

The logo for UNCSA, featuring the letters "UNCSA" in a white, serif font, centered within a dark gray rectangular background.

THE ASSOCIATES

ArtistCorps

Congratulations! You have been accepted for admission to UNCSA. This institution is not only one of the finest arts schools in the country, it provides strong academic classes, as well. Both your artistic development and all of those classes will place serious demands upon your time. And then, there's the fact that you'll need a part-time job to help meet your college expenses. Challenging? Yes, indeed.

But what if you could get a job that was designed to dovetail with your college schedule, would provide a valuable growth experience for you as an artist, would serve the community, enrich the lives of disadvantaged kids, and make you a better person? *ArtistCorps*, a program designed and launched by UNCSA Director of Career Development and Community Engagement Rebecca Nussbaum, does all that and more, as she explained to The Associates at our March board meeting.

As a flutist in a professional chamber orchestra, Nussbaum, a 1997 graduate of the School of Music, had first-hand experience with outreach programs that were failing to connect with disadvantaged populations. UNCSA had previously participated in the nationwide AmeriCorps program, but its requirements were not a good fit for the schedules of UNCSA students. Nussbaum's current position was created to fulfill both of the mandates of her job title. She says *ArtistCorps* was “created to be a service, using the arts as the way that we serve.” It does so by means of “arts-centric community partnerships that enhance the careers of students and alumni.”



Sadly, there is great need in this area. Two of the “most distressed communities” in the state are in Winston-Salem. Forsyth County has eleven Title 1 Schools, including the lowest performing elementary school and middle school in the state. Nussbaum emphasizes that *ArtistCorps* members see real abject poverty “every day, within a three-mile radius of the School of the Arts.”

UNCSA's *ArtistCorps* currently has thirty-eight artists placed at thirteen sites – most of them “right in our neighborhood.” They serve predominantly in elementary schools, as well as middle schools and high schools. *ArtistCorps* has responded to evidence-based studies showing that early arts exposure improves young children's readiness for kindergarten by extending its reach into five preschools – a benefit that most public school systems are not able to extend to pre-K classes. Fifteen additional children are seen on a more transitory basis at a domestic violence shelter. “For kids living in an unstable situation, just the reliable appearance of an *ArtistCorps* member on a regular schedule is a positive influence.” In all, over twenty-two hundred kids are being seen regularly, on a weekly basis.

A majority of *ArtistCorps* members are musicians, who have a somewhat more flexible schedule that allows them to serve, but the program also has several filmmakers, two drama students, a dancer, and a visual artist.

This service has three major components: Arts Instruction, Integration, and Exposure. Regarding in-school Instruction, Nussbaum clarified: “We partner with schools not to replace what they have, or to create something that they don't have - not taking away from the teacher, but adding to what they are able to offer; not going in as an expert, but as a partner.”

Instruction may take place in classrooms, or any available smaller space, perhaps working with just a couple of kids. *ArtistCorps* members can also provide individualized instruction, working with a child who is just not getting a concept as presented to the full class.

The integration component of *ArtistCorps* pairs a standard in the arts and another outside of the arts, teaching them at the same time. “Studies have shown this to be one of the best ways to teach the non-arts component, because it's experiential.” In elementary schools, “doing integration” can take the form of poetry lessons, movement-based work, and visual arts. At Brunson School each of eleven classes will be working on creating a short film based upon an animal - a frog - and its natural habitat. A UNCSA filmmaker will also use this project to show kids how to control the way viewers experience the subject, depending upon how you frame things.

The exposure component of *ArtistCorps'* agenda focuses on making sure that every person it reaches also gets to experience some quality arts performance. “To see that artists don't just teach and talk about art. They create art. And for kids to grow to understand the artistic process - lessons in perseverance and striving for excellence.” Nussbaum emphasizes that the benefits of exposure flow both ways. For participating UNCSA students, “exposure to different populations make them better artists.”



These three pillars of *ArtistCorps'* agenda are currently implemented through five programs. Every school day a pre-phonics program helps Spanish speakers for whom English is a second language differentiate English phonemes. Also every day, pre-K kids experience music, violin, visual arts, story telling, drama, and dance. Twice per week UNCSA students provide general music instruction as well as basic music lessons, including violin, using a program developed in Düsseldorf by UNCSA violinist and world-renowned pedagogue, Ida Bieler. Middle school beneficiaries of *ArtistCorps* receive instruction for band, orchestra, choir, and piano. And, new this year is a meals on wheels program for older adults, breaking through the wall of social isolation experienced by many seniors. In the process of piloting this program, a student sings to her meal recipients. On her own, she even organized a Christmas Concert for about a hundred residents of three housing units - “an outgrowth of her interest, that she just decided she wanted to do,” reports Nussbaum proudly.

Clearly, *ArtistCorps* abundantly fulfills its mandate for Community Engagement. As for Career Development, Rebecca Nussbaum can attest to that, as well: “I have seen this program lead young artists to change their career path. For example, a violinist decided to become a child psychologist. Another [alumnus] is working on screenwriting in Los Angeles, focusing on social justice issues. All of this helps artists improve their own process, as well as become better, more empathetic people.”



