

Northern Journeys

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A GROWING SCHOOL ROOTED IN HISTORY



Nestled in the beautiful historic Hamilton House on the edge of the Garden District and one block from the courthouse, the small but mighty Music Conservatory of Coeur d'Alene honors its roots in local history while creating a bit of its own.

Listed in the National Register of Historic Places by the United States Department of the Interior, this lovely house was built in 1908 for Coeur d'Alene's second mayor, Boyd Hamilton, and his wife, Alta, the daughter of Spokane empire builder J.J. Browne. The two-story house was designed by Spokane architect George Keith.

It has been home to other prominent public officials, including Idaho Supreme Court Judge W.F. McNaughton, and Kootenai County Prosecutor William Hawkins.

Over the years, many musicians lived in the house, including vocalist Agnes Hawkins, jazz musician William Hawkins, and internationally acclaimed piano jurist Dean Elder, adding to the home's rich cultural history.

The Hamilton House was saved from demolition in 2020 and the Music Conservatory of Coeur d'Alene opened its doors here in 2021.

This nonprofit organization's mission is to nurture musical excellence through accessible instruction, collaborative partnerships and performance. It serves as more than a music school—it's a vibrant community resource and a training ground for future musicians, providing exceptional music education for all ages and hosting inspiring community performances.

One of the Music Conservatory's truly remarkable accomplishments is that since its beginning, it has attracted and sustained a faculty of over twenty music educators who are also professional musicians and performers. These educators instruct private lessons on the breadth of instrument families including piano, strings, woodwinds, brass and percussion, as well as voice, music fundamentals and theory, conducting,

composition and song writing. These talented teachers mentor students through the progressive stages of their musical education journey, providing instruction, guidance, feedback and encouragement. With its early childhood music program called Mini Music Makers, the Conservatory provides a fun, explorative foundation of music fundamentals that encourages parents to incorporate music in the home as well as to assist the young students in recognizing their own musical inclinations and helping them choose how to best express their unique talents.

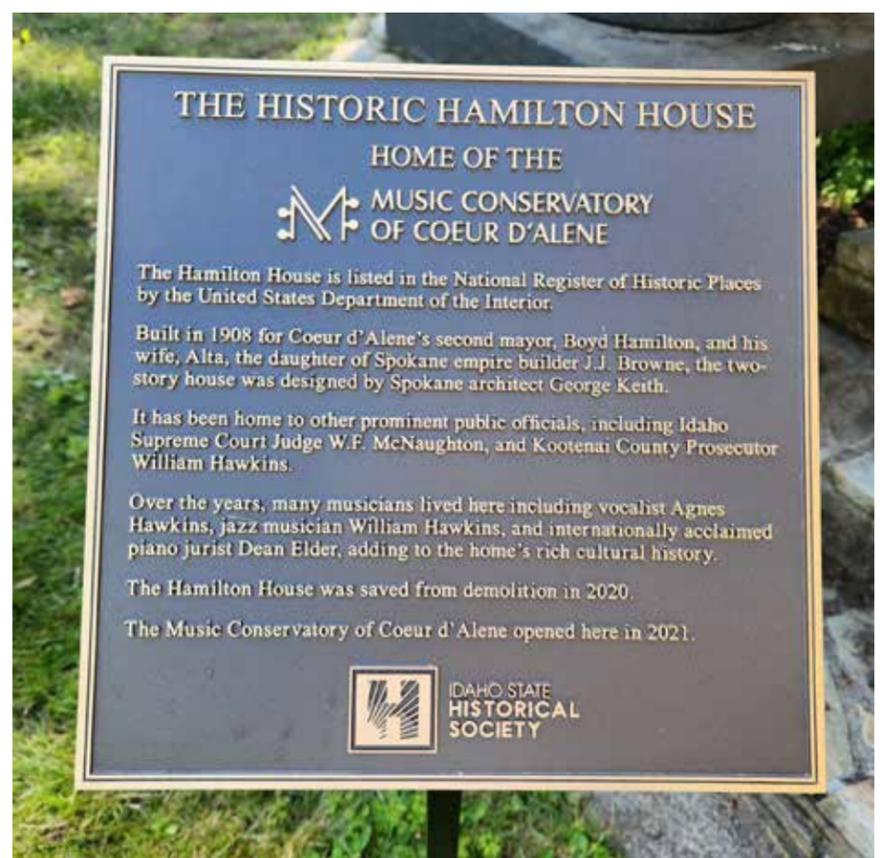
For older beginning students, group classes are offered for piano, guitar, ukulele and singing, fostering interactive training with peers.

The Music Conservatory also delivers more advanced levels of instruction in music theory, composition, and ensemble performance, providing opportunities for students to grow as musicians.

