

# AMBASSADOR

## Aber Suzuki Center

University of Wisconsin–Stevens Point  
College of Fine Arts and Communication  
*inspire, create, achieve*

March 2009

### From the Director's Desk

By Dee Martz

She stood in the middle of the atrium playing. The sound soared through a waiting room that was filled with people who were obviously physically and emotionally stressed. The sound of the violin and the quality of the music captured their attention and lifted their spirits. Matthew wondered what drew her to open up her violin case and to play at that particular location. Alyssa recognized that music. These were all Suzuki violin pieces—from the early books. They were both familiar and comforting. Gradually this young woman, a terrific violinist, formed a bond with all those within earshot. Through her music she made the long day just a bit easier.

When I heard this story from my daughter and son-in-law it was clear to me that they were touched by the violinist who played for over an hour at the University of Wisconsin-Madison Hospitals and Clinics. With the simple act of performing music she made a difference in the lives of many people. She did this without speaking a word and without expecting anything back. This pure gift from one soul to another reminded me about how easy it is to share the gift of music and what a big difference this simple act of kindness can make.

This life lesson is a big enough reason for writing about the experience, but then a surprising thing happened. By chance, Matthew saw this violinist again and took the time to thank her for her performance a few weeks before. As they chatted he learned that she is now studying music in Madison but plans to become a physician. He also learned that she regularly volunteers at the UW Hospitals and Clinics by playing her violin. It turns out that she was a Suzuki student—a student of David Becker at the Aber Suzuki Center in Stevens Point. Thank you Katie Munck for sharing your love of music at the Carbone Cancer Center.

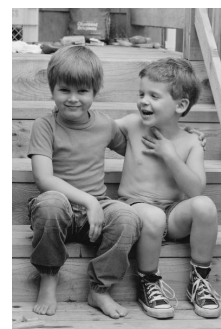
Katie's volunteer spirit leads me to challenge each Aber Suzuki Center family to figure out how to make a difference through music right here in central Wisconsin.



### BRING A FRIEND – SHARE THE EXPERIENCE!!

Aber Suzuki Center Festival Concert  
April 26, 2:00 p.m.  
Ben Franklin Jr. High Auditorium  
Reception to follow

(free and open to the public)



### The Path to Excellence: Developing Ability

By Dave Becker

"How do I get to Carnegie Hall?" "Practice!" This famous question and response succinctly sums up how we get better at anything we do.

In a recent issue of the Stevens Point Journal, Cheri Polster, the Reading and Language Arts coordinator for the Stevens Point Area Public School District was quoted as saying, "We know from research that the more you do something the better you get at it. That's why we promote reading with your child every day for 20 minutes." My wife, Patti, had an eighth grade teacher who required students to use new words in at least ten sentences during the week in order to truly assimilate them into their everyday vocabulary. Alacrity, meaning cheerful readiness, is one of the words she still remembers from that class. One of my students said he practices shooting at least seventy-five free throws every day during basketball practice.

Parents often ask me how much their child should be practicing every day. Although the temptation is to say, "As much as possible," I also recognize the limited amount of time both students and parents have to devote to practicing the instrument. There is a school of thought that one's daily practice time should at least equal the length of the private lesson time. Even a small amount of practice makes a difference and it's preferable to do shorter daily

practices than cramming a week's worth of practice into the day before a lesson. In his book, *Nurtured by Love*, Dr. Suzuki writes, "Talent is no accident of birth. We are born with natural ability to learn. Shortcomings or weak points are usually blamed on "character or "nature" and are left at that. But through training, the contrary – points of excellence – can be brought out in a ten year program. To stop training as soon as one can do something does not mean that it is truly absorbed. One must continue to practice until it is natural and easy. The more one practices the better one becomes. Practicing according to the correct method and practicing as much as possible is the way to acquire ability. If you compare a person who practices five minutes a day with one who practices three hours a day, the difference, is enormous. What one accomplishes in three months it will take the other nine years."

