Happy New Year to our extended pan family and we wish you all peace, love, and music in this new chapter of all of our lives. 2017 wrapped up nicely with holiday performances by the All-Stars, a Larchmont Winter Program, and a fantastic Rhythm Project Holiday party that brought together students from our bands all across Hampton Roads.

Now the Rhythm Project instructors find themselves getting back into the groove after a long break from many of our bands due to the latest snowstorm. Despite losing most of January, we are still on track to have a strong spring semester and there’s been a flurry of gig bookings and fun plans to make for a fantastic next few months.

Rhythm Live! is in our immediate future, and once we get into the month of March, it’s going to be pedal-to-the-metal, and mallet-to-steel, all the way to the summer and our greatly anticipated Virginia International PANFest.

Sponsors

The Rhythm Project is supported in part by Bank of America, Capital Group Companies, D. Baker Ames Charitable Foundation, Dominion Resources, Enterprise Holdings Foundation, P&K Group, Surfland, USAA, Wells Fargo, and the following municipalities and/or their Arts and Humanities Commissions: Norfolk, Portsmouth, and Virginia Beach.

Activity Calendar

- Tuesday, March 13, 2018
  Larchmont Elementary Steel Bands Fine Arts Night
  6PM
  Free and open to Larchmont families

- Friday, March 23, 2018
  Virginia Beach Rising-Stars VBCPS All-City
  Sandler Center
  7PM
  Free and open to Rising-Stars players

- Tuesday, May 1, 2018
  Larchmont Elementary Steel Bands Spring Program
  6PM
  Free and open to Larchmont families

Full Schedule at www.RhythmProject.org

Be sure to join us for the 16th Annual PANFest on Friday-Saturday, May 11th-12th at the 24th Street Pavilion, Virginia Beach Oceanfront!
Bridging the Gap

The constant growth of the Rhythm Project family continues with our addition of a middle school group in Norfolk. The Norfolk Rising-Stars draws students with steel drum experience from Tidewater Park, Jacox, and Larchmont elementary schools. The group, like most, is starting out small but mighty, although there is no doubt that it will expand like crazy in the next few years. This fulfills a long-term goal we have had in the Rhythm Project—to provide a bridge between our elementary programs in Norfolk to middle school, and eventually in the All-Stars as high schoolers.

New Home, Same Family

Larchmont Elementary school just recently took a big step into the future by building a brand new school facility to continue their scholarly studies. The long-awaited upgrade finally happened this past summer and the steel band students have been enjoying their time in their new digs. Despite the vintage charm of the previous facility, we’re happy to be in a new, state-of-the-art school that allows us more space for kids and a few new pans. It coincided nicely with a record number of students trying out for the bands there. We’re also looking forward to a collaboration between the Larchmont steel bands and choir. It’s sure to make for some beautiful music at the Spring Program concert!

Pan History in Motion

Once again the month of February brings us a number of important pan-related events both here in the U.S. as well as the mecca of steel pan, Trinidad and Tobago. Carnival season is in full swing as new soca, calypso, and steel band music explodes from the islands and inspires us all. It’s perfect timing for us to gear up for the annual Rhythm Live! concert, taking place on Friday, February 23rd at the Harrison Opera House. The performance is at 7:30PM and ticket information can be found at www.vafest.org.

If you’re new to the program, Rhythm Live! is a fantastic concert that brings to life the story of how steel drums were invented in Trinidad over 80 years ago. It features the Governor’s School of the Arts Dance and Instrumental departments, as well as the Rhythm Project All-Stars. Narration explains events in history that took place in Trinidad while the dancers bring the words to life with incredible choreography and energy. The audience is indulged in a strong does of African drumming and dance, Trinidadian steel pan music, and historical relevance. We hope to see you there!