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Mary Pappert School of Music

Alumna Uses What She Learned for More Than Music

Over the past year Jordan Mroziak, coordinator of student services in the School of Music, reached out to alumni in an effort to learn more about their careers and lives since graduation. Many talked about their successes in symphonies, as educators and as recording artists. However, not all of the alumni that were contacted landed on the path to professional musicianship.

Sarah Lambert Ribbens (B.S. Music Education, 1984) built a career for herself in the insurance industry. As an insurance broker, Ribbens used many of the skills she gained as a student of the Mary Pappert School of Music in her new career.

To the right is an excerpt from the email Ribbens wrote.

Making Music:

A History of Duquesne University's Mary Pappert School of Music

History Professor Emeritus Dr. Joseph F. Rishel and his wife, Helen, have co-authored Making Music: A History of Duquesne University’s Mary Pappert School of Music, a book that showcases the rich history of the music school from its humble beginnings in 1926 to the world-renowned educational institution it is today.

Rishel, who has authored several historical books including Founding Families of Pittsburgh: The Evolution of a Regional Elite, 1760 to 1910; “The Spirit that Gives Life”: The History of Duquesne University, 1878-1996; and Pittsburgh Remembers World War II, began the book after a conversation with Dean Edward Kocher.

“Dean Kocher approached me one day on campus about writing a book on the history of the music school,” Rishel said. “I thought that it was a fantastic idea, and the collaboration among all of us has been fantastic from the start.”

The book, which has been in the works for more than three years, required extensive research from music school publications, the University’s archives and public sources. The result is a fascinating blend of information, photos and facts that will leave any reader with a deeper insight into the history of the music school and an appreciation of its growth and achievements throughout the years.

“What impresses me the most about the history of the school is how far it’s come,” said Mrs. Rishel. “To think that it began as just 50 students in a classroom in the basement of Old Main...it’s fantastic to think how much the school has grown over the years to what it is today.”

Making Music: A History of Duquesne University’s Mary Pappert School of Music will be available for purchase via the publisher’s website, www.dorrancebookstore.com, or by phone at 1.800.788.7654. In addition, the book will be available through Amazon.com. Sale proceeds will go to support the Mary Pappert School of Music Scholarship Fund.