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El Camino College Music Students Headed to Universities this Fall *Outstanding students to continue their education in vocal performance*

Sarah Bailey grew up in a musical family, and knew by freshman year of high school she wanted to pursue singing as a career.

“There was never a day in my life when I wasn’t singing,” said Sarah, who enrolled in El Camino College in 2014 after graduating from North High School in Torrance. “I grew up surrounded by music.”

Sarah graduated from ECC this past spring and is now headed to Chapman University’s Hall-Musco Conservatory of Music and plans to pursue roles in opera and musical theater productions. She was part of ECC’s Chorale and Opera Workshop and is one of several outstanding students in El Camino College’s music program transferring to universities this fall to further their artistic studies.

Other members from the class of 2016 to attend prestigious music programs this fall: Steven McClain, University of Cincinnati’s College-Conservatory of Music, bachelor’s degree in vocal performance; Kelly McCandless, California State University, Long Beach’s Bob Cole Conservatory of Music, bachelor’s in vocal performance; and Deborah Tejada, California State University, Northridge, bachelor’s degree in education with a vocal emphasis. Some students will receive scholarships for their achievements.

Pauline Tamale, Gabrielle Chea, Axel Mejia, and Rachel Gonzalez transferred into similar programs last year.

El Camino College’s four vocal music ensembles include two audition and two that are open to all singers. The Chorale, an audition chorale ensemble, includes up to 30 performers covering choral pieces from folk songs to show tunes. The Women’s Chorus, the other audition group, features females of all ages. Community Choir and Concert Choir, the two non-audition ensembles, perform all types of choral literature around the South Bay.

Vicki Muto, assistant music professor at El Camino College, runs the Opera Workshop. She says the group has branched out of its opera roots, performing musical theater pieces as well.

“At some point, the performers in musical theater scenes become interested in the operatic scenes, and vice versa,” Muto said. “We encourage students to explore; we definitely accommodate that.”

Soon, the vocal program may branch into vocal pop music, along with maintaining a small jazz group, Muto said. At any given time, about 20 students are pursuing degrees in the vocal arts through El Camino College’s Applied Music Program, she said.

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