

Campolindo High School
Instrumental Music

2020

Senior Bios

GYAMFIAH BOATENG: While I truly enjoy playing cello, I know that I'm not the best at it. So when I walked into M1 on the first day of my freshmen year, I was terrified. I was scared that I'd be left in the dust in terms of ability and that my peers would dislike me for not being the best. This couldn't be further from the truth: everyone in orchestra was so kind and welcoming. I left class on that first day happy and excited to return. And in these past four years it has only gotten better. Through orchestra, I've grown both in playing ability and confidence. Every piece we were handed was a new and exciting challenge waiting to be explored. Each day in class was filled with inside jokes and hard work. And I've enjoyed every minute of it. I'm sad that I won't be able to finish this year playing beside my peers, but I will hold onto the memories I have made in these last four years forever.

RUSSELL BRADLEY: When I first began band in 4th grade, I was super excited to play a real instrument, but in reality, I cried for the whole first week because to put it lightly, I did not get along very well with the trumpet. Mr. Noel invited me to the band room at JM and introduced me to a bigger, funny-looking instrument called the euphonium, and I took to it immediately. Little did I realize, I would have to explain what a euphonium is for the rest of my life. During the summer before 7th grade, at my first music camp, I met a counselor who played euphonium, and was in college studying to become a music teacher. His obvious love of the instrument, combined with his enthusiasm to help me improve, made me realize that I wanted to become a music teacher. Being a part of the music program here at Campo for the past four years has been so rewarding for me. I've been able to participate in our mighty Pep Band, our swingin' Big Band, and our 'breath-taking' Wind Ensembles. Playing in groups outside of school, such as the Contra Costa County Honor Band and the Diablo Wind Symphony have pushed me to play my best. Mr. Johnson has been one of the best teachers I have ever had in any subject, and I honestly don't know where I'd be without his guidance; it baffles me that he could deal with my questions every day for four years straight. Being able to work alongside Mr. J this year as Symphonic Band president was another great experience, from the less glamorous task of inventorying the school instruments, to bringing more visibility to our concerts. As the Concert Band teaching assistant, seeing the Lucky 13 make such huge strides in their playing under Mr. Johnson's watchful eye makes me so proud. I'd like to give a quick shout-out to Jamiel Liu for somehow sitting next to me for 6 years straight; I'm so happy we got to play together. Being able to make music alongside my best friends, Santi Milano and Chris Muray, just made band that much better. I'm grateful that my parents were so encouraging and that they let me pursue music. I also want to express my thanks to Mr. Noel, Mr. and Mrs. Maltester, and Mr. Johnson for being such supportive conductors and directors for me over the years. I will be majoring in music education at Sacramento State University, and I will forever be inspired by Mr. Johnson.

CECILIA CHANG: I took music during 5th period for the entirety of my high school career, so you could say that I've quite literally grown up with the Campo orchestra. From the first day, Mr. Johnson stressed that orchestra is a family. I have a lot left to learn and experience, but I will always be grateful that I had a solid foundation to start off on. Thank you to everyone in the Campo music program, past and future! My orchestra family will always have a special place in my heart.

Hi, I'm **VICTOR CHEN** and I like booping people and saying "hi" to everyone.

KELLEN CLANCY: My relationship with music started with piano lessons when I was 7 years old. In middle school, I picked up the trumpet under Mr. Noel and, to be honest, I didn't love the trumpet. After four incredible years of music and mentorship with Mr. Johnson, I believe I have found my perfect instrument: the alto saxophone. Transitioning from the JM music program to the Campolindo music program was a big and scary (at first) jump, as I was unsure whether I wanted to continue playing music in school. Looking back on my decision to continue, it was most certainly one of the best decisions I have made in my life. I have shared so many laughs and memories with all of my fellow musicians that I would not trade it for anything. The friendships formed and the confidence and pride taken in performing professional-level music under Mr. Johnson will stay with me for a lifetime. I am excited to be attending UCLA next year and I hope to join an amateur jazz ensemble. Thank you Mr. Johnson and the entire Campolindo Instrumental Music program for making my four years unforgettable!

