



PRESS RELEASE

(FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE)

2020 VCS Scholarships Awarded

Newport News, VA, June 15, 2020 (PR-7)

In November 2009, The Virginia Choral Society (VCS) established the VCS Scholarship Award for a high school graduating senior who desired to continue his/her education with a focus on music performance or education. In 2018, VCS added a second scholarship, the Ronald D. Darone Memorial Scholarship.

VCS is pleased to announce that Ms. Serena Olson has been selected for the 2020 VCS Music Scholarship Award. Serena was awarded \$2,000 for this scholarship.



Serena Olson

Serena Olson, a graduating senior at Grafton High School, has been making music for as long as she can remember. She grew up singing with her family and at church and has excelled at music through her middle and high school careers. Her accomplishments include earning a place in the VMEA District 8 Choir for 6 consecutive years, along with the Virginia All-State Choir for 2 years. This year she was ranked 5th out of all sopranos in the state and selected to attend the Virginia Senior Honors Choir. Serena has been chosen 3 years in a row to participate in the prestigious “Young Singer’s Project” and has grown from her experiences with members of the Virginia Chorale and conductors Charles J. Woodward and Bryson Mortensen. During her senior year she studied voice with Ellen Petko.

Serena is very accomplished in other aspects of music. On her trumpet she earned a place in the Virginia All-State Band and Senior Regional Orchestra, and has studied classical piano for 12 years, currently under the direction of Teri Falk. While being a student herself, Serena has found a passion in teaching. She runs her own piano studio where she instructs beginner piano students, and teaches the Grafton Middle School women’s choir through a mentorship program with her mentor, Elizabeth Higginbotham.

In addition to her music, Serena loves playing soccer and getting involved in her school. She has played on the GHS soccer team, served as Junior Class President, Student Council Secretary, and Tri- M music honor society for 2 years. Serena plans to attend Utah State University this fall to major in Choral Education. She is very excited to inspire and impact the lives of her future students through her love of music and people.

ABOUT VCS: The Virginia Choral Society (VCS), active since 1931, is the largest continually performing community arts organization on the Peninsula. VCS is an IRS 501 (c) 3 code non-profit organization of about 90 singers, sustained by the generosity of grants from arts commissions, individual gifts, corporate funding and concert ticket sales.