



*US Army Band Calls Up  
AHCC Organist to New Life of Service  
Dan Campolieta and Christen Hernandez  
to relocate to Washington, DC*

When Dan Campolieta was hired as the organist at AHCC in 2007, we knew he was destined for great things. Then, a 22 year old student at UCONN completing his degrees in Organ Performance and Music Education, Dan showed tremendous promise as a pianist, organist and composer. Eight years later, we now know him to be a gifted and talented man, a consummate musician, a respected colleague and a natural leader. Now, the world will get to see and share in what we have all come to know, as Dan begins his new career with the United States Army Band in Washington, DC.

The United States Army Band, "Pershing's Own," is the premier musical ensemble for the US Army, and features more than 250 of the country's finest instrumentalists and singers. The band is an umbrella organization that houses 10 official ensembles and several chamber ensembles. The two ensembles with which Dan will be working most closely are the Army Chorus and the Army Voices. The mission of the band is to provide musical support for the leadership of the United States, to include all branches of government, and to a wide spectrum of national and international events in support of soldiers and their families, public diplomacy, community and international relations, recruiting initiatives, and music education programs. Dan will start as a Staff Sergeant in the US Army, and will be given a permanent duty station at Fort Myer, Arlington, VA as a member of the band. Being part of a premier military band is not unlike having a chair in a major symphony orchestra, and will provide Dan the opportunity for a lifetime appointment as a performing musician in the DC metro area.

Dan has been joined in many aspects of the music ministry at AHCC by his wife Christen

Hernandez. An extraordinary musician and teacher, Christen has led our Spirit Hill Music Program and co-directed the Children's Musicals with Dan and Steve since 2008. She has elevated the quality of our music-making as a choir section leader and soloist, and masterfully conducted the orchestra and women's choir voices in a presentation of the Pergolesi "Stabat Mater." Christen's innate gift for teaching, and her extensive musical talents will continue to bless and serve all those she touches.

Steve Mitchell, our Minister of Music & Arts, and Dan Campolieta have been an outstanding team over the past several years. They have collaborated each week on powerful and inspirational music in worship and created memorable musical events for the church and community. From concert events like the Messiaen "Quartet for the End of Time," to compositions like "The March of the Three Kings" for our Boar's Head Festival, to Broadway Revues and Brown Bag Concerts, everything has been prepared and presented to the highest standards of musicianship and service. "It has been a privilege to work alongside Dan and Christen these past eight years," says Steve. "We drew out the best in one another as we served God and this church through the gifts of music and teaching." When asked about what Dan's departure means to him personally, Steve added, "I will miss my friend, colleague and co-conspirator more than I can express. But I could not be more proud of Dan and where he is going. We will be friends for life. I can't wait to see what is next for him and Christen."

Reflecting on Dan's departure, Rev. Matthew Laney adds, "We all know Dan's musical gifts will be deeply missed by the congregation and community but Dan's personal gifts of integrity, commitment, spiritual depth, care and deep love for the people he works with are losses for the staff and choir alike. The Army called Dan for his talent, but they will soon discover just how much more Dan brings. The character and quality of our military just got even better!"

As one might expect, Steve Mitchell has a plan. With the blessing of church leadership, he has secured an interim organist to take over worship needs after Dan's departure and while a formal search is mounted for the next organist of this great historic church. AHCC member David Bradley, community leader, organist, and pianist, will serve as our interim organist and will be active in the search process to come. David has served in this capacity before and we are fortunate that he has once again answered this call. "We are blessed with a great deal of talent within this congregation and in the greater Hartford community, and we will draw on those gifts in the weeks and months ahead," says Steve. "David is a respected colleague and a talented musician. I look forward to making music together again."

Dan Campolieta's last Sunday on the organ bench of Asylum Hill Congregational Church will be **Easter Sunday, April 5, 2015**. As some may recall, Dan started his music ministry with us on Easter Sunday 2007. Now, this day of new life and new hope will again symbolize our hope for Dan's bright future. In the weeks ahead, we will be celebrating Dan's time at AHCC in numerous ways. Watch for information about special performances, recognitions and celebrations. But for now, join us in worship each Sunday, listen for the musical gifts that flow forth from the organ and piano in our sanctuary through the hands and heart of Dan Campolieta. Come early for the Prelude and stay for the Postlude. Take it all in - and be grateful.