DYLAN DACUMOS started playing viola in the Moraga School District Music Program in 5th grade. Prior to this, he had always had an aspiration to learn how to read music. The reason for picking viola was very silly. One of his favorite TV characters, Jake the Dog, from the cartoon, *Adventure Time*, played a viola—even though it was actually a three-stringed instrument with bent strings! He spent his elementary and middle school years greatly improving his playing. He took many private lessons and even played a solo on an electric viola in 8th grade, which led to his receiving that year's Orchestra Player of the Year award. Although in high school many other priorities competed with music, he tried his best to continue expanding his music knowledge, attempting to learn piano and music theory. Through his years in the music department he has made many friends and connections, which he would not pass up for anything. He greatly cherishes his years playing, performing, and learning what hard practice and hard work means to one's personal journey of self betterment. He will continue to use this philosophy in improving his daily life and working hard toward his goals in the future. Dylan will attend San Francisco State University and major in kinesiology, looking toward a future career in either physical therapy or physical education.

ELIZABETH DAVIS: You could say that music has played a major role in my life from the beginning. When I had the option to join band in fifth grade, my mom said I should choose either clarinet or flute, because those were what we already owned. When I asked what the difference was, she said that clarinet was easier to switch to other instruments, but the flute was easier to put together. And so began my flute career. Band has meant so many different things to me. I've had years where all my friends were with me, years where I made new friends, years where I joined a family. None of it would be possible without the many band directors. Although I knew I was not planning on continuing music in college, I never would've thought that my last time playing in band would come so soon. Even though I am not continuing my music studies, I will always be grateful to Mr. Johnson and our talented music program, and will always look back on my eight years of band and many memories fondly.

VINCENT EVANGELIST: I have always enjoyed music, even as a small child, from classical to popular music. I first started studying music in 4th grade band playing the clarinet and performing in musicals. I knew that I wanted to play saxophone but I had to start at clarinet before I could switch in 5th grade. I continued performing in musicals through junior high but opted to just concentrate on concert band in 8th grade. During middle school, Mr. Athayde truly

made me love music. He pushed me into advanced band and had all saxophonists switch each trimester between alto, tenor, and baritone. However, I always knew I liked tenor the best. Concert band has been the one constant in my education since I was 9 and I will miss performing. In college I will be studying civil engineering but I may take some music classes as part of my general education. I also have an interest in music production, and my school has a program for that as well.

MICHAEL EVANS: I never could have imagined when I picked up the trumpet for the first time in fourth grade how much I would come to value and cherish music by the end of high school. Transitioning to French horn in sixth grade set me on a path of joy and creativity that I never knew was possible. During my high school years, I have been able to take part in so many amazing music opportunities like Symphonic Band, Pit Orchestra, Diablo Wind Symphony, and the County Honor Band. Through these experiences I have not only been able to achieve an appreciation for music greater than I could ever dream of, but also gain so many amazing friends along the way. I am beyond excited to take what I have learned and continue my love for music at the University of Washington next year while I study psychology.

ANDREW FENSKE: I've played the cello for over half my life. I remember the first day I picked it up back in the 4th grade, and it's been an important part of my life ever since. I'd like to thank Mr. Noel and Mr. Johnson for helping me shape myself into not only the musician I am today, but the person I am today. I'm excited to go off to Purdue University next fall and hope to bring all that I've learned from Orchestra with me.

SAM GHISELLI: I started playing in the fourth grade, originally intending to play the trumpet, but switching to the trombone as there were fewer people in that section. Then in fifth grade, I joined an after-school group that would meet at Joaquin Moraga. It was in that after-school band that I began to find happiness in playing music. I enjoyed the middle school band, but it was not until high school that I found there to be a big leap in terms of craftsmanship. The pieces became more complex, and the concerts became even more magical. The high school band was a fun experience, and even if I never placed in the first chair, it was still just as fun to work and grow with such an amazing group of people. Thank you Mr. Johnson for making the Campolindo Band such a nice group to be with, and to everyone else who has helped me along the way. I look forward to bringing all the lessons I've learned with me to Baylor University and using them to build new relationships.

