



Instructors 2017-18



Mrs. Erika Cutler, Violin



Erika Cutler has performed across the United States with ensembles such as the Indianapolis, Los Angeles and North Carolina Baroque Orchestras, Dayton Bach Society, Tempesta di Mare, El Mundo, and Chatham Baroque. She has been a featured soloist on the Music Sources concert series in Berkeley, CA, and performed with chamber groups in the Piccolo Spoleto, Bloomington, Sacramento, and Amherst Early Music Festivals. She is an active performer on both baroque and

modern violin, and plays with Columbia Baroque, the South Carolina Philharmonic, and the Vista Ensemble in Columbia, SC. Ms. Cutler studied Violin Pedagogy at Indiana University in Bloomington where she taught at the IU String Academy, and has been running a private lesson studio in violin and piano since 2001.

Ms. Cutler earned her Bachelor's degree in Baroque Violin Performance from Indiana University in Bloomington, and completed a Master's degree in Violin Performance from Duquesne University.

Mrs. Karin Dawson van Veen, Cello



Karin Dawson - van Veen was born in Delft, The Netherlands and studied cello at the Music Pedagogy Academy of Leeuwarden and the Conservatory of Groningen. Karin studied cello with Maarten Mostert, Elias Arizcuren, Jeroen den Herder and Jiri Prchal. She took masterclasses from Anner Bijlsma, Tsuyoshi Tsutsumi, Milos Sadlo, and Christopher Bunting. During her studies, she was also a member of the National Youth Orchestra of The Netherlands where she performed in concert tours in Spain and Scotland. She graduated with a degree in Cello Pedagogy, and was a co-founder of De Speeldoos (which is Dutch for The Music Box) where she gained 12 years experience as a cello and ensemble teacher. She has experience teaching children of all ages, as well as high school students and adults.

She moved with her husband and two children to South Carolina in 2010 due partially to her dedication to her children's education. The director of the unique school they came to South Carolina for is equally enthusiastic about the educational benefits of classical string instruments.

Her exposure to the Suzuki method was very limited until she was pleasantly surprised at how well her son responded to and learned from the method. She signed her daughter up for Suzuki lessons as well, and became very enthusiastic about it after seeing the positive results it generated. She started taking Suzuki teacher training in 2015 and holds certifications in the Suzuki Cello Method in Books 1-3 with plans for more certifications whenever time permits. Music using the Suzuki method is a large part of her now home-schooled children's education (cello and violin/viola).

Mrs. Sarah Evanovich, Cello



Sarah Jackson Evanovich is the Assistant Director of the Suzuki Strings at the University of South Carolina. She holds a Master of Music degree from Roosevelt University where she studied performance and pedagogy with Dr. Tanya Carey, and a Bachelor of Music from the University of South Carolina in cello performance where she studied with Dr. Robert Jesselson. Sarah taught cello lessons and classes for several years at the Hyde Park Suzuki Institute and the MAGIC program in Chicago. She was also an associate member of the Civic Orchestra of Chicago and played in the Kankakee Valley Symphony Orchestra. Sarah enjoys playing in a string quartet with her three sisters, and with her husband pianist/organist Joshua Evanovich. In 2009, her quartet from Roosevelt University traveled to Quito, Ecuador to take part in the Mes Cultural Franz Liszt.

She has participated in summer festivals including the Green Mountain Chamber Music Festival, Killington Music Festival, Hot Springs Music Festival in Arkansas and the South Carolina Governor's School for the Arts. She is currently the president of the Suzuki Association of South Carolina.

Miss Kristen Harris, Violin



Kristen Harris received her Bachelor of Music degree at the University of Oregon, where she studied violin with Fritz Gearhart. She received her Master of Arts in Teaching from the University of South Carolina, where she studied with Dr. William Terwilliger and taught at the USC String Project under the direction of Dr. Gail Barnes. Kristen has been teaching Suzuki violin method since 2007, has taught private lessons and group classes in the Suzuki Strings at USC program since 2011, and has taught grades 6-8 orchestra for four years at Kelly Mill Middle School in Blythewood, SC. A multi-instrumentalist, Kristen is an active orchestral and chamber musician in the Southeast and performs and records regularly with musical groups of various genres ranging from old time, swing, and country, to bluegrass and rock. She is a member of the local gypsy jazz group Flat Out Strangers and the folk trio the Prairie Willows, and was the 2013 South Carolina State Fiddle Champion.

Dr. Samara Humbert-Hughes, Violin & Viola



Dr. Humbert-Hughes currently serves as the Director and an Instructor of Violin and Viola for the Suzuki Strings at USC Program. She is also actively involved with the Suzuki Association of South Carolina (SASC), serving as the Treasurer for the Midlands (2014-2015) and Treasurer for the State (2015-current). In addition, Dr. Humbert-Hughes teaches pedagogy courses at the School of Music at USC as part of the Master of Music Degree in Violin/Viola Pedagogy.

Dr. Humbert-Hughes has been teaching since 1997 and has held teaching positions in England (Cambridge Suzuki Groups and at RAF Mildenhall), in Louisiana (Assistant Director and Instructor for the Centenary Suzuki School in Shreveport), in Oregon (Community Music Institute in Eugene), and in Arizona (Private Studio in Mesa). In addition to teaching, Dr. Humbert-Hughes has remained an active performer with groups such as the South Carolina Philharmonic, the Cambridge Philharmonic, the Shreveport Symphony, the Longview Symphony, the Texarkana Symphony, the South Arkansas Symphony, the Oregon Mozart Players and the Eugene Symphony.