In 2023, the Conservatory began its Youth Choir program, incorporating vocal and music theory while teaching students how to sing chorally, classically and correctly. Choristers perform in a variety of musical styles for the local community while building friendships and growing artistically as an ensemble.

Additionally, the Music Conservatory provides support for the underserved in our community through music therapy. To create an inclusive environment, it offers specialized sessions for neurodivergent individuals and those with sensory sensitivities. Its music therapy program provides sensory-friendly experiences designed to meet diverse needs, ensuring that everyone can engage with music in a meaningful way. The music school provides a "Conservatory experience" by holding recitals so its students can perform for

Continued on Page 9



A GROWING SCHOOL ROOTED IN HISTORY

Continued From Page 4

their families and friends to gain confidence in front of a live audience.

As a cornerstone of the community, the Music Conservatory of Coeur d'Alene serves as a dynamic hub for cultivating talent, fostering creativity, and shaping the next generation of musicians. Through a robust infrastructure of faculty, classes, performers, and events, it provides music education that inspires students of all ages and abilities.

The Music Conservatory's marquee event is its annual production of Handel's "Messiah", the classical music oratorio featuring the joyous voices of the Hallelujah Chorus, with audiences filling the seats of the Schuler Performing Arts Center on the North Idaho College campus.

The Conservatory is proud partners with key organizations like the Music Conservatory of Sandpoint, North Idaho Philharmonia, the City of Coeur d'Alene Arts Commission, Citizen Council for the Arts, Shakespeare CDA, Dance Theatre Northwest, North Idaho College, the Arts & Culture Alliance, and the Boys and Girls Club of Kootenai County.

By working alongside schools, nonprofits, and cultural organizations, it is able to extend its reach, amplify its impact, and foster a dynamic, inclusive music community that benefits students, families, and residents throughout the region. Through these collaborations, the Conservatory strengthens its mission and enhances music education in Coeur d'Alene.

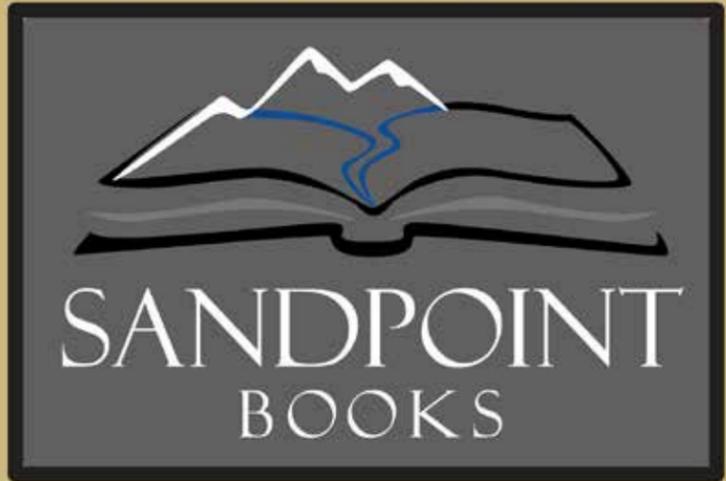
Audience development is central to its outreach. The Music Conservatory prioritizes building lasting relationships with both current and prospective students, and focuses on creating opportunities for engagement beyond traditional classroom settings. Its performances, workshops, and community events serve as platforms to engage diverse audiences, underserved groups and families. This helps build a strong base of support and awareness, ultimately expanding its influence.

The Music Conservatory's long-range goals include growing its impact by increasing program offerings, improving its facilities, and securing funding for scholarships and outreach initiatives. It strives to become a key cultural institution in Coeur d'Alene, offering transformative music education for generations to come. What it will take for this tiny nonprofit to fulfill its mission is continued support from the local community through generous donations of time, talent and treasure. One such recent donation is hopefully an inspiration for others to follow.

"We have had the honor to receive a substantial donation of \$ 10,000 from Mr. and Mrs. Mark Benka,

part-time residents of Coeur d'Alene, in memory of their beloved son Adam who was a gifted musician," describes Cynthia Newkirk, Executive Director of the Music Conservatory. Adam had just graduated from Berklee College of Music in Boston with a degree in professional music before he very sadly lost his life at age 22. "The Benkas also gifted to us Adam's beloved 12-string Taylor guitar for it to be enjoyed by our students and faculty, local guitarists and the Coeur d'Alene community for years to come," continued Cynthia Newkirk. "We know this guitar means the world to them and we are so honored to be entrusted with its care. We wholeheartedly thank the Benkas for this extremely generous donation."

For more information about the Music Conservatory of Coeur d'Alene and to make a donation, visit the nonprofit organization's website at cdaconservatory.org.



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