The Beacon
United States Coast Guard Band

Spring 2024
The United States Coast Guard Band welcomes you to a new year! 2024 will be filled with international performances, exciting concerts at home, ceremonial support for Coast Guard and Department of Homeland Security events, educational initiatives reaching many thousands of school-aged children across the world, keynote performances and presentations at the Midwest Clinic in Chicago (the world’s largest instrumental music education conference), and preparations for the Coast Guard Band’s upcoming centennial celebration. This issue showcases the Band’s reach across New England through its educational concerts, delivers information about upcoming performances, and highlights the elite professionalism of two members whose talent, hard work, and achievements extend far past the notes they play on stage.
LEAMY CONCERT SERIES: “Everything Under the Moon”

Sunday, March 24, 2:00 p.m., Leamy Concert Hall

Commander Adam Williamson leads the U.S. Coast Guard Band in an exciting program featuring works by Kimberly Archer, John Philip Sousa, Roshanne Etezady, Alberto Ginastera, and Steven Bryant, and will feature the full Band on Kevin Day’s 2021 Concerto for Wind Ensemble. Coast Guard Band vocalist Allison Landstedt will sing Dvořák’s “Song to the Moon” from the opera Rusalka.

LEAMY CONCERT SERIES: APRIL CONCERT

Sunday, April 21, 2:00 p.m., Leamy Concert Hall

The Coast Guard Band features soprano vocalist MU1 Allison Landstedt, in a program that runs the gamut of music for vocalist and military band with composers Mozart, Puccini, Bernstein, Bricusse/Wildhorn, and numerous earworms from favorite animated films, along with special guest tenor vocalist MU1 Ryan Connolly from the United States Navy Band. Chief Musician Greg Case performs favorite movements from American composer Joel Love’s lyric concerto for alto saxophone entitled Solace. Commander Adam Williamson Conducts.

LEAMY CONCERT SERIES: MAY CONCERT

Sunday, May 5, 2:00 p.m., Leamy Concert Hall

Chief Warrant Officer Jeff Spenner leads a concert showcasing virtuosity throughout the entire Band. Chief Musician Nathan Lassell utilizes a unique collection of percussion instruments to perform a percussion concerto by Mason Bates entitled Sideman, and Chief Musician Kelly Hurrell, clarinet, performs with Musician 1st Class Steven Zhang, basset horn, on Mendelssohn’s Concert Piece No. 2. The legendary Sinfonietta by Czech composer Leoš Janáček is a spectacle to behold.

COAST GUARD BAND NATIONAL CONCERT TOUR

June 19 - July 6, 2024

The Band embarks on its annual concert tour and looks forward to an extensive visit through U.S. Coast Guard District 8, visiting Arkansas, Tennessee, Kentucky, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Iowa, and Nebraska. Stay tuned to the Band’s website and social media pages; information will be added as concert dates and venues are confirmed.
For over thirty-seven years, the Coast Guard Band School Concert Series has been a staple of our annual commitment to educating and entertaining students from around Connecticut and the neighboring states. This series takes place each autumn and is attended by over 7000 students in grades K-12. Presented in Leamy Concert Hall at the USCG Academy, these educational and entertaining performances utilize visual and storytelling elements to help students appreciate music while gaining valuable exposure to the Band and the Coast Guard.

The U.S. Coast Guard Band’s Community Outreach Initiative leverages the versatility of the Band’s musicians to provide creative, in-house designed chamber music programs to local elementary and middle schools. Common ensembles for this endeavor include brass quintet, woodwind quintet, reed quintet, tuba/euphonium quartet, saxophone quartet, flute/harp/vocal trio, programs with narrator, percussion ensemble, jazz combo, and more. In 2022, 5 separate chamber ensembles comprised of 23 Band members performed in 31 schools and reached 9,717 students in Connecticut and Alaska, and over 25,000 viewers across Connecticut through local television.

The Coast Guard Band website offers numerous educational resources and is located at www.uscg.mil/community/band. There, you’ll find invaluable instructional videos for beginning music students, video recordings of standard études on each instrument, and even the opportunity for college students and pre-professionals to test their skill and musicianship by submitting a mock audition for feedback from the world-class musicians of the U.S. Coast Guard Band.
A sea breeze whips over the rolling hills of the Admiral Baker Golf Course at Naval Base San Diego. On a dew-covered tee box, Chief Musician Laura Pirruccello collects her thoughts and contemplates the perfect drive as a competitor in the 75th Armed Forces Golf Championship. That laser focus sustains over four rounds, earning her the low score among Coast Guard women and a T-7 finish in her division against active duty members from the Army, Air Force, Space Force, Marines, and Navy. Preparation meets opportunity as service members make connections through their love of the game.

This past September, MUC Pirruccello was a member of the Coast Guard’s inaugural golf team composed of 9 players selected from 43 applicants from across the fleet. Team members built camaraderie teeing off at 0700 and carrying equipment approximately 5 miles a day through a mix of showers, sun, and varied terrain. CWO3 Ken Collins coached the team and was instrumental in its formation. He is committed to growing the applicant pool in the coming years and finding the best of the best golfers in the service. Top seeded players can qualify to compete in the International Armed Forces Tournament in Zimbabwe during the fall of 2024. Since its inception in 1947 as the Inter-service Sports Council, Armed Forces Sports events help foster important international relationships with a shared commitment to honor, sportsmanship, friendship, and the natural networking that occurs during competition.

