

# LONGWOOD CHORUS

The Newsletter

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## The Turning of the Seasons



The Choir In Concert at the [All Saints Parish in Brookline](#)

As we turn towards the winter, past Thanksgiving and into the holiday season, our own choral season nears its end. It is a time in which our choir, in another year under different circumstances, would be reaching toward a communal culminating moment. A *concert*. An occasion of unity in body and voice, of singers and listeners. The etymology of the word lays bare what we now lack. This season will have no concerts and these holidays we will not crowd into music halls and places of worship. In light of it all we will keep on turning.

I am perhaps obviously reminded of a song. One I know from The Byrds and others may from Ecclesiastes. Reminded there is time to build up, and a time to break down, a time to dance, a time to mourn, a time you may embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing. To everything there is a season. Turn, turn, turn. While it has been no one's pleasure to realize we often do not choose the season we're in, we are equally assured to turn eventually into a new one. And when we do, I hope we are like a plant in the spring's sun. Rejoicing in life and doubly thankful for knowing the cold has past. Even now, I feel we are turning within our season. Finding time to build and grow where we can: here in the choir, with our families, and in the community. That has been the hope of these letters, to turn toward each other.

- Dan Horgan, [Social Chair](#). Interviews co-authored by George Fei, [Stage Manager](#).

## ANNOUNCEMENTS, NEWS, & CONGRATULATIONS!

November and December have a fair few birthdays in the chorus. Please join us in saying a happy birthday to: Andrea Vandeven, Pragya Goel, Sarine Bellou, Amir Bitran, George Fei, Ben Carter, and David Campbell!

We were also so privileged to have been joined by **Caroline Shaw** this past month. I was, as I'm sure many of you were, delighted by her work and the fullness with which she brought herself to our meeting. It was a rare peek behind the curtain of process and thought for someone as gifted as her. Genuine, curious and caring, she certainly inspired me. Thanks are due to both her and Jeremy for arranging. Thank you!

In case you missed it, [here](#) is a great video speaking to her career And [here](#) you can find one of the wonderful performance videos she shared with us "And So" with the Attacca Quartet.

Please email Dan ([dnhorgn@gmail.com](mailto:dnhorgn@gmail.com)) with any updates, big plans, birthdays, occasions, reflections, or news etc. that you have to report either for yourself or on the behalf of another choir member.

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### THIS WEEK'S Featured Faces



Erin!



Ga Young!



Joe!

# Erin Carter

Medical Student, [BU School of Medicine](#)

## **Where Is She From?**

Erin is, in her own words, from all over the place. Hailing originally from Virginia, Erin moved three times before turning thirteen: first to Arizona, back east to New Jersey and then finally back to Arizona where her family still lives. Not one for staying still though, Erin completed her undergraduate at Rhodes College in Memphis, Tennessee. She returned again to Arizona, Flagstaff specifically, where she tended bar, sang in a community choir and attended a graduate program in computational chemistry at NAU, in that order. After graduating her masters program she went to teach for a year at ASU, all while completing her med school applications. Not to be kept from yet another coast hop, Erin chose to come to BU where she is now approaching her residency placement.

## **How Is Med School?**

As a fourth year student in the last year of her program, Erin was in the midst of her rotations when we last spoke. While her clinical experience has unfortunately been affected by the elective surgery shutdown and tele-med services in response to COVID, she's been pleased to work in transgender medicine and urology, as she hopes to pursue both in her residency. Erin says she's wanted to be a doctor since she was a kid and has always wanted to work with her hands. Simply, she just, in her own words, "needed to be a surgeon." As of this week she is in her final class. Send her all your best telepathic encouragement! We're one step closer to having an amazing doctor in the world.

## **How Did She Start Singing?**

Like so many of us, Erin came into music through a love of an instrument. In her case it was the oboe. A personal favorite orchestral piece for it's voice-like timbre, Erin played up through the ranks of district and state ensembles. Surprisingly, it wasn't until after college, when she returned to Flagstaff, that she found her first choir. The Flagstaff Master Chorale was a source of family and music for four years. They traveled to Bulgaria and Turkey and even performed at Chicago Symphony Hall. Then, while teaching at ASU, she joined the Arizona Choral Union. Most recently, in our very own city of Boston, Erin has sung with the Doctor's Notes a capella group and now with us here in the LC.