CHASE GIGLIO: I find it interesting writing this at the time that I am. I know if Mr. Johnson had asked us to do this in class after weeks of playing together, I would be reluctant to do it. When I finally did, it would simply be to make him happy and fulfill a potential grade requirement. I also know if we had been in school when asked to write this, I would be saying less encouraging things about my experience. Symphonic Band is early in the morning, and Jazz even more so, and I think we can all agree the periods are very tedious. Thus, if I was asked to write about my time in music after one of those days of Jazz followed by Symphonic Band, I would probably say half-hearted things like, "unlike any class," "made some great friends," and other things that sound nice but would be incredibly disingenuous. However, because I have not been able to make music with some of my best friends at Campo—Mr. Johnson among them—I realize what band has actually meant to me, and can say these things wishing it wasn't over. Like most, I started band in

4th grade, and didn't really figure out practicing could actually make you better until 8th, so you can guess what those four years sounded like. Even so, music has been a highlight of my day for 8 years now, and if I was writing this during the school year, I probably would not express how much I was going to miss it, because I would not know how much I miss it. But now that I understand the hole it has left, I realize how lucky I was to have so many years of music and friends. It's really a rare opportunity that we're given, and while we're in the moment, we take it for granted. So, for that realization, I am grateful to this shutdown. I won't forget how lucky I was to have had that much music in my life. That said, I would definitely trade being ungrateful making music for being very appreciative without it.

MADDIE HOUSE: Music, for me, has always been about community. After moving from Illinois, I met some of my best friends through band at JM. The people I have met through Campo's music program have also changed me; they inspire me to work harder and to be kinder, everyday. I want to thank Amy Likar and Mr. Johnson for teaching me more than music and my church congregations for always encouraging my playing. Next year I will be attending the University of Michigan to study economics and sustainability. I will miss mornings in band, but I cannot wait to continue playing flute (and piccolo!) in one of the many UMich bands!

PATRICK JACOBSON: I initially hated the idea of playing an instrument and impulsively skipped out on participating in Camino Pablo's 4th grade music program. In 5th grade however, the program was mandatory, and my sad 5th grade self had to drag his feet into the music room, pick an instrument and get to playing. And good on the school for making me do that! Participating in the music program has given me a constant in the ever-shifting landscape of the public education system, where students get a new rotation of teachers and academic goals every year. Well, despite passing through three schools and dozens of teachers, I've only had two music instructors (Mr. Noel and Mr. Johnson) and a single goal, to make great music! The ability to spend years building a single skill is perhaps the most important thing a person can learn. Groups like the Campolindo Orchestra are really the only way this skill can be taught in a public school. Where else can you find such a long term, professional environment with so many dedicated peers? It is this environment and with great directors such as Mr. Johnson and Mr. Noel, as well as my amazing instrumental teachers—Eric, Scott, and Jen—who really allowed me to learn this skill-honing ability. I have grown so much over the past four years, going from a beginner to an advanced bassist while also learning how to better integrate my sound into the group's. I have also met so many amazing people just by being a part of the orchestra, whether it be the friendly upperclassmen of my freshmen year or the amazing new friends that I've made in the bass section and in others. I don't think I could have gotten to know these people the way I came to know them without Orchestra! I will hold dear all the memories that were made in our class. They make up an important episode in my life that has taught me many lessons and bettered me as a person. I hope to find similar opportunities moving forward as I study in the College of Natural Resources at UC Berkeley.

ARMAAN SINGH JOHAL has been a part of the Campolindo Music Program since his freshman year, when he joined on a whim as a percussionist, wanting to fulfill the art requirement. However, after bonding with the other wonderful band players, playing some beautiful music together, and having lots of fun in the process, band became much more than just a requirement to Armaan. After a few months, a spot opened up for a French horn player, and with some help

from Mr. Johnson, the Boosters, and his ultra-patient horn teacher, Ms. Welcomer, Armaan joined the horn section and hasn't looked back since. Throughout the last few years, Armaan has developed a passion for music which he will inevitably carry with him for the rest of his life, whether it manifests itself through music creation, music listening, or dance. Next year, Armaan will be pursuing Cognitive Science and Computer Science at UC San Diego. In the future, he hopes to contribute towards the intersection of Artificial Intelligence and Medicine, all the while staying immersed in music, of course. :)

