

ENTERTAINMENT

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Episcopal SeniorLife, Hochstein partner for holiday concert

Messenger Post Media

Episcopal SeniorLife Communities and The Hochstein School recently teamed up to offer a holiday performance for senior residents, families and guests at The Episcopal Church Home.

The performers were ESLC staff employed in support services who don't often have opportunities to interact directly with residents. Currently, the Inspirational Ensemble represents six different departments reflecting inclusion and diversity.

The rehearsals were part of an ongoing music therapy initiative — part of Hochstein's Expressive Arts Department: Wellness Through Creativity — and a program that ESLC has offered their employees for six years.

Participants voluntarily joined the group and this performance was a culmination of their efforts. Members collaborated and decided on Inspirational Ensemble as the name in 2013, and the core group has been together ever since. Senior residents look forward to this performance every year that focuses on holiday music.

"This program continues to make a difference with the staff. It's great to see that they are recognizing and accepting differences, and have become quite a cohesive group over the years," said Stacy McIntyre, who oversees the support services department. "It's so exciting to see how much the residents enjoy these performances year after year."

The Hochstein School found that the unifying musical experience creates a safe place for teams to experience the power of working together to achieve a common objective. Participants experience the importance of collaboration and listening to one another, as well as learn the value of their own individual contribution within the group.



The Inspirational Ensemble sings holiday songs during a recent performance. [PHOTOS PROVIDED]



The Inspirational Ensemble is led by Daniel Kuehler, Hochstein intern and Eastman School of Music doctoral student, and overseen by Maria Battista-Hancock, Hochstein department chair and internship director.

Music and rhythm build a noncompetitive community where employees develop a greater awareness of themselves in relation to others, often leading to greater confidence in their own abilities and greater self-esteem.

Companies that offer music-based team building opportunities in the workplace reported improved employee morale; improved creativity and productivity;

improved general office and interpersonal dynamics; departments started communicating better; increased alertness in all departments; less absenteeism/complaints of work-related stress; improved communication, cooperation and team skills; a workforce delighted with new music skills; and a welcome diversity/inclusion into the working day.

"When we meet others in

music and in rhythm, a natural sense of community rises up from within," said Maria Battista-Hancock, chair and internship director of the Expressive Arts Department: Wellness Through Creativity at The Hochstein School. "The group has discovered that musical experiences resemble everyday life situations we all encounter, and I truly enjoy my continued work with the ESLC staff."

3 THINGS TO DO

1 "The Magic of Light 2019" reception: 5 to 9 p.m. on Jan. 4, Image City Photography Gallery, 722 University Ave., Rochester. The exhibit features over 135 framed images by 103 photographers. Free. Visit bit.ly/2GMLJ8K for information.

2 Story Time Stars: 9:30 to 10 a.m. on Jan. 7, Greece Public Library, 2 Vince Tofany Blvd., Rochester. For all ages with an adult. This early literacy class makes books come alive with puppets, music, finger plays, flannel board stories and rhymes. For information: greecepubliclibrary.org or (585) 225-8951.

3 "Hard Cell" preview: 7:30 p.m. on Jan. 8-10, Geva Theatre Center, 75 Woodbury Blvd., Rochester. A college professor finds himself lost in a small Midwestern town and unwelcome by its crazy collection of locals. Tickets start at \$25. For information: gevatheatre.org or (585) 232-4382.

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CORRECTIONS

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