Dr. Suzuki also said, "Knowledge plus 10,000 times equals ability." In his recently published book, *Outliers*, Malcolm Gladwell includes a chapter called "The 10,000 Hour Rule". His contention is that anyone who becomes truly outstanding at what they do has logged at least ten thousand hours developing their skills. Mr. Gladwell discusses the "talent" vs. "preparation" argument saying, "...the closer psychologists look at the careers of the gifted, the smaller the role innate talent seems to play and the bigger the role preparation seems to play." He cites a study that took place in the early 1990's and was carried out by the psychologist K. Anders Ericsson and two colleagues at Berlin's prestigious Academy of Music. Aided by the Academy's professors, they divided the school's violinists at the school into three groups. In the first group were the top students, those with world-class soloist potential. Students in the second group were judged to be merely "good". In the third group were students who intended to teach music in the public school system but were deemed unlikely to ever play professionally. The researchers then asked all of the violinists the same question: "Over the course of your entire career, ever since you first picked up the violin, how many hours have you practiced?"

Everyone from the three groups began playing the violin at approximately the age of five. During the first few years, all of the students practiced roughly the same amount, about two or three hours per week. However when the students were around eight years old, significant differences began to emerge. "The students who would end up the best in their class began to practice more than anyone else: six hours a week by age nine, eight hours a week by age twelve, sixteen hours a week by age fourteen, and up and up, until by the age of twenty they were practicing – that is, purposefully and single-mindedly playing their instruments with the intent to get better – well over thirty hours a week. In fact, by the age of twenty, the elite performers had each totaled ten thousand hours of practice. By contrast the merely good students had totaled eight thousand hours, and the future music teachers had totaled just over four thousand hours." A similar study was done with pianists and the same pattern emerged. One noteworthy point of the study is that the researchers could not find any "naturals", musicians who rose to the top ranks while practicing substantially less than their peers.

Setting aside a certain time of each day is probably the best way to guarantee that regular practice will occur. We need time in our schedules that is blocked off specifically for and dedicated to practice. Establishing goals for consecutive days of practice can be a real motivator for a lot of students. Start with an easily achievable goal like thirty days then bump it up to one hundred

days. I've known students who have not missed a day of practice for years on end.

Repetition for the sake of repetition can sometimes do more harm than good. If we practice a passage incorrectly twenty times we simply become experts at making mistakes. It will take at least forty correct repetitions to undo the mistakes and make the passage natural and effortless. A good starting point for polishing any skill is to do at least five perfect repetitions in a row. Then, over time, we can proceed with the remaining 9,995 repetitions that Dr. Suzuki suggested.

Mastering the art of practicing is one of the biggest challenges facing a musician. How can we make each practice session productive and fun while avoiding a sense of boredom and drudgery that can be associated with repetitive activities? Pat D'Ercole outlined a wonderful set of practice strategies in the article she wrote for the February, 2009 Ambassador. Keep a copy of that article handy for quick reference when practicing.

If we engage in mindful, purposeful practice we can approach our practice sessions with alacrity. Every hour of practice is one step closer to the magical ten thousand.



## Cello News

By Tim Mutschlecner

Aber Suzuki Center cello student **Elisabeth Mahon** played for the Gesell Institute's pre-school class February 26<sup>th</sup>, along with her teacher Mr. Tim. Bravo Isa!

Students at Lincoln High School in Wisconsin Rapids worked with Dr. Mutschlecner in a class on cello technique February 4<sup>th</sup>. Thanks to Ginger Marten for the invitation to work with these fine players.

Cellists will join with violinists under the direction of Kyoko Fuller for a University Open House performance Sunday March 29<sup>th</sup> at 2:00 in Michelson Hall. This is a good opportunity to showcase our program for a wide audience and reach people who may not be familiar with the Aber Suzuki Center.

