Spotlight: Molly McCarthy
November, 2018

Molly McCarthy was a student at Apple Hill from 2002-2008. She will be joining the Apple Hill Board of Trustees this January, bringing with her years of experience in non-profit fundraising. Meet Molly and learn why your gift to Apple Hill is so important.

I first came to Apple Hill in 2002 after my sophomore year of high school, having learned about it from my violin teacher. I had never been to a music camp--or a sleep-away camp of any kind--and am definitely a homebody. I actually cried when my parents dropped me off because I was so nervous about the whole experience! My discomfort faded away almost instantly and I ended up coming back to fill in for two open violin slots at sessions 3 and 4 later that summer. It was a transformational summer for me--musically, personally, and emotionally. It's hard to articulate how meaningful it was to be in an environment that was diverse, compassionate, fun, challenging, and accepting all at the same time. I continued coming to Apple Hill through 2008, right before my final semester of college, and over those six years the people and experiences that make Apple Hill what it is helped me grow into the person I am today. Many of the people I met way back in 2002 remain some of my closest friends today.

Professionally-speaking, I am living in Boston and working as Director of Development at Massachusetts General Hospital, where I focus on major gift fundraising for the Department of
Psychiatry. While I am not playing music on a regular basis, so many of the skills I use on a day to day basis—creativity, communication, listening, problem-solving, collaboration, relationship-building, and more—were acquired at Apple Hill.

On a personal level, I am married to my husband who is working as a research fellow at Harvard while finishing his PhD dissertation in sociology and science studies from UC San Diego. We have two cats, Rosie and Buster, and love spending our free time seeing concerts, going to the Museum of Fine Art, and hanging out with Boston-based Apple Hillers. We also have a niece and nephew who live in Boston, and we are trying to get them both excited about music so they can be the next generation of Apple Hill summer festival participants!

Philanthropy is an essential component of any nonprofit organization's ability to advance its mission. Doing without it is like trying to play your instrument with one of its strings missing. When you go to a summer faculty concert, or meet a scholarship recipient, or listen to the Apple Hill String Quartet's recording of a new composition, or read about the success of former Apple Hill summer participants, those are philanthropic gifts at work. That is what donor giving makes possible for Apple Hill and for the countless lives that are touched by the organization's mission.

These days, we are regularly confronted with messages in the media of tragedy, hate, division, and chaos, and as a result, it can leave us feeling powerless to effect change. Supporting Apple Hill is an easy and direct way to spread love, share music, encourage dialogue, and facilitate active listening. We could all use more of that in our world.