She is a registered Suzuki teacher through the Suzuki Association of the Americas (SAA) in Violin Books 1- 10 and in Viola Books 1-8. Her Suzuki Method mentors include: Shelley Rich, Ed Sprunger, Judy Bossuat, Cathy Lee, Roger Stieg, Gail Johansen, Carol Dallinger, Alice Joy Lewis, Susan Kemptor, Linda Case, Betsy Stuen-Walker, and Julia Hardie.

In addition to her Master and Doctorate degrees in music, Dr. Humbert-Hughes also holds a Master's Degree in Business in Administration from the University of Phoenix and a Bachelor's Degree in Music Education from Arizona State University. Dr. Humbert-Hughes has published articles with the Suzuki Association of the Americas and the American String Teachers' Association. In 2015, Dr. Humbert-Hughes earned a Certificate of Achievement, Level 1, from the SAA.

Mr. Adam Rafferty



Adam Rafferty is a professional cellist who has been playing for 26 years. He started as a classically trained Suzuki cellist and studied at the University of Kentucky as well as a graduate student at the University of Louisville. He is currently a student at USC getting a second bachelor's degree in Music Education.

After performing and recording an album with Woodstock performer, Arlo Guthrie, Adam began venturing into styles such as bluegrass, jazz, rock, and folk. He has performed and worked with some of the biggest names in electric strings including Tracy Silverman of the Turtle Island String Quartet and Mark Wood, founding violinist of the Trans-Siberian Orchestra.

Adam works with hundreds of middle and high school students every summer at the Mark Wood Rock Orchestra Camp. Adam discovered a love for sharing his knowledge of music with children and received Suzuki teacher training from former Suzuki Association of America President, Tanya Carey. Adam's teaching philosophy is "It is with great joy that I teach children to love, understand, and perform music."

Mrs. Jessica Ker Rafferty



Jessica received her Bachelor of Music degree in Violin Performance from Shenandoah Conservatory. Upon graduation, she was invited by Joanne Bath to study Suzuki Pedagogy at East Carolina University. Jessica completed her training and is registered in Every Child Can! through Suzuki Violin Book 10.

Jessica lived in Charlotte, North Carolina from 2011-2016 and taught at the Community School of the Arts and Charlotte Academy of Music. While in Charlotte she made appearances with the Salisbury Symphony and the Union Symphony Orchestra. She currently holds the position of second violin sectional coach with the Union Symphony Youth Orchestra. Jessica is excited to begin her third year with Suzuki Strings at USC.

Jessica lives in Columbia with her husband, Adam Rafferty, and their cat, Dexter. They enjoy being able to play music together, going to concerts, cooking, and roller blading on the River Walk. Outside of classical violin, Jessica has a passion for the electric violin and playing alternative styles. Jessica frequently plays on tour with the Trans-Siberian Orchestra. She has worked with Mark Wood since 2011, assisting with Electrify Your Strings for middle and high school strings programs. Each summer she travels to Olathe, Kansas and works with world class faculty at the Mark Wood Rock Orchestra Festival. She is very passionate about violinists being true musicians and having the ability to play all styles of music. Jessica conducts her own Rock Orchestra Workshops and has worked with several middle schools.

Her goal is to create a love and passion for music in a positive and nurturing environment, all while having fun! She hopes to be an inspiration to her students.

Mr. Steve Sloan, Classical Guitar



Steve Sloan is the guitar instructor for Suzuki Strings at USC and an adjunct professor of music at the University of South Carolina Aiken. He won first prize in the 2007 James Stroud Classical Guitar Competitions and was a third-prize winner in the 2010 Rosario Guitar Competition. Sloan has been heard in a variety of venues across the United States including Presbyterian College (SC), Nashville Public Library (TN), Oberlin Conservatory (OH), and others. In addition to his solo activities, Sloan often performs duos with his saxophonist wife, Mandy, and has served as a faculty member for the annual Southern Guitar Festival and Competition. Mr. Sloan has been teaching guitar since 2004.

Steve received his bachelor degree from the University of Akron's School of Music studying under Stephen Aron, and earned his Master of Music Degree from the University of South Carolina where he held a graduate teaching assistantship under Professor Christopher Berg.

Miss Emily Wait



Born and raised in Ohio, she received her Bachelor degrees in Violin Performance and Graphic Design from Miami University in Oxford, Ohio. In 2011 she moved to Columbia to complete a Master of Music degree with a focus in Violin Performance at the University of South Carolina. While working on her masters, she became intrigued by the educational philosophy of the Suzuki Method, and joined the faculty of Suzuki Strings at USC in 2012. Today, she holds certifications in the Suzuki Violin Method in Books 1-4 and continues to serve on faculty at Suzuki Strings at USC, where she teaches group classes and maintains a private studio. From 2013-2016, she also founded and was director of an elementary strings program at East Point Academy, a Chinese-immersion charter school located in West Columbia. In the summers she has continued to receive supplementary training at workshops and institutes as she strives to continuously increase her teaching skill and stay up-to-date on the latest teaching methodologies.

In addition to her teaching schedule, Ms. Emily Wait continues to be an active performer throughout the South Carolina music scene. She performs regularly with the South Carolina Philharmonic, Symphony Orchestra Augusta, Spartanburg Philharmonic, Aiken Symphony, and Long Bay Symphony orchestras. During her undergraduate years she developed a love for chamber music; her group, the Rock-it String Quartet, were finalists in the University of Connecticut Chamber Music Competition in 2009. She has brought that love of chamber music with her, collaborating with the USC Ballet program to perform the Debussy Violin Sonata for a dance production in 2015, and more recently, performing on electric and acoustic instruments in a recital with guitarist Devin Sherman in the spring of 2016. For her latest project, she is collaborating with the Post-Timey String Band, a local folk-duo, on their upcoming album. In her spare time she enjoys picking with friends and playing Appalachian Old-time fiddle tunes.