MICHAEL KIKUGAWA: In sixth grade, my mom persuaded me to switch from trumpet to the French horn. I just took her word for it, given I didn't even know what the French horn was. I could have never foreseen how important this decision was: playing music has become one of the biggest parts of my life. I am honored to have been able to perform in such a wonderful musical program and with so many ensembles, from the Symphonic Band to the Pit Orchestra to the Walnut Creek Concert Band. My biggest thanks go to Mr. Johnson for keeping it real, teaching me to appreciate and, most importantly, to have fun with music. His humor, his personality, and his passion for music made these past four years so great for me. I would also like to thank Mr. Benstein and Dr. Hammer for encouraging me to be the best version of my musical self. Finally, I would like to thank Gary Jagard and Elisha Wilson for being such fantastic horn mentors to me. I am excited to continue playing horn while studying biotechnology at UC Davis.

JOEL KOFMAN: I started playing music in 4th grade at Rheem Elementary School under Mr. Noel, making my way through middle school and then entering high school. I ended up switching from trumpet to tuba as our concert band did not have a tuba player and I volunteered (aka everyone just started to say my name since I played a little tuba in middle school). These past four years of music have been amazing. I took lessons, provided by the Boosters to instrument switchers, with Mr. Davidson my first year, and then I got to play under Adriana Derksen, who took me under her wing for 2 years. I would like to thank my family and especially Mr. Johnson who has not only been a teacher and mentor to me these past four years, but a friend as well. Since music has affected my life in such a positive way, I will continue to seek opportunities to play music as I attend Middlebury College in Vermont for the next four years.

ALLY LEE: When I first started playing band in 4th grade at Camino Pablo, I didn't expect it to be a part of my life for nine more years. Being a part of band has taught me a lot about myself and shown me how much music means to me. Playing an instrument has allowed me to express my creativity in new ways and introduced me to a welcoming community of other musicians. I'll always remember the early mornings playing together first period and getting to the concerts early for check-in. I really appreciate Mr. Johnson and Mr. Noel for their unconditional support throughout my years in band and I will always remember this wonderful experience. I will continue to carry these memories with me this fall at UC Berkeley.

JAMIEL LIU: From the moment I began playing the piano in kindergarten, I knew that music would be a big part of my life. There was no way I could've imagined, though, just how important it would become. I started playing the trumpet in fourth grade before switching to my current instrument, the euphonium, in sixth grade. I'm thankful for the opportunities that I've had as a member of the Campolindo Symphonic Band: the CMEA Bay Section Clinic with Dr. Hammer, the exchange concert with Huron High School, and the "conductor-in-residence"

rehearsals with Dr. Halseth all come to mind, among countless others (like Pep Band). Being able to make music with my classmates is truly a blessing, and I will miss everything from taking attendance to playing fantastic repertoire. Music has also pushed me to be both a better leader and a group contributor, skills that will serve me well as I continue my academic and musical pursuits at UCLA. Thank you to my parents for supporting my musical endeavors and letting me play instruments that they'd never heard of, Mr. Noel for getting me started with band, and Mr. Johnson for making music so special and for helping me to grow both as a musician and as a person these past four years. I am forever grateful.

CHRIS LOBRON: Throughout my life music has played an active and present role in shaping my artistic viewpoint, but only in these last four years has music recently taken a front seat in developing my ideas in storytelling. As the art of storytelling is something that I had become fascinated with in my early teen years as many movies, television shows, and content creators influenced and inspired my artistic talents. But with every piece of visual art I viewed, a complex musical presence protruded throughout each work. Every visual work that lacked a presence of any musical value began to feel dull. Thanks to Mr. Johnson I realized the value of music and its important and integral role in the process of storytelling, as music acts as a deep emotional context to the viewer. Now as I head to California State University, Northridge to major in Cinema and Television studies I take the changes that music has brought in my life to develop a deeper understanding of the art of storytelling. Once again I would like to thank Mr. Johnson's persistent passion and belief in all of us during his teachings in the luxurious language of music.

