

Music, Medicine, and Balance

Alumna Karen Boselli



Karen Boselli performing in a Music School recital c. 1987.

Karen Boselli was six years old when she became one of the first students at the Music School. The School's temporary home was a drafty building on Main Street, and Boselli remembers one thing in particular about those early days—it was really cold.

“When you came in the door, there was this basket of knit slippers to put on, to keep your feet warm. You'd take off your boots and put on these booties,” she laughs.

Since those days, the Music School has found a permanent—and much warmer—home, and Boselli is working nearby at Concord Orthopaedics. Now in what she calls a “left-brained job,” she says her piano lessons with Music School founder Peggy Senter helped give her the self-discipline she needed to become a successful surgeon.

“Peggy was pretty tough, in a good way,” she says. “Because I respected her, I never wanted to

disappoint her. She taught me to stay on top of my practicing. I'd come back from summer vacation, and she'd say, ‘I shouldn't see any white on your fingernails!’”

Boselli studied piano at the Music School through high school, and played oboe in the Scholarship Woodwind Quintet. The School became a home away from home for her. “It was a huge social thing,” she recalls. “All my friends revolved around the Music School.”

She shared her senior recital with Karl Rzasa, who is now a professional bassoonist in Chicago. “He's crazy talented,” says Boselli. “I knew that was going to be his career.”

Though Boselli chose to go into medicine, she feels that studying music helped her find and maintain a sense of balance in her life, between her artistic and analytical sides.

“I'm a really left-brained person,” she says, “and Peggy encouraged me to break out of that—to get into my right brain.”

Now, she turns to creative projects in her free time, as a way to take a breath and shift her perspective for a while. “I'm renovating a house right now, and it's this creative process. Some of the discipline you learn in music lessons helps you stay committed to something that keeps you engaged outside your job.”

She's even getting back to playing the piano, thanks to an antique Steinway she has on permanent loan from some family friends. And she's thinking about taking piano lessons again.

“Piano lessons taught me that it was important to have balance,” she says. “You learn that you've got to have some sort of creative outlet.”