DEAR FRIENDS,

In FY 2016, Project STEP exceeded our expectations with our students marking personal and collective achievements that made their families, our staff, teachers, and supporters proud. Our Board of Directors carefully managed the planned retirement of our able Executive Director Mary Jaffee. We named a Search Committee, headed by Board Member Diane Austin, that succeeded in finding us an outstanding new leader, Gabriella Sanna, as our new Executive Director.

Because of Project STEP’s growing national reputation, world class musicians honored us by conducting five masterclasses. They included world renowned cellist Johannes Moser, the Boston Cello Quartet, Apple Hill String Quartet, Triple Helix Piano Trio, and a lesson full of laughs and learning from the great Maestro Thomas Wilkins. We also welcomed a visit from Jane Chu, Chair, the National Endowment for the Arts, a long term funder and supporter of our work.

Project STEP was featured in Strings Magazine as “the country’s longest-running [35 years!] youth organization dedicated to racial balance” in classical music. Our mission to address the underrepresentation of certain minorities in the classical music profession is as clear today as it was when we were founded in 1982.

In June of 2016, we welcomed Gabriella Sanna as our new Executive Director. Gabriella is an accomplished performer, teacher, and arts administrator, with over 18 years of progressively responsible experience in arts organizations and schools. Her most recent position was as the Director of the Dedham School of Music.

“I look forward to the opportunity to work closely with outstanding teaching artists, students, and board that believes in its worthy mission. Throughout my career I have been focused and invested in supporting young musicians, and providing them with opportunities to build their future as successful people.”

– Gabriella Sanna

We present this year’s annual report to you, knowing your support helps provide our students with a limitless future. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Dianne Luby
Chair, Board of Directors

Gabriella Sanna
Executive Director

Dianne Luby
Chair, Board of Directors

Gabriella Sanna
Executive Director
OUR MISSION

Project STEP recognizes that certain racial and ethnic minorities are vastly underrepresented in classical music. Our mission is to address this imbalance by identifying musically talented children from underrepresented Boston and surrounding communities and providing these children with comprehensive music and string instrument instruction. We set the highest standards for our students, provide mentoring and performance opportunities, and create a network of support for our students, their families, and their communities.

Core Values

(1) We believe that the classical music profession should reflect racial and ethnic diversity.

(2) We believe that children, if identified at an early age and immersed in long-term, rigorous music instruction, can flourish as professional classical musicians and as individuals, regardless of their ultimate career choice.

(3) We believe that our students can reach their full potential when held to high standards and provided with the support and active engagement of teachers, mentors, family members, and alumni.

(4) We believe that music can change lives and that the disciplined study of classical music enhances educational opportunities and opens doors for our students and their communities.
PROGRAMS

Project STEP provides a continuum of music instruction that begins when we enroll 50-100 five-year-olds from the Boston Public School system in our FOCUS Program, and continues through Grade 12. FOCUS introduces kindergartners from underrepresented ethnicities to the study of music at an early age, generating enthusiasm and providing a bridge for further study at Boston-area music schools. It is also a gateway to the next level of Project STEP.

Each year, about four students from FOCUS are selected to continue their musical studies in Project STEP’s core program (grades 1-12). Each student receives weekly private lessons, theory and/or solfège classes, chamber music, orchestra, summer music camp support, and an instrument. In addition, they receive enrichment opportunities including masterclasses and residencies with renowned chamber ensembles, and tickets to dozens of concerts each year. Project STEP is a model for creative youth development. In the course of studying music, young people develop social, creative, problem solving, collaboration, and critical thinking skills. These skills are widely transferrable and enable youth to reach their full potential as musicians, students, and productive members of society.