### Cello Festival Concert list:

Rondo from Concerto No. 2 in D Major, J.B. Breval  
Arioso from Cantata 156, J.S. Bach  
Gavotte, J.B. Lully  
French Folk Song, Folk Song  
May Song (with violins), Folk Song  
Long, Long Ago (with violins in key of D), T.H. Bayly  
Twinkle Variations (with violins), S. Suzuki



## **Voila Viola**

By Dee Martz

Violists **Alex Buehler, Hannah Buehler, Lucas Chan, Will Peck and Erik Sands** performed during the intermission at the Central Wisconsin Symphony Orchestra concert on Sunday, February 22. The program of viola ensemble music included Toad in the Hole (Nelson), The Ashgrove (Folk song arr. Ourada/Martz), Duo N. 1 (Kalliwoda), Circus Time (Martin), Colonel Bogey March (Ricketts arr. Martin/King) and Twinkle Theme (folk song arr. Glazer). Thank you to the students and parents for adding this performance to their already busy schedules. Quite a number of CWSO patrons told me how much they enjoyed hearing the viola ensemble. Many of the younger CWSO attendees wished that they had such fun music to play

FYI—The UWSP viola studio (Katie Fitzgerald, Anita Goodin, Amanda Goodsett, Matt Muelling, Adam Qutaishat, Mitch Sluzewski) performed the exact same list of viola ensembles at the Saturday, February 21 CWSO concert.

Congratulations to all who performed. YEAH VIOLAS!

### **Viola Festival Concert list:**

Le Basque	M. Marais
Colonel Bogey March	Ricketts/arr.Martin/King
Gavotte in g minor	J. S. Bach
Hunter's Chorus	C. M. von Weber
Bohemian Folk Song	
Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star	arr. Glazer

The combined pieces for the end of the concert are:

May Song  
Long, Long Ago (Book 1)  
Twinkle (all)

All Suzuki pieces will be played from memory. Music will be used for Colonel Bogey March and the harmony parts to Twinkle.



## **Attention Violinists!**

Since we won't have a marathon until the rehearsal for the Festival Concert, please begin to review these pieces in preparation for the concert. Your teacher will hear you play them at your lesson. The last three pieces will start on the D string instead of the A string.

### **Violin Festival Repertoire**

Bk. 7 -Corelli Allegro  
Bk. 5 - Veracini Gigue  
Bk. 4 - Seitz Concert No. 2, III  
Bk. 2 Chorus fr. JM  
Bk. 1 Etude  
Long, Long Ago in D  
May Song in D  
Twinkle in D

## **ASC Parent Education Sessions**

All Aber Suzuki Center parents are encouraged to attend the Parent Education Sessions which are offered to you free of charge! Join the March session, "**Do You Hear What I Hear**", on Tuesday, March 10, at 7:30 pm in NFAC Room 144.

Future sessions are as follows:

**April 14:** "Fostering Independent Learning"

**May 12:** "In the Good Old Summertime: Survival of Those Lazy Days of Summer"

We look forward to seeing you there!!!



## **Sign up to Perform at the UWSP Open House**

Dr. Mutschlecner and Mrs. Fuller are gathering students to perform at the UWSP Open House day in Michelsen Hall on Sunday, March 29<sup>th</sup> at 2:00-3:00 PM. The Annual Arts Festival is also going on that day in the Fine Arts Building. It will be a good opportunity to let people hear your music. The rehearsal will be at 5:30 PM on Friday, March 27<sup>th</sup>.

The performance program will be similar to the ASC Spring Festival Concert except it will be on a smaller scale with just string students. Viola students are more than welcome, if you would be happy to play just a few pieces of cello/ violin combined pieces.

Please make sure to put your name on the signup sheet and indicate your instrument and the most advanced piece on the list that you can play, so that Mrs. Fuller and Dr. Mutschlecner can finalize the program. The signup sheet is on the bulletin board in the waiting room. We hope many of you can participate in this.



