



VICTORIA
CONSERVATORY
OF MUSIC

The Young Artists Program



Nurturing Excellence in a Community of Emerging Musicians

2022 Program Evaluation SUMMARY OF RESULTS

Major Conclusions:

Did the Victoria Conservatory of Music Collegium Program for Young Musicians achieve its intended outcomes?

94% of all respondents found the program quite valuable or incredibly valuable. No one rated it 'not valuable'. Note that the survey response rate was 91.5% so these are very reliable results.

In the section measuring the impact on the student by various goal areas of the program, every section has a positive score – whether measured by teachers, students or parents.

Again in 2021/22 we asked everyone to rate “... *the Collegium has been successful during the Covid pandemic at keeping students engaged, connected and moving forward with their music.*” Covid was more disruptive in 2021/22 than the previous year, but still the overall rating was 4.6 out of 5.

Did the Collegium Program offer appropriate challenges to students, and did the program meet the needs of those who were involved (e.g., students, parents, and teachers)?

83% of all respondents thought the program was appropriately challenging.

91% of respondents would recommend the program to others; plus another 9% might recommend it = 100%. No one would not recommend the program.

“Joining VCM taught me that music is about being part of a community and sharing love of music with everyone around us. When I play music with other people, it is like we are speaking a magical language that goes from heart to heart. When we play music for others, that completes the circle. I feel like music is one of the most powerful ways to connect people together and to help us understand and care about each other.”

Junior Collegium Student

Collegium Artistic Director: **Simon MacDonald**

Collegium Animateur: **Micki Stirling**

Survey designed by Dr. Jamie Syer and Micki Stirling Updated and executed by Micki Stirling
via SurveyMonkey: a web-based electronic survey tool June-July 2022

2022 Collegium Program Evaluation

EVALUATION RATIONALE

We undertake this evaluation annually to assess our educational effectiveness and to give students, teachers and parents an opportunity to provide feedback on all aspects of the program. This is the sixteenth year of conducting this full-spectrum evaluation - part of an ongoing process to ensure that those involved with the Collegium have regular opportunities for creative input. We believe that it is crucial to regularly evaluate this unique program to assess its relevance and quality, and to incorporate new ideas and constructive responses from those who are most involved. Program evaluation results also help determine whether the Collegium is offering appropriate challenges to its participants and meeting the needs of the Greater Victoria community.

Program Description

The Collegium Program for Young Musicians was inaugurated in January 2006. The program was designed to provide an enriched and comprehensive curriculum for young pianists, instrumentalists and singers between the ages of approximately 12 and 18 years who have reached at least a Grade 9 performance level, and who are notable for their musical achievement and promise. Starting in September 2011, we added a Junior category for students at a performance level of Grade 6 - 9 who show promise and dedication, but who are not yet at an age or proficiency that qualifies them for either Full or Associate membership; and a Postsecondary category for VCM/Camosun students wanting to participate in chamber music. In 2020/21 and 2021/22 we did not offer the Vocal Collegium Program due to the high risk of spreading Covid-19 through aerosols in shared air.

Students who participate in the Collegium Program already have a growing awareness that music is a valuable component in their lives and show strong self-motivation to devote their energy and time to developing their musical potential and talent.

Auditions are required for both new and returning students. Students are required to perform two contrasting solo works for their audition and may be tested on technique and sight-reading appropriate to their grade level; they are also asked to describe why they would like to be a member of the Collegium and what their commitment level is. Students' performances and responses to interview questions are considered together in decisions made regarding participation in the program. Also considered is the mix of instrumentation for chamber ensembles.

Applicants June 2021:

Full members: 20; Associate Members: 0; Junior Members: 18; Postsecondary: 6 = **44**

Strings: 26 (Violin: 18; Viola: 3; Cello: 4; Bass - 1); Piano: 13; Winds: 5; Voice: 0 = **44**

2021-22 Enrolment:

Full members: 15; Associate Members: 0; Junior Members: 14; Postsecondary: 5 = **34**

Strings: 20 (Violin: 13; Viola: 2; Cello: 4; Bass: 1); Piano: 9, Winds (2 clarinet, 3 flute): 5; = **34**

Program Objectives

One of the main objectives of the Collegium is to allow students to explore their artistic talents and develop their musical skills in a challenging yet nurturing musical community. The Collegium provides a comprehensive curriculum consisting of the following components: private studio lessons, chamber music ensembles, master classes, *Soundings* seminars, instruction in theory, history, or composition, work with accompanists; and special performance opportunities with other students, Conservatory faculty, and guest artists.

