



TAKE IT BEYOND THE CONCERT HALL

with From the Top Alum
Dong Won Lee



Dong Won Lee is a 17-year-old pianist from Redmond, Washington. He performed on *From the Top* on show [241](#) and is a [Jack Kent Cooke Young Artist](#).

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HELPING TO KEEP HIS SCHOOL'S MUSIC PROGRAM STRONG AND ALIVE

After receiving notice that the Interlake High School music department was in need of financial support, pianist Dong Won Lee decided to take action. The program's band director, David Kim, announced that he would be taking a leave of absence while his wife underwent critical surgery, and sent an appeal to all students for help with raising funds to hire temporary music clinicians. Dong Won was so inspired by Mr. Kim's dedication to the band that he decided to organize a benefit concert. The music department rallied to support the cause, with nearly 40 musicians joining Dong Won for the event. The concert, held at the Interlake Performing Arts Center, showcased a variety of instruments and genres, from saxophone ensemble to string quartet, and raised \$2,000 for the music program!

GOALS: “I wanted to help the music students at my school and had always wanted to be a part of the music program (the piano doesn't really belong to any group), so the opportunity to stage this concert came to my mind.”

PROCESS: Having never organized a concert by himself, Dong Won reached out to the school's orchestra director, Dr. Shira Katsman (pictured at left with Dong Won). She helped him secure a venue, organize a music program, and contact the various performers from the school. All proceeds went towards the Interlake Music Parents Association's Clinician Fund (created by Dr. Kim). Parents also played an active role by distributing flyers across the community, as well as donating refreshments for the reception.



Q&A WITH DONG WON

From the Top (FTT): Tell us more on how you first heard about Mr. Kim's efforts:

Dong Won: In mid-January of 2012, my parents received a newsletter from my high school's music department. It was about the band director's wife, and how she was receiving treatment for a malignant tumor. In the newsletter was the band director's personal request for help in raising money for musical clinicians who would come to school while he was on leave taking care of his wife. What moved me most about his request was the fact that he still had the energy to care for his music students, despite the personal hardship he may have been suffering due to his wife's sickness.

FTT: What inspired your musical choices for this program?

Dong Won: At first, this benefit concert was going to have only string and piano players. But as an organizer trying to engage an audience, I wanted to include all types of student musicians. We had "The Mavudraman Percussion Ensemble" slamming away, and a science-music duo called "The F&H Doppler Effect Flute Duet"

playing some fantastic flute music. There was also the "Seaweed Six Vocal Ensemble" singing some traditional Gaelic songs. There was just a lot of cool music!

FTT: What were some of the challenges you faced in organizing this concert?

Dong Won: Organizing a concert is certainly different from performing. It made me work a lot harder to make music seem approachable for an audience. The greatest challenge was responding to all the emails, and not letting down the people I was working with. The level of support that I received from the music department was amazing – I would not have been able to stage the concert without the faculty's help.

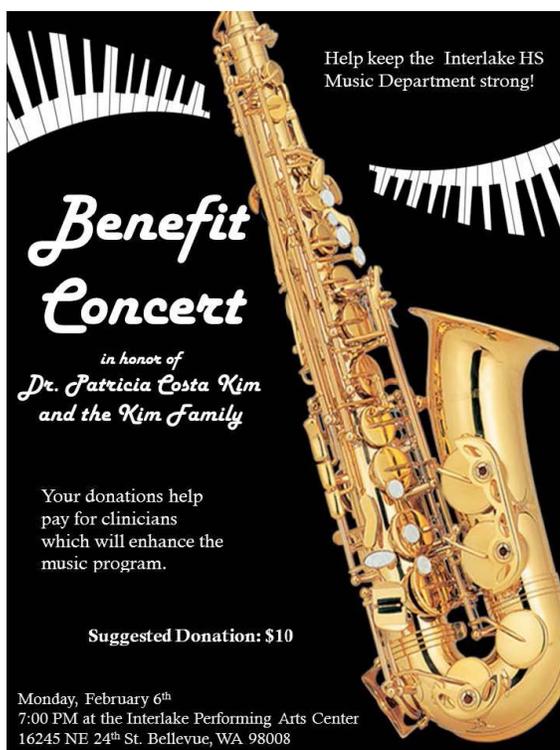
FTT: What impact do you believe this concert had on those involved?

Dong Won: Although I don't know how much the money will be of help to the students in the long term, I believe that the concert gave them another chance to perform on a stage. It sounds trivial, but I think that performing and sharing is crucial for young people like us. This concert definitely showed the parents and the greater Interlake community that its musical scene is full of life.

FTT: What do you think it means to be an arts leader?

Dong Won: To me, being an arts leader is making sure that the arts do not die out. There is a lot of talk today about how classical music is outdated (which is partially true), but my job as an arts leader would be to present classical music in ways that can make it more popular and appreciated.

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Help keep the Interlake HS Music Department strong!

Benefit Concert

*in honor of
Dr. Patricia Costa Kim
and the Kim Family*

Your donations help pay for clinicians which will enhance the music program.

Suggested Donation: \$10

Monday, February 6th
7:00 PM at the Interlake Performing Arts Center
16245 NE 24th St. Bellevue, WA 98008

[CLICK HERE TO LEARN MORE ABOUT DON WON!](#)