- Sacred Music Fund
- Music Scholarship Fund
- Music School Endowment
- Nicholas Jordanoff Jazz Trumpet Scholarship
- Sidney and Teresa Harth Violin Scholarship
- City Music Center

**Send Checks To:**

The Mary Pappert School of Music
Duquesne University
600 Forbes Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15282

Your donation is tax-deductible. To learn more about giving, call Carrie Collins at 412.396.4272.

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**Nicholas Jordanoff Jazz Trumpet Scholarship**

Throughout his long career at Duquesne, former Director of Music Admissions Nicholas Jordanoff helped generations of students achieve their dreams, befriended countless alumni and on a daily basis inspired staff. For these reasons, we have instituted the Nicholas Jordanoff Jazz Trumpet Scholarship. Nick spent most of his career helping deserving students obtain scholarships, and to have a scholarship named for him, designated for the instrument he loved to play, is a fitting tribute.

**Sidney and Teresa Harth Violin Scholarship**

Sidney Harth was a man dedicated to community through performance and to students through education. Sidney held the position of Director of Orchestral Activities at Duquesne, drawing from his life-long experiences as performer, concertmaster and conductor of many world-class orchestras to provide an inspirational and practical education for students. The creation of this scholarship continues the legacy he established, providing future violin students the opportunity to refine their skills and lead a life of dedicated and passionate musicianship.