PAIGE LOVE: I originally began playing flute in the fourth grade, but I wasn't exactly a virtuoso; more of the kid who pretended to play (but never actually made a sound) the entire year. Since flute was not a huge hit with me, I decided to move to the farthest thing from its delicacy and primness I could find: percussion. I played for the entirety of fifth grade, and joined jazz at the start of middle school despite having never touched a drum set. Music has always been important to my family, especially my father, who you can find listening to anything from modern funk to classic country. Thus, music was a huge part of my life, driving me to join and eventually conduct Pep Band when I arrived in high school. While nothing can compare to walking into Mr. Johnson's class every day, I'll be sure to bring along everything he has taught me to UC San Diego.

DAVID LUCAS wishes to share this quote by film composer, Hans Zimmer: "The thing that hasn't changed, and I don't think will ever change, is that the operative word in music is "play." You have to have a playfulness about it. As the world shifts, it's starting to understand more and more that to have a playfulness about any and everything is actually the way of having a better life, or being more creative, or being more productive."

EMILY MARSTON: There are really no good words to describe how much music means to me. When I picked up the clarinet in fourth grade for the first time, I had no idea the musical journey it would take me on or the incredible people that I would meet along the way. High school was a big step in that I began to have more control over my musical future. It gave me the opportunity to participate in music in so many different ways. I have gained unforgettable memories playing in the Symphonic Band, Pep Band, Contra Costa County Honor Band, Diablo Wind Symphony, Music for the Soul, and the musical, that I will treasure and never forget. The music community

at Campo is so warm and welcoming and I felt that I was being supported at all times to excel and be the best that I could. I have grown to appreciate music even more during my four years. I want to thank from the bottom of my heart Mr. Noel, Mrs. Meltzer, Mr. Roberts, and, of course, Mr. Johnson, for supporting me and making music such a highlight in my life. I am excited to continue playing the clarinet and I look forward to continuing my musical endeavors at the University of Pennsylvania while studying physics!

LILY MATRANGA: As I began my journey into the world of instrumental music in fourth grade, I was ready to learn a new skill, but was not anticipating finding the community I did. In that first year, I made one “trumpet buddy,”—Ally Lee—and we made a pact that we would both stick with band, all the way through senior year. Now, we’ve made it! In middle school, I had friends in band, but I never felt bonded to the group as a whole. Yet on the first day of freshman year, Mr. Johnson introduced me to my new “family.” Despite the external happenings of my life, I could come into band, relax, and find comfort in being surrounded by my peers, all pursuing a common goal. This environment fostered countless unforgettable moments highlighting my high school experience. Thank you to everyone in the Campolindo Music Program, especially Mr. Johnson, for everything they have done; I hope to find this same sense of community as I further my studies next year at Villanova University!

KYLE McDONALD: I’ve loved music for as long as I can remember. According to my parents, it started after my grandma gave us her old piano. This, in combination with my new favorite TV show, *Little Einsteins*, would cultivate a deep love for music that has lasted until today. After “teaching” myself to play piano, I took up the violin (on two separate occasions) in kindergarten, and in fourth grade. Both of these endeavors didn’t last, but I still have my cheap Cecilio violin from my ninth birthday, and I still pick it up occasionally. As bad as I sound, I hope to improve my playing, and I hope I will find the time to do so. After violin, my next instrument would be the alto saxophone in fourth grade. I loved being able to play a real wind instrument (as opposed to recorder in third grade), but alas, the saxophone wouldn’t be enough. Next I would pick up clarinet, trumpet, trombone, and flute. While I wasn’t particularly good at any of these, I was just happy to be able play them. I would mostly improvise crude songs, sometimes trying to imitate parts of other songs I’d heard before. I also reluctantly joined the Piedmont East Bay Children’s Choir, which turned out to be one of the best choices I ever made. In sixth grade, I had no intention of switching from alto saxophone, but our band director announced that we needed people to play bassoon, oboe, bass clarinet, French horn, baritone, and tuba. The idea of a new instrument greatly excited me and I chose bassoon. The next year, I joined Jazz Band and decided to play baritone sax. In hindsight, perhaps I shouldn’t have chosen two of the heaviest instruments to play in middle school, as it was a pain to take them home to practice. In eighth grade, I started to attempt to compose music. Looking back at my earlier work often ends with me cringing more often than not. Yet this was a key turning point in my life, as before I only saw myself as being a performer. As high school neared, I had a very important decision to make: which school to go to. Everyone in my family went to Miramonte, but I was very aware that Campo has far better music, and as difficult as it was, it was also an easy decision. I continued with bassoon, but also picked up euphonium, piccolo, and harp. I also finally decided to take piano lessons. I’m so glad I did, as that in combination with taking AP Music Theory has greatly improved my ability to compose and improvise. My two latest endeavors this year were beginning to take organ lessons, and doubling on alto clarinet for the tour ensemble, and spring concert

