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WIND ENSEMBLE TAKES ITS SHOW TO ARGENTINA

PERFORMING ABROAD PROVES TO BE AN UNFORGETTABLE EXPERIENCE

by [Kelli Caplan](#) | October 19, 2023

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The night felt a bit surreal. Hannah Asuncion was playing her French horn for 600 people at a beautiful outdoor venue in the mountains of Argentina. At that moment, she was overcome with feelings of pride and gratitude.

"I cannot even begin to describe the thrill and excitement," said Asuncion, '25 [Instrumental Music Education](#). "It was truly an out of body experience. We got to play alongside other talented musicians and we had so much fun.

"Playing horn is already a great time for me," she said. "But there were moments on stage where I would stop and think, 'oh my goodness, I'm playing horn in Argentina.'"

Asuncion was one of 26 members of the [Christopher Newport Wind Ensemble](#) who traveled to Argentina to make music and memories. The Wind Ensemble travels abroad to play every three years. This time, the destination was Argentina.

"It was fantastic," said Dr. Mark Reimer, Conductor of the Wind Ensemble and Director of Music at Christopher Newport. "It was a great, great experience."

The Wind Ensemble wowed with its outdoor performance in front of the courthouse in Carlos Paz, with mountain ranges visible in the distance. Students played their hearts out for an audience they never expected to entertain. They were also joined by a community music group and Argentinian tango dancers. The title of the performance was, "Hello, Argentina," and it included different genres of American music.

“The audience was very receptive. They wanted an encore,” Reimer said. “It was such a good time. I really hope it was a life changing experience for them.”

By all accounts, it was. Reimer asked his students to keep a journal and share their observations.

“That performance- without a doubt- was the coolest thing I have ever done. The huge crowd, the mountain backdrop, the community band, and the dancers made it incredible,” said Tyler Alberico, ‘24. “The energy was truly electric. I will never forget that night.”

For Ben Beck, ‘23, the trip was “beyond priceless.”

“Words cannot describe just how exceptional it was,” he said. “It helped me to grow musically, culturally, and personally- all things with unlimited value.”

Julian Cruz, ‘23 [Music Creative Studies](#), said “the whole experience was eye opening and nothing short of amazing.”

“I’m used to people cheering after pieces. But, knowing that this music was new for most of the audience, their applause meant a lot. It wasn’t just them saying ‘good job playing it right.’ It felt like they were saying ‘thank you for sharing your culture with us,’” he said.

The Wind Ensemble is composed of the University’s most accomplished wind and percussion performers, with the majority majoring in music. Traveling abroad, Reimer said, is a key way for musicians to build their confidence and expand their worldviews. [Study abroad](#) is also one of the four pillars of a Christopher Newport education.

“It proves to them that they can do this,” he said.

The trip not only gifted Asuncion with a musical experience that she found enchanting and fortifying, it also brought her happiness.

“Being in university with the stress of finances, work, and homework, you start to forget the fun life,” said Asuncion, who plans to stay at Christopher Newport for a fifth year to obtain her [Master of Arts in Teaching](#) degree. “This trip brought back the joy in my life and opened my eyes to a whole other world of culture and beauty. This trip definitely changed my perspective on life and reminded me of things to look forward to.”
