

THE 2016 ELAINE EHLERS ARTS SCHOLARSHIP ZACHARY CATRON

Fifteen years ago, Morris Arts collaborated with Elaine Ehlers' family to initiate a scholarship to be given annually to foster new artistic talent, helping a graduating Morris County high school senior who possesses artistic talent to pursue further study in an area related to the arts. Created as a tribute to the memory of Elaine Ehlers, the scholarship is an enduring legacy to recognize artistic excellence and encourage the artists of the future. Elaine, a health-care administrator by profession, had a voracious appetite for all things artistic and musical. She derived intellectual and emotional sustenance from the arts, and received great pleasure when she took young people to concerts, the theater and museums. Morris Arts invites young artists of Morris County who exhibited artistic excellence in the areas of dance, drama, music and the visual arts to compete for this scholarship.

I am pleased to announce that this year's Elaine Ehlers Arts Scholarship award winner of \$5,000 is Zachary Catron, who lives in Mendham and is a graduating senior at West Morris Mendham High School in Mendham.

This talented young composer distinguished himself by winning the highly competitive National Association for Music Education's 2015 National Student Composer's Competition, the NAFME 2015 Young Composer Competition for the Eastern Division as well as the Grand Prize of Harmonium Choral Society's 2015 Annual Composition Contest. His

works have been performed at Harmonium's Choral Society June, 2015 Concert, by the Austin Peay State University Symphony Orchestra (Clarksville, TN) at the NAFME National Conference (Oct., 2015), and by various local groups.

Zachary also has experience in performance - as a pianist, violinist and singer as well as a conductor. With 11 years of private piano instruction with concert pianist Laryssa Krupa, 6 years of private violin lessons and 7 months on organ, Zachary plays violin in the New Jersey Youth Symphony, serves as concertmaster with the Chester Baroque Orchestra and the Mendham High School orchestra, sings with Mendham Voices, and with various local choral and *a capella* groups and has conducted the orchestra accompanying various Mendham High productions. He placed second in Crescendo Competition and won the opportunity to perform on piano at Carnegie Hall. He accompanied a recital at Juilliard and helped organize a variety of fundraising concerts in the community.

His composition teacher, Dr. David Sampson described Zachary as "the most talented high school musician I have ever taught." His High School music teacher, Mary Daly, stated "Zach encapsulates the epitome of musicianship." When describing the Incidental Music Zach composed for *Twelfth Night*, Ms. Daly said "The musical style fit perfectly into the period of the play while creating an emotional connection to specific characters and scenes. The audience was once again captivated by his beautiful music." She concluded, "In all my years of public teaching, I have never found anyone so deserving of the Elaine Ehlers Arts Scholarship and the Eugenie Coladarci Arts Scholarship as Zach."

The Arts Scholarship panel jurying this year's applications was unanimous in its choice for the Ehlers Scholarship. They were greatly impressed by the Zachary's deep yet broad involvement in multiple areas of music - as a performer on piano, violin and organ, as a conductor, and especially as an unusually mature, skilled and extremely talented composer. His compositions were highly original, technically sophisticated, beautifully orchestrated, and moving. Therefore, on behalf of the Board of Trustees of Morris Arts, it is my great pleasure and privilege to award the fifteenth annual Elaine Ehlers Arts Scholarship to this outstanding young composer, Zachary Catron.

March 30, 2016