## **Save the Date**

The American Suzuki Foundation

Please plan on joining us on November 7, 2009, for our annual fund-raising event, the **Music of the Masters**. The event will be held at the Holiday Inn Convention Center in Stevens Point, and promises to be an evening of wonderful music, food, and merriment.

All proceeds from the Music of the Masters benefit students of the Aber Suzuki Center. Stay tuned to the Ambassador for more details.



### **Photos Wanted!**

The Aber Suzuki Center is looking for photos to update the hallway bulletin board. Photos can be emailed to [Suzuki@uwsp.edu](mailto:Suzuki@uwsp.edu) or you can drop them off in the office or in the payment box in the waiting room.



### **Faculty News**

**Dave Becker, Dee Martz and Tim Mutschlecner** performed with the Central Wisconsin Symphony Orchestra on February 20, 21 and 22 for the Vetter school concerts and the regular CWSO February pair of concerts. Former Aber Suzuki Center faculty member, Lawrence Leviton, was the featured speaker and performer at these concerts which featured film music.



### **Student News**

**Jonathan Cochrane and Alyssa Eiden** participated in the Solo and Ensemble Festival held in Rosholt on February 28.



### **February Graduates**

Lilly Mahon, Viola Twinkles  
Alyssa Schroeckenthaler, Violin Book 3  
Nicole Eiden, Piano Twinkles  
Sam Sheibley, Piano Book 2  
Laura Josephson, Piano Book 3  
Laura Josephson, Violin Book 6  
Alyssa Eiden, Violin Book 3  
Lauren Sheibley, Violin Book 6  
Grace Miller, Piano Twinkles  
Marco Kurzynski, Piano Book 2  
Gwynna Norton, Piano Book 3  
Lara Prebble, Viola Book 3  
Trent Miller, Piano Twinkles  
Frederick Van Tiem, Violin Book 3  
Vinnie Fonti, Piano Twinkles  
Ruth Bouwer, Violin Twinkles  
Michael Thimmesch, Piano Book 1  
Kyleigh Fonti, Piano Twinkles  
Sarah Irons, Violin Book 1  
Hope Mahon, Violin Book 3  
Sarah Bauer, Cello Book 6  
Michael Reeser, Violin Book 1  
Courtney Cates, Voice Book 1  
Rachel Ley, Violin Book 3

### **Upcoming Events**

#### **Tuesday, March 10**

Parent Education Session  
"Do You Hear What I Hear?" (Listening)  
NFAC 144, 7:30 pm

#### **Sunday, March 22, 2009**

Julida Kochanowski Senior Recital (Piano)  
4:00 pm, Michelsen Hall

#### **Saturday, April 4, 2009**

Marathon (Piano Only), 9:00 am – 12:00 pm

#### **Sunday, April 5, 2009**

Solo Recitals, 2:00 and 3:30 pm, NFAC Michelsen Hall

#### **Tuesday, April 14**

Parent Education Session  
"Fostering Independent Learning"  
NFAC 144, 7:30 pm

#### **Saturday, April 25, 2009**

Hillary Anderson Senior Recital (Voice)  
1:30 pm, NFAC Michelsen Hall

#### **Sunday, April 26, 2009**

String & Voice Festival Concert  
2:00 pm, Ben Franklin Junior High School Auditorium

#### **Saturday, May 9, 2009**

Solo & Ensemble Concert  
2:00 and 3:30 pm, NFAC Michelsen Hall

#### **Saturday, May 9, 2009**

CSCO Concert  
7:30 pm, NFAC Michelsen Hall

#### **Sunday, May 10, 2009**

Piano Festival Concert  
2:00 and 3:30 pm, NFAC Michelsen Hall

#### **Tuesday, May 12**

Parent Education Session  
"In the Good Old Summertime: Survival of Those Lazy Days of Summer"  
NFAC 144, 7:30 pm