Project STEP alum Lev Mamuya (above), currently in the Harvard/New England Conservatory joint degree program, mentors a Project STEP student. Mentoring is an integral part of the Project STEP curriculum and serves as a means to inspire success through positive role models.
By building extensive student and family support systems into the program itself, Project STEP is able to hold students to - and help them reach - high standards of achievement. Incoming families are paired with “buddy” families, which allows older children to mentor incoming children and experienced parents to provide guidance for new parents. Families spend hours together each Saturday in the lounge at Symphony Hall while their children are in class, and all parents are part of the Parents’ Council which meets monthly for ‘parent pulse checks’ and workshops on practical issues related to their children’s music education. That Council elects two representatives to the Board of Directors who serve as full voting members and help shape organizational policies. These parent representatives facilitate communication between parents and staff. At the end of each year, Project STEP hosts a Spring Recital with a fundraising component planned and executed by the Parents’ Council. STEP’s depth of support for parents and families creates an atmosphere of encouragement, ownership, and responsibility. Parents are crucial to our students’ success, and their active involvement is one of STEP’s greatest strengths.

“Project STEP is more than talented children and expert faculty; it is also made of a network of real families who juggle multiple obligations. Despite all the other facets of our lives, we have chosen to prioritize Project STEP. We can’t help but follow in amazement as the program guides our children to new heights we couldn’t have imagined.” - STEP Parent

FAMILY ENGAGEMENT
The 2015/2016 year was filled with events, concerts, and collaborations including five masterclasses with world-class performers, five workshops with Triple Helix Piano Trio, the Boston Chamber Music Society workshop, FOCUS Recital, Annual Spring Recital & Parents’ Benefit, Senior Recital, and over 80 hours of community service concerts performed by our students.

**HIGHLIGHTS:**

**NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS RECEPTION**
Project STEP performed at a reception in Symphony Hall for the National Endowment for the Arts hosted by the Massachusetts Cultural Council.

**TRIPLE HELIX BENEFIT CONCERT** – Project STEP and the Triple Helix Piano Trio presented their second joint benefit concert with guests from the string ensemble A Far Cry to celebrate the life and legacy of Judith Sandler, a long-time friend of the Piano Trio.

**MLK JR. DAY** – The Project STEP community celebrated the life and legacy of Martin Luther King, Jr. This event included musical performances and a panel discussion about the role of race in classical music with Rev. Michael Haynes as well as Christopher Lydon from WBUR.

**FRIENDRAISER** – This fundraising event at Scholars was an exciting opportunity for us to spend an evening with new friends, welcome back long-time supporters, and share a short performance from STEP students.

**TUFTS UNIVERSITY COMPOSITION COLLABORATION**
Tufts music composition students worked with Project STEP students for months, culminated in the creation of musical premieres performed by our students and featured in the Tufts media.

**PERFORMANCES:**
WE WENT TO THE WHITE HOUSE...AGAIN!

Project STEP was asked back to the White House for the second time in two years to perform for the State Dinner honoring the United States’ 50-year relationship with Singapore. Our students impressed over 200 guests that attended the event, including Vice President Joe Biden, Massachusetts State Senator Ed Markey, and Secretary of State John F. Kerry.

Njima (violin), Tristan (violin), and alumni Lev (cello) and Jordan (bass) formed a quartet that greeted guests as they arrived. The students also joined the United States Marine Band for several “strolling” songs as guests made their way from the formal dining room to the evening’s entertainment room. As the evening drew to a close, President Obama addressed his guests and thanked Project STEP by name!
Above - Triple Helix Piano Trio violinist Bayla Keyes mentors Project STEP student Alba during a Saturday workshop.

**IMPACT**

In 2015, the Center for Collaborative Education and the Annenberg Institute for School Reform documented the major opportunity gaps that persist for Black and Latino males in the Boston Public Schools. These gaps impede their learning and lead to lower 4-year graduation rates than those of their white peers (Black students: 70%, Latino students: 64%, white students: 76%). In contrast, 100% of Project STEP’s graduates go on to college or conservatory after graduating from high school, and excel in music studies, competitions, and academics. During their studies at Project STEP, students receive high levels of training and support that likely would not be accessible to them otherwise. They are able to break through socio-economic barriers to become excellent musicians, creative and successful students, and productive members of society. Project STEP offers a different path for Black and Latino youth by cultivating their talents, maintaining high expectations, and providing them with the support they need to succeed.

“Project STEP helps you in school. It improves how you think.” – STEP Student
In 2007, Barbara N. Kravitz established a scholarship for one advanced STEP student to be selected each year in memory of her husband, Dr. Arthur Kravitz. As Past President of the Board, he loved classical music and believed strongly in the mission of Project STEP.