repertoire. While I am sad we couldn't complete the year normally, I am still extremely thankful for all the opportunities I've had in band at Campo. I've gotten to play classics like the First and Second Suites for military band by Gustav Holst, Persichetti's *Symphony No. 6* by, *Suite of Old American Dances* by Robert Russell Bennett, *Illyrian Dances* by Guy Woolfenden, *Symphonette No. 2* by Morton Gould, *Folk Dances* by Shostakovich, *Candide* by Leonard Bernstein, and *Danse Negre* by Samuel Coleridge Taylor. If I had never come to Campo, I wouldn't be as well versed in wind band repertoire as I am now. As I go off to Bob Cole Conservatory of Music to study composition, I am equally excited to continue to perform with their Symphonic Band. I can only hope that it will carry with it the same sense of community I have come to love here at Campolindo.

SANTI MILANO: I cannot fully describe in words the gratitude I have for Mr. Johnson and everyone else who has worked in the Instrumental Music department these past four years. It is a severe understatement to say that music has had a big impact on me. If I hadn't discovered drumming halfway through 8th grade, I simply wouldn't be the person I am today; and if I hadn't gotten involved with Mr. J and this department, through Symphonic Band and Jazz Band, my high school experience would have been unrecognizably different, and for the worse. It's mind-boggling when I think about the friends, memories, lessons, and experiences I've acquired these past four years: everything from the New Orleans Tour, to the concerts, to waking up every morning for Jazz. All of these showed me, in fragments, by days, what the enriching process of creating music can mean for yourself, your audience, and your fellow musicians. And to think I switched into music a week before school started! If there are any incoming freshmen reading this who are on the fence about doing Band, Orchestra, or Jazz, erase all doubts from your mind. Mr. Johnson's profound love for the art will change you as a musician, but his respect, dedication, and work ethic will give you lessons that go way past the instrument you are holding in your hand. And you'll have loads of fun! Thank you Mr. J for making my high school experience so positive, and to all the instrumental music staff for your work!

CAITLIN MURPHY: When I started playing an instrument in 4th grade, I chose flute to be in the same section with my friends. Not a single one of them kept playing in middle school, but I'm forever thankful I didn't quit. Band has been a second home to me through the years, a class I could always look forward to. I've grown as more than just a musician, but as an individual and a friend as well. I'm incredibly grateful for my time in the Campo music program, all the people I've met through it, and especially for Mr. Johnson, who's made this such an unforgettable experience.

CHRIS MURAY: When I was but a wee lad in third grade at Rheem Elementary, I had an absolute blast playing the recorder in Ms. St. Claire's music class. From then on, I've been hooked on music, the saxophone being my instrument of choice. Musical opportunities at Campo have been too many to count. Mr. Johnson has done a phenomenal job at pushing and nurturing each and every student that goes through the program. I wouldn't have had the appreciation and love of music I have today if it weren't for Mr. Johnson and the tremendous effort he puts forth every day to share how beautiful music-making can be. I will most certainly look for jazz opportunities next year and beyond as I study physics at UC Santa Barbara.

PABLO NGUYEN: I started playing the clarinet in the 4th grade and I've stuck with it until now. Some of my most fond memories have been made in the band room, both making music with Mr. Johnson and messing around in the rehearsal room (S/O OG!). It sucks that band has to end now the way it has, but I am more than thankful for the opportunities I've had and the friends I've made through Symphonic Band. I will be attending the Cal Poly SLO School of Engineering, assuming it's open by the fall.