## **What Does Erin Do For Fun?**

From my conversation with Erin I can say she is an unparalleled crafter, builder, and tinkerer. I learned of her many recent projects including Alexa interacting floating shelves,

a refurbished couch equipped with a cantilevered phone charging station, reupholstered chairs, and a variety of light woodworking. Her inspiring project mindedness also comes, of course, with a steadily growing suite of tools to make it all happen. Just as she is creative, there is an equal keenness to the search for precious and fairly-priced materials and equipment. One day she will finally have the sprawling workshop she both wants and deserves and there will be no stopping her.

### **Could She Choose a Favorite Song?**

Yes! The beautiful chorral [Entreatment Me Not to Leave You](#) by Dan Forrest. With an honorable mention to Carmina Burana because I told her it would be cheating to pick that.

## GaYoung Lee

Post-Doctoral Fellow, [Harvard Medical School](#)

### **Where Is She From?**

GaYoung was born in Korea, but when she was 10 moved with her family to a suburb in New Jersey not too far from New York City. After finishing high school in Jersey, she decided to go back to Korea for college. She's since returned to the States for graduate school, coming to Harvard for her PhD immediately after finishing her undergraduate in 2011. She's been here in Boston ever since. An avid consumer of culture, GaYoung misses living close to the Big Apple, but she and her husband find ways to visit, often on the drive down when they visit family who still live in New Jersey.

### **What Does A Day In Lab Look Like?**

GaYoung is a bit of a brainiac, studying the brain. She works as a post-doctoral fellow in the lab of Stephen Liberles in the Cell Biology Department here at the Harvard Medical School. Her research focuses on how the autonomic nerves in various organs of the body connect to and communicate with the brain. Given the nature of her research, GaYoung uses a lot of mice in her experiments. Sadly when the shutdown went into effect she and her lab could only maintain care for a few of the creatures. She lovingly calls the few that were saved her "Noah's Ark mice."

### **Where Did She Get Her Start Singing?**

Singing actually wasn't GaYoung's earliest foray into music but rather the violin. Her mother is a music teacher, so GaYoung was surrounded by music throughout much of her childhood. It was with a church choir that she got her first taste of choral singing. Later, she joined her high school choir where she actually sang together with our very own Emi

Ling. (Small world!) Despite carrying some serious singing cred, GaYoung confesses to not enjoying vocal music (in both listening and performing) as much as instrumental music. She played the violin all throughout college, but in graduate school the pressure of work put a strain on free time to engage in extracurricular music. Even though she had a brief stint with a chamber group, as well as the graduate student chorus in Cambridge, logistics and her PhD work prevented her from staying. Thankfully, with the Longwood Chorus situated so close to work and with her post-doc affording her more free time, GaYoung has stayed with us ever since our first season.

### **What Does GaYoung Do For Fun?**

It may come as no surprise that GaYoung is a huge music geek. In her own words, “When it comes to music, I’m an omnivore.” She loves going to concerts of all kinds. Right before the shut down, GaYoung got to see Robert Glasper in concert at a local jazz club, Scullers, a true highlight for a rather chaotic year. Besides going to jazz clubs, GaYoung also enjoys student concerts at the New England Conservatory. She notes that the free admission to the student concerts makes the music very accessible to the public and highly recommends any music fan to go have a look-see (or perhaps a listen-hear?). Other than music, GaYoung also dabbles in the culinary arts. Like many of us, the lockdown in the early phase of the pandemic gave her the chance to take on various projects in the kitchen. According to her, she’s made a LOT of bread.

### **Asked to Name But a Single Favorite Song:**

Ga Young chose a jazz standard. [So What](#) by Miles Davis

## Joe Kopp

Emergency Doctor, [Brigham and Women’s Hospital](#)

### **Where Is He From?**

Joe was born and raised in Indiana, where he went to college and medical school. He spent two years studying at IU Bloomington before he decided that he preferred an environment with fewer students and a tighter community, so he finished college at Anderson University. After medical school Joe decided he finally wanted a change of scenery, so he moved all the way across the country to Palm Springs, California, for his residency. He stayed there a year afterwards, working, but when his wife got a job in Boston about five years ago the two of them moved up here, where Joe got a job as an ER doctor at the Brigham. He isn’t looking to move back to Indiana any time soon, but remarks it still feels like home to him.

### **What's Up (ER) Doc?**

Coming from “a medical family,” Joe had always aimed to become a doctor, though the question of specialization remained. He originally intended to go into primary care. During rotations, however, he found he also wanted to work in procedures. Emergency medicine provided the perfect mix. He’s been at the Brigham for almost five years now, having joined right around the same time as Jeremy. He now works mostly at the Brigham’s Faulkner Hospital, whose ER mostly serves the surrounding community. That includes a fair number of nursing homes, meaning Joe has been quite busy and vitally needed during the pandemic.