In the same year, Judge Levin H. Campbell established a scholarship fund in honor of his wife, Eleanor L. Campbell, a long-time Project STEP supporter.

Scholars are chosen on the basis of merit, dedication, and community involvement.

Project STEP is pleased to bestow the 2016 Eleanor L. Campbell Scholarship to Njioma (above) and the Arthur Kravitz Scholarship to Itsva (below).

Jordan Calixto (above) recently completed his undergraduate studies at the Juilliard School studying double bass with Albert Laszlo. Before Juilliard, he studied with Helen Stevenson from age five to seventeen at the New England Conservatory Preparatory School, then studied with Don Palma (co-founder of the Orpheus Chamber Orchestra, and professor at Yale and New England Conservatory) during his senior year.

Jordan attended the Aspen Music Festival under the Vincent Wilkinson scholarship in 2013, the National Orchestral Institute in 2015, and the Orford Music Festival in 2016. On top of playing in the Juilliard Orchestra, Jordan played with the Lab Orchestra and New Juilliard Ensemble with various conductors including Alan Gilbert, Vladimir Jurowski, and Peter Oundjian. Jordan will be continuing his studies at Yale University’s School of Music Graduate program with Don Palma.
Music camps are often some of the most productive and influential experiences for our students. In gorgeous country settings, students have many hours each day to play chamber and orchestra music with students from all over the world. Away from academic and other day to day obligations that compete with music, they enjoy relaxed but determined goal-oriented music making in combination with fun and healthy outdoor experiences. Their identities as music students are heightened by being surrounded with campers who share and celebrate their passion. The combination of intensity, beauty, structure, physical freedom, and bonds formed among campers and members of the faculty contribute to lifelong memories.

This summer, our students attended camps that included Greenwood, Boston University Tanglewood Institute (BUTI), Point CounterPoint, Brevard, Kinhaven, Encore/CODA, and Apple Hill. Students also travelled abroad to the Vianden Festival in Luxembourg and went on tour with the Boston Philharmonic Youth Orchestra to Spain.

This incredible opportunity is provided to every Project STEP student for two to six weeks each summer. In order to help cover the costs of these programs, making them accessible for our students, we combine funds from Project STEP, special support from Susan Rothenberg and the Janey Fund, Winsor Music contributions, The Willow Tree Fund, The Mary Saudek Jaffee Fund, and scholarships from the camps themselves.

“Another great thing about STEP is that they send everyone to music camp every summer. My first summer I attended Apple Hill Center for Chamber Music. That camp is the best thing that has ever happened to me in my whole life...” - STEP Student
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Farhoud Moshfegh
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Aristides Rivas
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Deborah Thompson
Gwendoline Thornblade
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Sophie Vilker
Donald Weilerstein
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John Ziarko
**COMMUNITY OF SUPPORT**
A Far Cry
Boston Symphony Orchestra
BSO Education Department/
Symphony for Our City
Boston University
Carriage House Violins of Johnson
String Instruments
Johannes Moser
New England Conservatory
Peggy Pearson and Winsor Music
Wendy Putnam and the Concord
Chamber Music Society
Rutman’s Violins
Marcus Thompson and the Boston
Chamber Music Society
Triple Helix Piano Trio
Owen Young

**IN MEMORIAM**
Louis H. Hamel, Jr.

**INDIVIDUAL DONORS**

$200,000 +
Barbara N. Kravitz

$50,000 +
The Hon. Levin H. Campbell

$30,000 +
Susan Rothenberg
The Willow Tree Fund

$10,000 +
Nat and Diana Alpert
Diane Asseo Griliches

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$1,000 +
Diane M. Austin
and Dr. Aaron J. Nurick
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Dharma Cortes and Rodolfo Vega
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Nathaniel Jaffee
Johnson String Instrument
Claudia Lavin
Mary Lincoln
Meghan K. Jasani and Adam Margolin
Karen McNinis
Bill and Betsy Moyer
Christophe and Tara Oliver