2022 Collegium Program Evaluation

Program Objectives (continued)

The Collegium Program also seeks to fulfill objectives beyond developing a student's musical potential. These objectives include:

- Offering a supportive community where the love and aptitude for classical music is shared by students' peers;
- Providing students with experiences and life-skills that are transferable to effectiveness as individuals working together towards a common purpose;
- Creating a growing sense of community among students, their families, and their teachers;
- Building bridges between the Conservatory and the wider musical constituency.

Tuition fees and Program Costs

In the year 2013/14, fees were completely restructured to more closely reflect the cost of the program, be more transparent and be offset by an increased scholarship pool. The Conservatory supports about 25% of the cost of the program, in addition to 8% from scholarship funds earmarked to support exceptionally talented Conservatory students. Tuition fees account for about 50% of program revenue, and the remaining approximately 17% is covered through grants and fundraising.

2021-22 Tuition fees were:

Full membership: \$5164 – (\$664 discount + \$1500 scholarship) = \$3000/year

Collaborative Coaching sessions for full members = \$380/year

Associate members: \$895/year

Junior Members: \$2626 – (\$732 discount + \$1000 Scholarship) = \$895/year

Postsecondary Assoc. Members: Camosun tuition plus \$105 x 2 terms = \$210 (plus Camosun \$)

EVALUATION PROCESS

With the assistance of Graduate Student Externs Rachel Yeung & Ed Chow from the University of Victoria we designed and implemented the first Collegium evaluation in the spring and summer of 2007.

Questionnaires were designed for each group (students, parents, faculty) with similar questions appropriately targeted. The questions have been updated in each of the subsequent sixteen years. These questionnaires were translated to on-line surveys via SurveyMonkey. Collegium staff are able to see who has responded, but we do not tie responses to individuals, hence assuring as much confidentiality as possible within a small sample group. Follow-up of non-respondents is done by email and phone. The surveys were sent out June 29, closed July 27, 2022, and the results tallied as included in this report.

RESULTS: Data Analysis and Interpretation

Surveys were sent to 'internal' members of the Collegium community: **30 faculty members, 34 students and 30 parents**. They were not sent to guest artists and visiting faculty. Student feedback was also gathered in person at end of year evaluation sessions. Notes of these sessions are available on request. The number of parents is less than the number of students as there are a number of sibling groups in the Collegium, and most postsecondary students do not include their parents in the Collegium community. Of the three groups, 25 faculty members, 31 students and 30 parents responded. That is a response rate of 83% for faculty; 91% for students and 100%(!) for parents with a **combined response rate of 91.5%**. Last year the response rate was 96% for faculty; 70% for students and 84% for parents with a combined response rate of 82.5%. In 2020 it was 84%.

Collegium staff thank all 86 respondents for their support of and participation in this evaluation.

2022 Collegium Program Evaluation

From the Artistic Director:

While still dealing with the ongoing pandemic, the 2021/22 Junior and Senior Instrumental Collegium again ran fully in person over the last Academic year. There were instances of Covid in the Collegium this year, but all quarantine protocols were followed, and the effect of the pandemic was minimized while the program continued to flourish.

The survey results show that the primary stakeholders (students, parents, faculty) were again overwhelmingly positive about the program; 100% of the respondents would "likely" or "definitely" recommend the program to others, with no respondent saying that they wouldn't. In the feedback, a few themes came back this year that were presented last year, and we will seriously consider the following possible changes:

- more rehearsal time for junior groups (requests to change from 15 minutes to 30 minutes uncoached, and 90 minutes (rather than 60 minutes) for senior groups)
- continued care in choosing suitable repertoire and equal experience level in groups
- even more concurrent masterclasses so that students interested in a different clinician can make a choice

The 2021/22 Naming Initiative was focused on mental health, and that theme resonated well with the student body. We have not settled on a social issue for the 2022/23 program but will continue with this process as the program continues; the Collegium continues to teach life skills as well as musical and collaborative skills.

The Collegium ensembles again were successful at the local (GVPAF), Provincial (PABC), Western Canadian (Canada West Festival), and National (FCNF) competitions. Collegium groups took 1st place (senior), 2nd place (intermediate), and 1st place (junior) at the Provincials; Collegium groups took 1st in all of the chamber categories at the inaugural "Canada West Performing Arts Festival" (24 and under and 17 and under chamber music divisions), and swept first place in the finals of the National Festival, an historic first (first place in Junior, Intermediate, and Advanced Chamber Music, Nationals).

The Collegium also had two recent alumni, Lexie Krakowski, cello and Jono Devey, piano named as part of CBC's 2022 30 under 30 Hot Classical Musicians.