### **Where Did He Get His Start Singing?**

Growing up, Joe attended Catholic school and participated in the choir all through high school. He also took piano and guitar lessons, no stranger to our friends in instrumental music. Yet, after Joe entered college he mostly stopped singing in groups. The Longwood choir is actually his first time with a choir since high school. We don’t know how, but somehow Jeremy knew that there was a singer in him all along and convinced him to join the choir just in time for our Fall 2019 season.

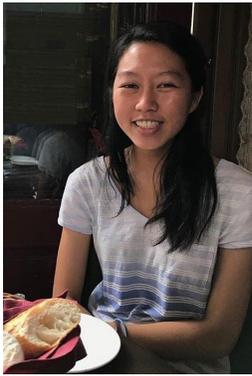
### **What Does Joe Do For Fun?**

Joe is quite the outdoor fellow, spending most of his free time in the open air. Growing up he lived not too far from the Knobstone Trail, a long hiking trail stretching along the north-south axis of Indiana, where people would often go to train and prepare for the Appalachian Trail. Joe and his family frequented the trail for many backpacking trips. These days Joe also does a fair amount of kayaking and biking, having just gotten himself a new mountain bike that he’s excited to take out for a spin. He also enjoys the occasional trail run, though his most recently planned half marathon was unfortunately shut down due to the pandemic. Aside from outdoor sports, Joe also keeps a piano in his house which he frequently plays.

### **Asked For Some Of His Favorite Music,**

Joe picked a classic - [Sitting on the Dock of the Bay](#) by Sara Bareilles

# Board Member of the Week



## Assistant Director - Iris Chan, Medical Student

Iris Chan has participated in a range of musical activities throughout her life, spanning church choirs, wind ensembles, operas, and the study of harpsichord. She studied piano and music theory at the Bryn Mawr Conservatory of Music with Marcantonio Barone and earned a B.A. in biology from Swarthmore College, where she was the recipient of the Department of Music's Freeman Scholarship. During college, Iris served as rehearsal pianist for the Swarthmore College Choirs and appeared as soloist in Finzi's Eclogue and Chopin's Piano Concerto No. 2 with the Swarthmore Lab Orchestra.

Iris has a particular interest in vocal music. She has performed Purcell's Dido and Aeneas, Monteverdi's L'incoronazione di Poppea, and Mozart's Die Zauberflöte, collaborated with the Delaware Valley Opera Company, and performed at New York's Carnegie Hall. Passionate about bringing live music to the community, Iris has taught piano and organized outreach concerts throughout the Philadelphia and Boston areas. She has played and sung with the Longwood Chorus since its founding, assists with musical leadership, and advises the Board. Iris studied blood disorders as a research assistant in the Zon Lab at Boston Children's Hospital, and is now a medical student at Tufts University. When she's not at the piano, Iris loves going on nature walks, solving crossword puzzles, and learning about different types of tea.

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Of course I had to ask Iris, as a long standing and integral member of the choir, **what being a part of our group means to her.**

"Making music with the chorus is what animates me! When I was a small child, I had this narrow idea that music meant throwing my emotions into a solitary practice room at the piano. I didn't have much exposure to ensemble music-making, let alone vocal ensembles. It wasn't until I begrudgingly obliged my piano teacher to accompany opera scenes in college that it dawned on me that working with vocalists was incredibly unique for two important reasons: a) there's space to interpret and express both the text & music with musicians who have totally different perspectives than yourself, and b) there was a whole host of vocal and choral artforms that I hadn't known, so goodness, how on earth had I missed out on this before?! That led me to seek out opportunities to work with a huge range of singers - in more operas, vocal-piano duets, and chamber choirs. One could say I'm speaking like a true ex-solo-pianist. :D

So these days, especially in COVID times, I really live off the energy of singing together, listening across a (Zoom) room, and communicating our emotions to each other in a very visceral way. Of course, it's not the same as when we were in person, but there is still a semblance of it being like a dance. A very intricate dance, where every week we each bring our own colors, feelings, and voices to create something very full and warm that could only have been made by our unique combination of humans. I love hearing us all midway through a semester, and appreciating how much more we "get" the music that we're singing, because it's trickling into the spaces of our memories. I love seeing singers (who were strangers) sit next to each other become good friends, not only because it reminds me of my own musician-friendships, but it also speaks to the way we can bond as a community. That's the most gratifying part – that through our music-making, we're learning about and connecting with each other in small ways, whether it's over a shared hobby or a common research interest – and I am so glad to be here making music with you.”

Thank you all. Stay warm and keep singing.

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