Music and sports tend to dissolve international and personal boundaries through an unspoken language that can be leveraged for cooperation between nations. Band members have used the powerful diplomatic tool of music on tours and engagements in Taiwan, Japan, Italy, Djibouti, Puerto Rico, Australia, the U.K., Soviet Union, and Asian-Pacific Nations. Disciplined practice, passion, and superlative performance are a few of the shared values among athletes and musicians. Individual gifts may vary, but excelling in these activities takes sweat and determination. Chief Pirruccello’s exploits range from playing Division 1 golf at The University of North Texas, pursuing degrees in music performance from UNT and Manhattan School of Music, to playing alongside members of the Japanese Coast Guard Band. MUC Pirruccello’s consistency is on display as she stands unphased by the pressure of nailing the famous piccolo solo in John Philip Sousa’s “The Stars and Stripes Forever” hundreds of times in her career.

The parallels of a professional musician and nationally competitive golfer lie in the opportunities for growth. Preparation to perform either on stage or on the golf course is similar, with countless hours practicing to refine technique, self-assessing ways to improve, and keeping oneself mentally in check. MUC Pirruccello says, “Being a part of this historic Coast Guard golf team was an unbelievable honor. Although sometimes the harder I try, the worse I get, the goal is not to win but to participate and continue to improve as a golfer and person. Constantly trying to figure out new ways to approach and change old habits pushes me to continue to learn. I’ve done this successfully in music, and now I’m putting this kind of energy into golf with help from my swing coach, Sue Cart, of Stonington Country Club. Golf is thankfully a sport where you can peak later in life through constant trial and error.”

MUC Pirruccello’s work in the Band’s education department results in meaningful and lasting engagement with communities across New England. Coordinating the annual Education Concert Series at the CGA, her team brings in around 5,000 students aged 3 to 18 from 74 schools and includes conversations with Coast Guard Recruiting, masterclasses, and visits to the Coast Guard Museum at the Academy. Each year in February, various ensembles perform in at least 18 schools introducing upwards of 5,700 students to the Coast Guard through energetic musical programs. A pillar of Band missions, the success of Community Outreach Initiatives relies on individual excellence and group creativity as well as MUC Pirruccello’s drive and dedication.
One of our newest members is euphoniumist Patrick Nyren. Originally from South Casco, Maine, he was very busy during his 10 years in the U.S. Army Bands.

**2014-16:** 1st Armored Division Band at Ft. Bliss, TX playing euphonium with the concert band and guitar with the country band. While deployed to Jordan and Kuwait, he rode a camel at the Dead Sea!

**2016-18:** Maneuver Center of Excellence Band at Ft. Moore, GA played euphonium, served as drum major, and was named the Battalion and Brigade NCO of the Year in 2017.

**2018-19:** Euphonium Instructor at Joint Expeditionary Base Little Creek-Fort Story, VA Beach, assisting with Marine and Navy School of Music trainees and combatives instruction.

**2019-23:** Joined The U.S. Army Field Band at Ft. Meade, MD playing euphonium and guitar, was the Physical Readiness Training NCO, performed in the Edinburgh Military Tattoo in Scotland, and at the Macy’s 4th of July Fireworks in New York. In 2021, he was the recipient of the prestigious Sergeant Audie Murphy Award (first in TUSAFB history).

Q: Patrick, you’re originally from Maine. Are you glad to be back in New England?

A: Definitely! My wife, Erin, is from New Hampshire and we met in college at The University of Southern Maine. We look forward to experiencing all four seasons again and I just moved next to a large pond in East Lyme, so plenty of fishing with my kids is in store.

Q: How is your transition from the Army to the Coast Guard?

A: Coming from a larger organization with more personnel supporting many different missions and musical genres, it has been refreshing and exciting to just play euphonium in a traditional wind ensemble! I get to play music I’ve never encountered before with a great band. I’m still getting used to the different ranks and uniforms, sir.

Q: What do you do to stay looking so young?

A: A few years ago, I got into long distance running, completing my first marathon in 2019. Since then, I’ve completed numerous marathons, 50k races, and did a 50-miler in 2022. In 2021, I logged 1800 miles. Aside from that, I have gotten into disc golf, drink plenty of Coke Zero, and enjoy engaging with my kids and their interests like jiu-jitsu, ballet, and gymnastics.

Q: You’ve played guitar and bass in the Army. Do you have a favorite band?

A: I love playing guitar as a way to have fun and de-stress. Shortly after joining the band, I treated myself to a PRS Tim Mahoney (311’s guitarist) model. I love the band 311 and have seen them in concert over forty times! I got hooked on their extremely positive vibes and rap/reggae/funk sound years ago and never looked back. I really enjoy going to see live rock shows and do that every chance I get!
In September, the Traditional Jazz Band traveled to Mississippi giving performances at Clinton High School, Jackson State University, and Alcorn State University. Collaboration with the talented students, excellent faculty, and CG Recruiting Command made the trip a great success! With special thanks to Dr. Darryl Harris, Dr. Gene Smith, and Dr. Sean Daniels for making this possible.
The U.S. Coast Guard Band invites you to Like and Subscribe to all of our social media channels, where you can find photos, videos, performance archives, upcoming concert information, behind-the-scenes looks, interviews with Band members, and much more!

https://www.uscg.mil/Community/Band/

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