

Karger College Prep Music Program at PCM

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Karger College Prep Program One-of-a-kind in Maine

by Liesl Quigley, graduating Karger Student

For high school musicians, the Karger college prep program at the Portland Conservatory of Music (PCM) is a hidden gem of learning, where supportive peers come together and share their love of music.

The program creates a conservatory-like experience for young musicians interested in classical music. Every Saturday morning, students take classes in music literature, theory, chamber ensemble and a group piano class. And all in a very casual environment.

Since its inception several years ago, the program has fostered the talents of Maine's young musicians. And many of the graduates of the program have gone on to major in a field of music.



What Students Say

Caleb Hickman

"Karger is an amazing program that has opened my eyes to things that enhance my music knowledge," says guitar player Caleb Hickman, 17. "I would recommend this program to kids who are interested in classical music mostly."

This past year, Caleb formed his own band. Also, he is currently working on a CD at Acadia Recording Company.

During the school year, Karger students have access to an array of performance opportunities. Every semester, they are paired up to work on pieces together with the idea that they will have them ready for a Noonday Concert or another public performance.

Alice Hauser

"The Karger Program provides a fantastic opportunity for high school students to come together and make music with other students, bonded over our shared love of music," says Alice Hauser, a sophomore at Kennebunk High School. Alice plays piano and this is her second year at Karger.

"[The program] not only allows us to grow musically and expand our knowledge of music theory and history, but also teaches collaboration, and fosters a sense of community that high school musicians rarely find."

Along with fellow Karger student Mason Burke, Alice will participate in Musicalta this summer in Alsace, France.

Genevieve Welch

Genevieve Welch is a junior at Waynflete. She is a mezzo-soprano in her second year at Karger.

"What I like about Karger is how it is a very intense education program, where the instruction is taken very seriously, but the program is also casual enough that it's fun and a good way to spend a Saturday morning."

The past few summers, Genevieve participated in the Interlochen and Oklahoma City Summer Programs. Also, Genevieve is a previous National Association of Teachers of Singing (NATS) competition winner.

"I would recommend this program to anyone considering a career in music, especially classical, but really any [genre] as the program works with theory, history, and analysis of music. It is also a wonderful opportunity for practicing performance due to the masterclass-style coaching."

Auditions

The Karger division is a tremendous program. It is intended for high school musicians looking for a unique supplement to their music education that they may not get elsewhere. In fact, two of the graduating seniors, Leah Israel and Liesl Quigley, both of whom have been in Karger for five years, will be going to Manhattan School of Music and Oberlin Conservatory, respectively.

There are two opportunities to audition for the 2017-18 Karger Program. The first will be on June 14th, 3 to 5 p.m., at Woodfords Church in Portland. And the second will be immediately after PCM's Open House on September 10th. The Open House is from 2 to 4 p.m. It will include an "instrument petting zoo," where visitors can try various instruments.

Applications for the Karger Program can be found at portlandconservatoryofmusic.org/karger.

