Founded in Boston in 1995 by Gerald Slavet and Jennifer Hurley-Wales, From the Top originated as a variety-style radio show.

More than 20 years later, From the Top has grown into a multi-media and arts education powerhouse, transforming the lives of hundreds of young musicians each year. Inspiring millions of fans, and pioneering new ways to unite communities around the promise of outstanding young talent.

To learn more about From the Top’s history and mission, visit www.fromthetop.org.

Great kids. Great music. Listen to the future.

Dear friends and supporters,

The 2016–2017 season marked a turning point in the history of From the Top. After more than 20 years as Executive Producers and co-CEOs, we announced our intention to step aside and invite new leadership to take From the Top into its next chapter.

This past winter, a dedicated group of board members, staff, and From the Top alumni began the search for an Executive Director. Their work continues even as we write this, and we are hopeful that new leadership will be in place as 2018 begins. Bolstered by the continued loyalty of friends like you, we both stand ready to support the transition, and are confident that From the Top will continue to inspire audiences and empower young musicians for many more years to come.

While the search committee looks to the future, we continue to create outstanding programs to serve the young musicians of today. In this annual report, you can read about some of the 2016–2017 initiatives and activities that you made possible. Thanks to you, we shared the stories and talents of extraordinary young musicians with millions of fans online, on the radio, and in communities across the country.

We could not be more grateful for the generosity you have shown us this year, and in years past. Thank you for believing in our founding vision that young classically-trained musicians deserve to be celebrated and supported.

Fondly,

Jennifer Hurley-Wales
Co-CEO
From the Top

Gerald Slavet
Co-CEO
From the Top
OUR NATIONAL TOUR

NPR’s From the Top with Host Christopher O’Riley was recorded in venues all across the country, bringing together cities and towns to celebrate the outstanding talent of our nation’s young musicians, while always featuring a local performer who made their hometown proud. From Honolulu to Boston, Buffalo to Austin, and many places in between, we brought the beauty and joy of classical music to more than 10,000 live fans and more than 500,000 weekly radio listeners.

Beyond the Concert Hall: At every tour stop, through the national efforts of our Center for the Development of Arts Leaders, our musicians participated in focused arts leadership workshops. Each of these workshops culminated in a free outreach activity for a community partner, created and led by our young musicians.

Thank you to our 2016–2017 tour presenter partners:
- Aspen Summer Music Festival in Aspen, Colorado
- Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra in Buffalo, New York
- Hawai’i Public Radio in Honolulu and Kea’au, Hawai’i
- LeTourneau University in Longview, Texas
- Long Center for the Performing Arts in Austin, Texas
- Ordway Center for the Performing Arts and Schubert Club in St. Paul, Minnesota
- Music Academy of the West in Santa Barbara, California
- Norton Center for the Arts in Danville, Kentucky
- South Miami-Dade Cultural Arts Center in Miami, Florida
- Weill Music Institute at Carnegie Hall in New York, New York
- William Bremner Jewish Heritage Museum in Atlanta, Georgia
- York Symphony Orchestra in York, Pennsylvania

HONOLULU AND KEA’AU, HAWAI’I

Thanks to our long-time partners at Hawai’i Public Radio, and with support from the Sidney E. Frank Foundation, we made our fifth visit to the islands of Hawai’i for two recordings. Musical highlights on Hawai’i Island included the winner of the Sphinx Competition Junior Division and a performance by the Kamahameha Schools Hawai’i ‘Holoke A Hali’, featuring segments from an opera inspired by Hawai’ian myth and sung in the Hawai’ian language. On Oahu, the show included an ukulele quartet, the 13-year-old junior winner of the Menuhin International Violin Competition, and two pieces with the Hawaii Youth Symphony.

Beyond the Concert Hall: Performers led outreach activities with Kamaliikeha Elementary School on Hawai’i and Prince Jonah Kuhio Elementary School on Oahu in addition to working with members of the Hawaii Youth Symphony.

BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS

A wonderful mix of sounds and stories, our spring recording in our hometown, supported by Arthur Winn and the Winn Family Charitable Foundation, featured an intense and delightful chamber music piece by Arno Babadjanian, along with outstanding performances on bassoon, cello, piano, and violin. Two members of From the Top’s Center for the Development of Arts Leaders in Boston were featured on this show, and shared their stories of how they use music (and more) to transform their communities.

Beyond the Concert Hall: From the Top partnered with comMUSICation, an inspiring El Sistema-based afterschool program, for a special pre-show concert by 18 members of their youth choir. With support from the Howard and Geraldine Polinger Family Foundation, our musicians met with choir members the next day to lead workshops and share music.