$1,000 + CONT’D
Daniel and Barbara Palant
The Parents & Families of Project STEP
William H. and Kathleen Rousseau
Alfred and Gilda Slifka
Ann and Phil Smith
Emilie D. Steele
Marcus A. Thompson
Kim Whiteley
Margaret Williams-DeCelles
Sidney and Deanna Wolk

$500 +
Anonymous
David and Holly Ambler
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Judith McMichael and Jim Foster
Anne Mollet
Kyra Montagu
Robert and Jane Morse
Glenn Myers
Paul O’Shea
Harry and Francis Ostrander
Susan W. and Stephen Paine

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Michele and James Banker
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John F. Cogan, Jr. and Mary L. Cornille
Merissa and Vincent Dufrend
Ann Elliott
Harriet Feinberg
Will Fickes
Marie Lou Francoeur
Robert Frank and Jennifer Coplon
Eileen and Barney Freiberg-Dale
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Wen Huang
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Benjamin Zander
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Irene Merwin
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Jason Myers
Cornelia Nichols
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Abosede Odunsu
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Hilary Respess
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Nancy B. Roberts
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Elliott Paul and Martha Rothman
Nancy Cirillo Ruggiero
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Barbara Schnuer
Thomas J. and Lois Schwab

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Sprague Ackley
Helen Adelman
Mary Beth Alger
Iris Alkalay
Cornell Allen
Carol Allen
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Roxana Bajdechi
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Rachel Berger
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John Brennan
Gerge R. Bulger
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Aline Benoit and Marshall Burlingame
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Christine Capota
Delvyn Case
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Mark Cataudella
Hsiu Chang
Melinda C. Cheston
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Laura Christopherson
Ed Coletti
Katherine and Tom Colleran
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Brenda Engel
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Anne Watson Born
Genie Weekley
Karen Campbell and Ray Wellbaum
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John and Linda Willson
Danielle Wilson
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Gail Wood
Maggie Zager

IN-KIND SUPPORT
A Far Cry
Jodie Baehre Art
Boston Pops
Boston Symphony Orchestra
Brewers Fork Restaurant
Johnson String Instrument
Donna Kim of The Perfect Details
Hyatt Regency Hotel
Hillary Kassler and Wilfred Mamuya
New England Conservatory
Rhonda Rider
Scholars Bistro and Lounge
Seaport Boston Hotel

CORPORATE, BUSINESS, & COMMUNITY SUPPORT
A Foggy Word
Ali’s Roti Restaurant
Ashmont Auto Collision
Boston Symphony Orchestra
Boston University School of Music
Brookhaven at Lexington
Carloyn Mapes Music
Silvia Curry/Rivers School of Music
D’Laly’s Beauty Salon
Ethnica Catering
Jireh Beauty Salon and Spa
Johnson String Instrument
J.P. Morgan
Just Next Door Cards and Gifts
Lake Isle Woods Association Trust
Mario’s Restaurant Co.
New England Conservatory of Music
Above - Past Project STEP Executive Director Mary S. Jaffee joins Jane Chu, Chairman of the National Endowment for the Arts, as well as members of both organizations to discuss their experience in the program.
**FINANCIALS**

**Sources of Income**
- Support from Individuals: $515,840
- Support from Foundation & Government grants: $241,484
- Investment income: $34,625
- Donated space, instruments, services: $58,124
- Fees & honoraria: $13,135
- **Total Income**: $863,208

**Use of Funds**
- Program: $451,164
- Administrative: $136,488
- Fundraising: $91,824
- **All expenses**: $679,476

- Surplus before investment losses: $183,732
- Gains / Losses on investments: $(53,901)
- Surplus: $129,831
Project STEP, Inc.
Statement of Financial Position
June 30, 2016 and 2015

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<th>2016</th>
<th>2015</th>
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<td>Music instruments, net of depreciation of $264,970 and $255,653 in 2016 and 2015, respectively</td>
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<td><strong>Total Assets</strong></td>
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<td>1,675,196</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Liabilities</td>
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<td><strong>Total liabilities and net assets</strong></td>
<td>1,788,244</td>
<td>1,675,196</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Symphony Hall
301 Massachusetts Avenue
Boston, MA 02115
617-267-5777
ProjectSTEP.org
@ProjectSTEP
#ProjectSTEP

Photos by Michael J. Lutch