LUCAS NOMURA: Ever since my freshman year of high school, I took for granted how much I really needed band class. Although I was never the first chair or the best student in the class, I felt just as important as any other kid in the class. Mr. Johnson made sure each and every one of us knew that we were all essential components in the masterpieces that we worked on and performed every year. As one of his famous sayings went: "It only takes one of us to make sound, but it takes the whole band to make silence." The lessons of teamwork and cooperation that I learned in Concert Band and Symphonic Band will go on with me for the rest of my life. Mr. Johnson was the chill, fun, and caring teacher we knew, but also knew when to push us and make us work harder, a trait that contributed immensely to the success of the band and the learning environment. I always enjoyed the jokes and "memes" that the band members and Mr. Johnson exchanged with each other. He created such a personal and genuine relationship with us all, giving way to a more understanding teacher-student relationship in and out of the music room. Along with the many close friends I have made and the musical knowledge I have gained through the Campolindo music program, I have learned many lessons in teamwork, patience, attention to detail, and hard work. I am forever grateful for the memories and skills provided by Mr. Johnson and Campolindo Music.

ALEXANDER SIMON: Having made the decision to learn how to play the clarinet the summer before seventh grade, I can truthfully say that I am beyond grateful for the many experiences such a choice has afforded me. With my inclusion in both the JM and Campolindo Instrumental Music programs, I have been bestowed with multiple years of memorable rehearsals and concerts. From the support of Mr. Johnson, from whom a sense of true respect and love for music is abundantly clear, I have found greater joy in a larger variety of music. And as for the many other members of the music program, I can only share a heartfelt thank you for always being so dedicated to not only playing your best but also keeping a positive attitude.

AVA SPARACIO: I grew up in a family where making music was a must, where all my siblings and I would play piano together and be able to appreciate that music was not something that was easily made but something to be practiced and enjoyed. While we all drifted off into our own instruments as time went on, much to my mom's despair for her hearing, her youngest child did not take to a quieter instrument like her siblings. I decided as soon as we had a band program in place that I was going to play percussion. After years of playing piano and singing in a choir, I was done sitting still to perform. As the section leader for the Diablo Wind Symphony as well as the Campolindo Symphonic Band this year, nothing better has come from my high school experience as much as being able to perform with these groups. Percussion is one of my proudest achievements and I have never loved any music as much as the music I have been able to make over these past 9 years. It never would have been possible without the support of Mr. Johnson from our Campolindo band program and Mr. Maltester from the Diablo Wind Symphony. So with that, I must say: thank you and never tell a percussionist that playing the triangle is easy.

KATIE YE: Growing up as a violinist and pianist, I've learned several life lessons through music. On the piano, I've learned how to maintain composure and elegance on the competition stage and turn anxiety into the adrenaline that fuels my performances. On the violin, I learned how to work with an ensemble and become part of something bigger than myself through the binding force of teamwork. I'll never forget the first time Mr. Johnson said these words: "Making music in Orchestra is a beautiful but cruel art form. It requires the immediate attention and focus of every person, and while sound can be created by one, silence requires the presence of all." Music plays a wonderfully powerful role in my life, and it was moments like these that left me in awe as I looked around and felt the electrifying intensity of passion buzz around the room and settle into each and every musician. My music journey has made me an adventurer—I've been able to explore different worlds in centuries-old pieces on the keyboard, dance and laugh with strangers at Farmers' markets and senior retirement homes while playing the violin, and perform marvelous concerts under Mr. Johnson's baton and alongside my peers. Over my four years at Campolindo, Orchestra was a class I looked forward to every day because I knew there was a new adventure waiting inside my violin case and a story waiting to be told underneath my fingertips. Orchestra has become a home for me, and a place of birth and growth for my musical endeavors. To Mr. Johnson, Mr. Cohen, Mrs. Peterson, Mr. Noel, Ms. Nadia, and Mr. Gardner: thank you for always showing compassion and encouraging me to always be the better version of myself, whether it be in music or in my overall life. In the fall, I plan to attend UC Berkeley for Biology and Business and continue my music studies with the vibrant music community on campus!