ST. PAUL, MINNESOTA

An all-star lineup of Minnesotan musicians, including the 60-member Stillwater Concert Choir and a brother/sister piano duo, performed for a capacity crowd in a recording co-presented by the Ordway Center and the Schubert Club.

Beyond the Concert Hall: From the Top partnered with comMUSICation, an inspiring El Sistema-based afterschool program, for a special pre-show concert by 18 members of their youth choir. With support from the Howard and Geraldine Polinger Family Foundation, our musicians met with choir members the next day to lead workshops and share music.

DANVILLE, KENTUCKY

Eight school districts, 600 young audience members – our recording at the Norton Center for the Arts was definitely a highlight of the year. Rather than performing for our typical “grown up” audience, From the Top musicians performed for an audience of music students from all around the Danville area. Some students came from several hours away. The students were attentive and enthusiastic, and more than 300 of them enjoyed a post-show talk back with the performers. Support for this visit to Kentucky was provided by the William R. Kenan, Jr. Charitable Trust.

Beyond the Concert Hall: Performers and 15 budding young artists from the Danville Independent School District’s Gifted and Talented Program engaged in a 50-minute musical exchange, during which they performed, listened to one another’s music, and shared stories.
THE JACK KENT COOKE YOUNG ARTIST AWARD
Since 2005, From the Top and the Jack Kent Cooke Foundation have awarded more than $2.4 million in scholarships to exceptional young musicians with financial need. In addition to providing these young artists with an opportunity to perform on From the Top’s national broadcasts, recipients are awarded up to $10,000 to help offset the expensive costs of studying classical music at a high level. Each year, From the Top chooses approximately 20 exceptional pre-collegiate musicians to receive the Award.

EXCERPTS FROM A LETTER BY JACK KENT COOKE YOUNG ARTIST OLIVIA ELERSON, 16, FLUTE, FROM WAXAHACHIE, TEXAS:
I am immensely thankful for the amazing impact that this award has had on my life. Because of the Jack Kent Cooke Young Artist Award, I will be able to continue my education at Interlochen Arts Academy. This past year, my family struggled so much with tuition. My grandfather began to sell his cattle to help me further my music education at Interlochen, and I am unbelievably thankful that the Jack Kent Cooke Foundation has provided me with a way to help my family not give up their own passions so that I can pursue mine. My family is just as thankful as I am.

Performing on From the Top was such an amazing experience. One of my most treasured memories from the show, and now my life, was speaking to the audience afterwards. One man told me after the show that my playing gave him hope for the future, and that’s all that I can ask for as a musician.

I am forever grateful for the opportunities that the Jack Kent Cooke Young Artist Award has given me. My life has been changed because of it, and I can’t wait to see what else it brings in the future.

THE 2016–2017 JACK KENT COOKE YOUNG ARTISTS*  

From Waxahachie, Texas

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THE 2016–2017 JACK KENT COOKE YOUNG ARTISTS*  

Jiyee Ahn  
12, violin, Austin, Texas  
David Caplan  
17, cello, Skokie, Illinois  
Daniel Charif  
16, flute, San Jose, California  
Olivia Elerson  
16, flute, Waxahachie, Texas  
Joshua Elmore  
18, bassoon, Shaker Heights, Ohio  
Andrew Guo  
17, composer, Chicago, Illinois  
Adam Lee  
16, cello, Seoul, South Korea and Vernon Hills, Illinois  
Jonathan López  
17, clarinet, El Paso, Texas  
Coco Ma  
16, piano, Toronto, Ontario, Canada and New York, New York  
Jarrett May  
17, flute, Fort Worth, Texas  
Andrew Mazanko  
18, clarinet, Sovietbys, Khanty-Mansiysk. Russia and Interlochen, Michigan  
Javier Morales-Martinez  
15, clarinet, Oaxaca, Mexico and Los Angeles, California  
Elisabeth Pesavento  
17, horn, Redmond, Washington  
Adam Phan  
18, harp, Cedar Hill, Texas  
Maria Sanderson  
16, violin, Morgantown, Indiana  
William Suh  
17, cello, Los Angeles, California  
Emma Taggart  
14, piano, Blaine, Minnesota  
Vian Wagatsuma  
14, piano, Forest Hills, New York  
Hei-Yun Wu  
15, piano, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania  
Justin Zeitlinger  
16, composer, Dumont, New Jersey  

