

## San Francisco Community Music Center Brings People Together Through Affordable Music Education

*94-year-old nonprofit provides  
High-quality lessons, programs and concerts to all people regardless of financial means*

**SAN FRANCISCO – May 14, 2015** – [San Francisco Community Music Center](#) (CMC) provides high quality lessons, programs and concerts at no or low cost. The nonprofit, based in San Francisco’s Mission District, was founded in 1921 and is one of the oldest and largest community arts organizations on the West Coast.

With locations in San Francisco’s Mission and Richmond Districts, as well as partner sites across the city, CMC serves people from all walks of life who come together to connect through music – no matter their age, musical ability, financial background or where they live. CMC offers high-quality music lessons, programs and concerts in genres including classical, blues, bluegrass, jazz, opera, Latin, Middle Eastern, Asian and rock.

“Our commitment to the organization’s 94-year mission of making music education available to everyone continues to unfold in ways that offer life-changing experiences to our students,” said Executive Director Christopher Borg.



[Watch](#) video on CMC  
by Citizen Film

### **Building community through music lessons, programs, concerts**

CMC offers private instrumental and voice lessons, theory and musicianship classes, as well as group classes and ensembles. Instruction from faculty like acclaimed jazz bassist Marcus Shelby, who leads the Teen Jazz Orchestra, and guest artists like GRAMMY award-winning pianist Emanuel Ax, who recently taught a masterclass, is a key part of the organization’s commitment to quality. CMC fosters a supportive environment for all talent levels to make or listen to music. Musicians of any level can join one of the more than 30 ensembles at CMC.

CMC serves as a haven for anyone eager to make music a part of his or her life through a variety of programs. Its older adult choir program often receives national attention through the National Guild for Community Arts Education and funder events, and was the recipient of the highly competitive Google Bay Area Impact Challenge Grant. Other programs include:

- Summer music camps
- Young Musicians Programs
- Low cost concert hall rentals (??)
- Adult certificate programs
- Music therapy
- Special workshops

As host to more than 300 concerts by students, faculty and guest artists each year, CMC promotes the importance of music in everyone’s life, whether they play music themselves or participate as avid audience members. Through a partnership with San Francisco Performances, CMC hosts the free

*Concert with Conversation* series, which gives local community members an opportunity to hear and speak with world-renowned artists in an informal setting.

"CMC provides me with high quality lessons with sliding scale tuition, which can never be found anywhere else," said CMC cello student Johnny Huang. "It gives a lot of low income students the opportunity to pursue their music dream. CMC makes music available for everyone, rich or poor, young or old."

### **Tuition assistance**

CMC serves more than 23,000 people each year, including over 2,400 students of all ages, ethnicities and income levels. The organization awards over \$1.1 million in scholarships annually.

With 17 percent of CMC students living below the federal poverty line, combined with the increasing costs to live in San Francisco, CMC delivers unparalleled access to music education.

### **Leadership**

Executive Director [Christopher Borg](#) leads Community Music Center. Since his arrival nearly four years ago, he has successfully revamped the school's core infrastructure and diversified its revenue streams. Prior to joining CMC, Borg was a faculty member at Groton School in Massachusetts where he created curriculum-based programs in instrumental music and global education, in addition to teaching violin, viola and music theory. He also led that community through the construction of music education and performance facilities. Borg began his musical training in a community music school similar to CMC in Massachusetts. He holds a graduate degree in viola performance from Northwestern University and a Bachelor of Arts in music history from Vassar College.



### **About San Francisco Community Music Center**

Founded in 1921, San Francisco Community Music Center (CMC), a Bay Area nonprofit, is one of the oldest and largest community arts organizations on the West Coast making high quality music accessible to all people, regardless of financial means. CMC, based in the Mission District, was established to "be a provider of music that is not art for art's sake, but art for life's sake." CMC serves more than 23,000 people each year, including more than 2,400 students of all ages, ethnicities and income levels who enjoy music lessons, programs and concerts at no or low cost.

Learn more about CMC at [www.sfcmc.org](http://www.sfcmc.org) and follow the organization on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [YouTube](#).

###