

Student Organists Opportunities

Syracuse University student organists are able to draw on a myriad of performance, church music, and arts administration opportunities both on campus and in the wider community. While most of the teaching takes place in the Setnor School of Music, student organists regularly make use of additional opportunities supported by [Hendricks Chapel](#), [Syracuse Catholic Community](#), the [Syracuse Chapter of the American Guild of Organists](#), the [Westfield Center for Historical Keyboards](#), and the [Organ Historical Society](#) (the studio has a student chapter) in order to make the most of their experience in Syracuse. Scroll through the list below to get a sense of what our student organists are up to. For more information, or to express an interest in applying or getting involved, email Dr. Anne Laver, assistant professor of organ and University organist (alaver@syr.edu).

Solo Performances

In addition to Setnor School weekly convocation, organ students often perform at [Music and Message](#), a weekly concert series in Hendricks Chapel. Organ students have also put on studio concerts, such as a Halloween concert in Hendricks Chapel and Bach Birthday Bash in Setnor Auditorium that draw large student crowds. [Holidays at Hendricks](#), an annual concert that draws a live audience in the thousands and is broadcast on regional television stations, often features organ students in collaborative and solo performance. Students also perform on member and outreach recitals for the Syracuse Chapter of the American Guild of Organists as a way to try new instruments and bring music to a wider audience.

Collaborative Performances

Student organists are regularly asked to collaborate with Syracuse University ensembles for special performances. In recent years, student organists have performed with Syracuse University Symphony Orchestra, Syracuse University Wind Ensemble, Oratorio Society, Baroque Ensemble, and Hendricks Chapel Choir. Student organists are also eligible to compete in the annual Concerto and Aria Competition at the Setnor School of Music.

Organ Demonstrations

Organ students are frequently asked to perform pieces and offer demonstrations of the historic Holtkamp organ in Setnor Auditorium for special events such as admissions presentations for prospective students; reception days for new students; Orange Central tours; and Pedals, Pipes, and Pizza events with the Syracuse chapter of the American Guild of Organists.

Masterclasses/guest artists

Student organists have the opportunity to perform for some of the world's leading concert organists and church musicians every year as part of guest artist residencies. In the past five years, Syracuse University has hosted masterclasses by Alan Morrison, Nathan Laube, Michel Bouvard, Edoardo Bellotti, Andrew Henderson, Bruce Neswick, Cherry Rhodes, Katharine Pardee, Christopher Marks, William Porter, Kola Owolabi, and the Theodicy Jazz Collective. Syracuse student organists also participate in improvisation masterclasses with professors and guests of the Eastman School of Music and Cornell University at frequent educational exchanges supported by Mellon Humanities Corridor grants.

Sacred music

Student organists routinely support worship services and special events hosted at Hendricks Chapel. Most student organists hold music director or organist positions at local churches or synagogues. For more information on available positions, visit the [Syracuse AGO website](#).

Arthur Poister Scholarship Competition in Organ Playing

Each Spring, Syracuse University and the Syracuse chapter of the American Guild of Organists puts on the [Arthur Poister Scholarship Competition in Organ Playing](#) and student organists are welcomed and encouraged to apply. Students also have the opportunity to hear exceptionally talented young organists in the annual finals of the competition and winner's recital, and can choose to assist with the competition as an intern.

Arts Leadership

Organ students are well-positioned to take on a variety of internships and positions associated with the organ department. Among them are an internship to help administer the Arthur Poister Scholarship Competition in Organ Playing through the Syracuse Chapter of the American Guild of Organists; an internship focused on concert operations, promotion, and series development of the Music and Message Series at Hendricks Chapel; a student director position for the Music and Mindfulness after-school program supervised by Hendricks Chapel's Office of Engagement Programs; an executive assistant for a future Pipe Organ Encounter (POE) and an intern for an organ and composition symposium.

Instruments

Syracuse University's Setnor Auditorium is home to a magnificent example of organbuilder Walter Holtkamp Sr.'s work. [The three-manual organ](#) built in 1950 possesses an historic organ citation from the Organ Historical Society and is the primary teaching, recital, and rehearsal instrument on campus. Students also have access to the [1952 three-manual Holtkamp organ](#) in Hendricks Chapel and two practice instruments in the Setnor School of Music. Additionally, student organists have open invitations for lessons and practice time at a handful of notable instruments in the Syracuse area, namely the [Roo sevelt Organ at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception](#), the [Quimby organ at St. Paul's Episcopal Church](#), the [Fisk organ at First Presbyterian Church of Cazenovia](#), and the [Parsons organ at Holy Rosary Catholic Church](#).

Research and travel

Syracuse University offers strong support for undergraduate and graduate research in the arts and humanities. Organ students have received major funding for research projects and travel from the [Syracuse Office of Undergraduate Research and Creative Engagement](#) and the [Graduate Student Organization](#). Hendricks Chapel has also been a strong support for organ students. In 2019, the chapel supported a student-initiated [organ and choral workshop in Ghana, West Africa](#). The organ studio takes an organ crawl field trip each semester to a region with significant instruments.

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