* age at the time of award
From Navajo Nation

**INTRODUCING THE ALUMNI LEADERSHIP GRANT**

Since our early days, we’ve always believed that America’s most promising, young, classically-trained musicians have the potential to impact the world beyond sharing their virtuosity in the concert hall. Today, we challenge all of our performers, whether eight years old or 18, to broaden their identity as musicians, consider ways they can meaningfully effect change, and build on their potential as leaders in their communities. Alumni Ariel Horowitz, Angelica Hairston, Karen Cueva, and Avik Sarkar are the first recipients of From the Top’s Alumni Leadership Grant, which launched in early 2017. The four received grants of up to $5,000 to support music-centric outreach projects they’ve created that lay out an attainable path to positive change. The grants are generously funded by the Howard and Geraldine Polinger Family Foundation, with additional support from the Karma for Cara Foundation.

**ARIEL HOROWITZ: THE HEARTBEAT PROJECT**

The Heartbeat Project took place in August of 2017 on the Navajo (Dine) Reservation in New Mexico. Drawing on traditional education systems, traditional tunes and rhythms, and naturally occurring soundscapes in the Navajo Nation, Ariel’s project employed music instruction as a tool to improve mathematical skills for K–12 Navajo students. It also included community concerts, collaboration with Diné musicians, and a final performance showcasing the students’ accomplishments.

Ariel was 16 when she first performed on From the Top in 2012.

**ANGELICA HAIRSTON: CHALLENGE THE STATS**

“Challenge the Stats will create online and local communities devoted to diversity in the arts.”

- Angelica Hairston

As a 2016 Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Graduate Fellow at Northeastern University, Angelica Hairston presented a concert called Challenge the Stats. The event showcased African-American and Latino performing artists and sparked conversations about inclusion and social justice among a diverse crowd, many hearing classical music live for the first time. In early 2018 Angelica will present a second Challenge the Stats concert this time in Atlanta, Georgia – while also developing a website and social media campaign to provide online resources to those working to advance diversity in the arts.

Angelica, a Jack Kent Cooke Young Artist, was 18 when she first performed on From the Top in 2011.

**KAREN CUEVA: BUILDING CONNECTIONS WITH INCARCERATED YOUTH**

“Students will write about their life experiences through the lens of hope and compose the soundtrack to their stories.”

- Karen Cueva

In late 2017, members of the Du Bois Orchestra (co-founded by Karen Cueva), will partner with the Department of Youth Services in Boston, Massachusetts, to work with ten incarcerated youth. With support from teaching artists, the youth will record their discussions and compose original works reflecting their stories. The project will open up conversations about what it means to have your voice silenced and how music and creativity can end that cycle.

Karen, a Jack Kent Cooke Young Artist, was 17 when she first performed on From the Top in 2008.

**AVIK SARKAR: CONNECTING THROUGH MUSIC, HELPING REFUGEES**

“I want to listen to the stories of and foster a human connection with refugees living in Boston.”

- Avik Sarkar

16-year-old pianist and composer Avik Sarkar comes from an immigrant family; he sees parallels between his life and the experiences of refugees, and in partnership with the Boston (Massachusetts) Center for Refugee Health and Human Rights, plans to create a benefit concert in support of the Center. The concert, which will include performances of music native to refugees’ homelands, will be recorded and will include a new composition, created by Avik himself, that integrates the stories of the refugees he interviews.

Avik was a member of From the Top’s Center for the Development of Arts Leaders in Boston.

Performers and teaching artists of the Heartbeat Project 2017
Celebrating young musicians

SEE THE MUSIC VIDEO SERIES

In 2016–2017, See the Music videos celebrated musicians of all styles and backgrounds, including a cover of “Express Yourself”, Jon Batiste & Stay Human’s song, that brought together seven classical/jazz musicians, nine vocalists, one rapper, and ten visual artists in a partnership with Boston-based Artists for Humanity. The year also featured the return of a popular trio of pianists in a Harry Potter-themed piano mashup, and collaborations with Project Trio, Pink Martini, and Aspen Music Festival and School.

Turkish-American pianist Leyla Kabuli starred in a poignant video called ‘Black Earth’, playing the Fazıl Say song of the same name, and raising awareness of refugee issues. From the Top Host Christopher O’Riley composed a new work, “This Land/Our Land”, which combined Woody Guthrie’s “This Land is Your Land” with the national anthems of six From the Top alumni with immigrant stories. The musicians’ families come from Bulgaria, South Korea, Mexico, Ukraine, Bolivia, and Iran.