This is the 16th year of the Collegium (and the Collegium evaluation summary), and the program continues to launch students to the leading edge of musical (and non musical) programs, giving them the skills to work collaboratively in any field that inspires them, and the confidence to walk on stage, or in front of any large group, to present their ideas and their art with conviction.

Simon MacDonald, Collegium Artistic Director & Head, VCM Strings Department

Audition results June 2022:

Full members: 21; Associate Members: 0; Junior Members: 16; Postsecondary: 2 = **39**
Strings: 23 (Violin: 18; Viola: 1; Cello: 4); Piano: 10 Winds (Flute, clarinet): 6 = **39**

2022 Collegium Program Evaluation

Last on this summary is a chart listing responses regarding desired outcomes/ goal areas of the program. The last right-hand column shows the overall ratings of each of ten statements concerning the Collegium. Colour coding: **Students** **Teachers** **Parents**

	JUNIOR		SR INSTR		ALL
	<i>Response Count</i>	Rating Average	<i>Response Count</i>	Rating Average	Rating Average
Ratings out of 5					
The Collegium program has helped me /my student/ my child improve my/his/her music skills.	13	4.62	18	4.22	4.39
	10	4.60	15	4.47	4.52
	14	4.93	16	4.56	4.73
I/ My student(s) /my child(ren) has/have a better appreciation for music as a result of my/his/her/their involvement in the Collegium.	13	4.38	18	4.11	4.22
	10	4.80	15	4.14	4.40
	14	4.71	16	4.56	4.63
The Collegium has helped me/ my student(s)/ my child to improve my/his/her/their communication skills with others.	13	4.08	18	3.61	3.81
	10	4.70	15	4.07	4.32
	14	4.14	16	4.31	4.23
The Collegium Program has helped me/ my student(s)/ my child(ren) to understand how to work as a team member.	13	4.46	18	3.72	4.03
	10	4.80	15	4.29	4.49
	14	4.64	16	4.50	4.57
In the Collegium Program, I/ my student(s)/ my child(ren) was exposed to powerful musical experiences.	13	4.38	18	4.39	4.39
	10	4.70	15	3.93	4.24
	14	4.79	16	4.50	4.64
Participation in Soundings sessions broadened my/ his/her/their knowledge of the world of music.	0	N/A	18	4.33	
	0	N/A	15	4.00	
	0	N/A	16	3.92	
The Collegium Program has increased my/ his/her/their sense of value as a musician.	13	4.62	18	4.06	4.29
	10	4.70	15	4.29	4.45
	14	4.57	16	4.25	4.40
The Collegium Program has made me/ my student(s)/ my child(ren) more visible to the community as a musician.	13	4.46	18	3.78	4.07
	10	4.60	15	4.21	4.37
	14	4.64	16	4.25	4.43
In my opinion, the Collegium Program is successful in building bridges between VCM and the wider music community.	13	4.08	18	3.94	4.00
	10	4.50	15	4.25	4.35
	14	4.57	16	3.94	4.23
In my opinion, the Collegium was successful during the Covid pandemic at keeping students engaged, connected and moving forward with their music.	13	4.85	18	3.78	4.55
	10	4.67	15	4.80	4.56
	14	4.86	16	4.56	4.70
31	Students				
25	Teachers				
30	Parents				
86					

2022 Collegium Program Evaluation

“It’s great! It’s really fun playing with other people and working on challenging material.” Student

What I liked most: ***“The sense of community and musicianship my child gained.”*** Parent

“There is a high level of exposure to good playing and high-level guest artists, and it has a lot of social value. The kids make really good friendships.” Teacher

What I liked most: ***“I like the community it has established over the years. It is very easy for a music community to become toxic due to inevitable competition. But the Collegium community has built a safe environment for healthy competition among the students that leads to motivation and inspiration.”*** Student

“All round, Collegium was a great program for learning music, working with others and performing to a high standard. We were very happy.” Parent

Why I recommend the Collegium: ***“My student has grown so much this year due to all the enrichment received.”*** Teacher

Why I recommend the Collegium: ***“I strongly believe that it taught me valuable lessons on both music and non-music related aspects, supporting my growth as a musician and a person simultaneously. Skills I learned through the program are necessary for me to be able to excel in my postsecondary education.”*** Student

What I liked most: ***“How well the kids grew from September to May.”*** Teacher

“It was an amazing experience for me and I think that I made a bunch of new people who came into my life into some of my best friends!” Student

Why I recommend the Collegium: ***“For youth passionate about music, this program is, bar none, one of the most incredible offerings I’ve ever come across. It’s clear that for every musician and staff member involved, this is a passion project; and that is not lost on the kids or parents. It is a gift.”*** Parent

FULL SURVEY RESULTS ARE AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST: stirling@vcm.bc.ca