Congratulations! You have graduated from school, and are one of a large number of well-qualified candidates for a job in your chosen field. The recipient of your resume notes your alma mater: “Ah – UNCSA. Great School!” And then your service to your community through *ArtistCorps*: “Hey – this looks like the sort of person we'd like to have as a colleague.”

Salon@Six

No instrument owes its place in the concert hall to a single individual to a greater extent than the guitar. Long popular as a folk instrument, the guitar was elevated to its current lofty status largely through the efforts of Andres Segovia, through both his own concertizing and his advocacy with composers to create a repertoire for it.

The stately home of Kathryn and Otis Northington, built in 1928, was the setting for another of The Associates' Salon@Six events, held March 24th. Present beforehand in a supportive role, UNCSA guitar professor Joseph Pecoraro observed “This is the sort of setting in which Segovia played in his early years.” And, while the guitar can make itself heard quite well in a larger setting like UNCSA's three hundred-seat Watson Chamber Music Hall, there is something special about the intimacy of being just a few feet away.

Welcoming those present, Kathryn recalled that after attending a Salon@Six last year with three couples friends, she and Otis decided “now there's something we can do.” The Northingtons' co-hosts for this lovely evening were Lilly and Al Bunch, Marni and David Eisner, and Clare and Fred Jordan.

Next, on behalf of her Salon@Six colleagues, Carolyn Bailey and Sandy Romanac Broadway, Becky Brown welcomed Joe Pecoraro so that he could introduce the evening's performers. Josie Brand, Carson Kilpatrick, Nicolas Mayers, and Alexis Ward are all high school students at UNCSA. Each began playing the guitar as a young child and has performed for others on many occasions, resulting in remarkable maturity in both their playing and their verbal presentation to an appreciative audience an arm's-length away.



Individually, and in combinations, the four guitarists treated us to a half-hour's illustration of the many-faceted capabilities of their instrument. Darin Au's *Chasing Dragons* for guitar quartet combines a bit of prismatic Asian modality with Latin rhythmic shifts. Josie brought out the voice-leading of a Bach *Prelude*, originally composed for solo cello, so that it sounded like it was created for guitar. Nicolas, playing a *Waltz* by Paraguayan guitarist-composer Agustin Barrios, demonstrated how the melody can sing, both when voiced above and when woven into the fabric of the accompaniment. Next, Josie and Nicolas, who have been playing together for over twelve years, collaborated on a set of variations by Fernando Sor, bringing them to life with stylish rhythmic flexibility. Carson then played a *Prelude* by Heitor Villa-Lobos, its sultry cello-like melodies and supple rhythms leading us ever deeper into a crepuscular Brazilian jungle.

In the spirit of Segovia, Pecoraro encourages his students to add to the repertoire by creating their own arrangements of music they would like to play. Alexis shared hers of *Maria*, from Bernstein's *West Side Story*, demonstrating another of the instrument's arsenal of effects: bell-like harmonics. She paired her piece with a very different Mary – *Marietta* – a staple of the repertoire by Segovia's friend, Francisco Tarrega. Carson and Alexis then accompanied themselves in singing their arrangement of Stevie Wonder's *Sunshine of My Life*, letting their instruments have the final word. *Five Brazilian Dances* for guitar quartet by Celso Machado were respectively festive, languorous, percussive (with rhythms tapped on the guitar bodies), mellow, and virtuosic, providing opportunities for individual display.

In addition to having their teacher (“Mister Joe”) in attendance, UNCSCA Music Dean Brian Cole joined us for this Salon@Six. Cole expressed his admiration for the performances we had just enjoyed, saying he “considers the High School to be UNCSCA's most important program,” and certainly one of the school's most distinctive features. During the Q&A which followed, it became clear that each of these young people is extraordinarily disciplined about their schedules, in order to fit lots of practice time in with UNCSCA's demanding academic expectations - average SAT scores second only to the NC High School of Science and Mathematics.

While indulging in the wonderful food provided for this occasion, several guests remarked how the Salon concert conduced to lively conversation among people who had not known each other an hour earlier. Salon@Six is presented twice each year. The “admission price” for those who would like to attend is a guest – and prospective member of The Associates.

Another Way to Help UNCSA

Community members can now choose to consign items with The Snob Shop, a locally-owned consignment shop in Winston-Salem, and have the proceeds benefit UNCSA. This encompasses everything from housewares and antique furniture to clothing and fine jewelry. Up to 70% of the sale price for items will be donated back to UNCSA.

The first consignment shop in Winston Salem, Snob was opened in 1974 and is now locally owned by Anne Rainey Rokahr, longtime friend of UNCSA.

For questions or inquiries, you can call 336-724-2547 or write to anne@thesnobshops.com

General Information - Important Links

The Associates Website: <http://www.uncsa.edu/Associates>

For membership forms, a list of our Board members, and other general information.

Email Address: uncsaassociates@gmail.com

The Performance Calendar Website: <http://www.uncsa.edu/performances/>

Our Facebook page: <http://www.facebook.com/uncsaassociates>

Newsletter: uncsaassociates.news@gmail.com