Turkish-American pianist Leyla Kabuli starred in a poignant video called ‘Black Earth’, playing the Fazıl Say song of the same name, and raising awareness of refugee issues. From the Top Host Christopher O’Riley composed a new work, “This Land/Our Land”, which combined Woody Guthrie’s “This Land is Your Land” with the national anthems of six From the Top alumni with immigrant stories. The musicians’ families come from Bulgaria, South Korea, Mexico, Ukraine, Bolivia, and Iran.
Thank you for investing in the next generation.

From the Top thanks the following contributors for their generous unrestricted and programmatic support between July 1, 2016 and June 30, 2017. Please contact Shirley Barkai at 617.437.0707 x104 to update us on any changes.

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$500–$999

Anonymous (4)

$5,000–$9,999

Anonymous (4)

$500–$999

Anonymous (4)

$1,000,000–$4,999,999

Anonymous (4)

$50,000–$99,999

Anonymous (4)

$100,000–$499,999

Anonymous (4)

$500–$999

Anonymous (4)

$5,000–$9,999

Anonymous (4)

$500–$999

Anonymous (4)

$25,000–$49,999

Anonymous (4)

$5,000–$9,999

Anonymous (4)

$1,000,000–$4,999,999

Anonymous (4)

$500–$999

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From the Top Board of Directors

“As a member of the Board of Directors of From the Top, I have experienced first-hand the impact of meeting From the Top musicians and hearing them perform live. I am particularly grateful to those friends who have opened their homes and invited our musicians to perform for their friends and family. My husband Ollie and I have taken great inspiration from performances in our own home, allowing us to introduce our community to this unique organization and mission.”

-Cynthia K. Curren

2016-2017 EVENT HOSTS
Special thanks to these generous, hosted events on behalf of From the Top.

- Cynthia K. Curren

“From the Top Board of Directors”
### 2016-2017 GALA CONTRIBUTORS

From the Top thanks the following contributors for their generous support of the 2017 From the Top Gala. For more information about the 2018 From the Top Gala, please contact Rebecca Reiner at 617.437.0707 x120 or reiner@fromthetop.org.

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- Jodi Sufrin and Roy Einhorn

*In-kind gifts and service

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### FROM THE TOP’S GALA

The 2017 Gala in Cambridge, Massachusetts, was a special one, honoring co-founders Gerald Slavet and Jennifer Hurley-Wales (at right) as they prepare to hand the baton over to a new generation of From the Top leadership. Alumni from all over the country, including some surprise guests, shared their music and memories of From the Top. Among other highlights, a kazoo tribute and Klezmer finale captured the lively From the Top spirit you know and love. It was definitely a night to remember!

The Gala was co-chaired by Beth & Seth Klarman and Hillary & Board Chair Jeffrey Rayport. We are grateful for their leadership and friendship, and to everyone who supported the event, making it the most successful fundraising event in From the Top’s history.
**FY17 FINANCIAL SUMMARY**

**REVENUE:** $3,641,156*  
- **CONTRIBUTED REVENUES**  
  $2,839,053  
- **EARNED & OTHER REVENUES**  
  $801,701

**EXPENSES:** $3,667,221  
- **MANAGEMENT & ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES**  
  $500,130  
- **CAPACITY BUILDING & DEVELOPMENT EXPENSES**  
  $619,849  
- **PROGRAM EXPENSES**  
  $2,545,433

* includes future-year revenues

Management is responsible for the preparation of From the Top’s financial statements in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles. From the Top’s financial statements have been audited by Cohn Reznick, LLP. A complete audited financial statement can be viewed at www.fromthetop.org/auditedfinancials or by calling 617.437.0707.

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Front and back cover photos: Caitlin Cunningham, Kristan Ioczko, and From the Top
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Addendum to From the Top 2016-2017 Annual Report

Breakdown of Major Program Expenses  
Year Ended June 30, 2017

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program Services</th>
<th>Total Expenses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Radio Production</td>
<td>$1,155,994</td>
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<tr>
<td>Video Production</td>
<td>$114,205</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education &amp; Community Outreach</td>
<td>$361,298</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marketing &amp; Communications</td>
<td>$517,153</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Admissions &amp; Alumni Relations</td>
<td>$42,459</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scholarship &amp; Recruitment</td>
<td>$357,268</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$2,548,377</strong></td>
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Net Assets, Ending

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Unrestricted</th>
<th>Temporarily Restricted</th>
<th>Total</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ending</td>
<td>$557,684</td>
<td>$1,055,322</td>
<td>$1,613,006</td>
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* Total expenses reflect final audited financials