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# Florida Orchestra Broadens Student Experience at USFSP

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ST. PETERSBURG, Fla. – In an intimate classroom setting, honors students experienced the musical mastery of Jeff Multer, concertmaster of the Florida Orchestra, as part of a new partnership designed to foster students' understanding and appreciation for classical music. Every student in the room was fixated on Multer throughout his performance, captivated by every note that came from his nearly 150-year-old violin.

"I think it broadens people's perspectives," said freshman graphic design student Carmela Zabala. "I think a lot of people aren't really familiar with classical music, and I think it's an opportunity to see it live and make it more personal."

Thomas Smith, Honors Program director and associate professor of political science, coordinated with Multer to have guest lectures and performances to expose students to the orchestra.

"This is the first step in a budding relationship between USF St. Petersburg and the Florida Orchestra," Smith said. "I want the students to focus on the dedication and the discipline that goes into playing and performing at this very high level."

Multer spoke with the honors students about the work ethic necessary to play the violin for the Florida Orchestra.

"You can't just want to play the violin," Multer said. "You have to actually work at it really, really hard for a very, very long time."

One of seven in his family to graduate from The Juilliard School, Multer began playing at five years old and has performed all over the world. In addition to his work with the Florida Orchestra, Multer has received several concertmaster appointments with other groups, including the Colorado Symphony and the Echternacht Festival in Luxembourg.

"I think it's good to look at how much hard work it takes to get there," Zabala said. "And I feel that it can maybe inspire you to apply the same amount of work to your own interests. The more you learn about something and are involved, the more it's going to help you."

Multer brought vouchers on behalf of the Florida Orchestra for students to attend Multer's performance of Tchaikovsky's Violin Concerto on Saturday, Jan. 29. Multer also met with honors students in February before performing Beethoven's Symphony No. 9 on Feb. 26. Multer is planning on visiting music appreciation and history courses to extend the partnership beyond the Honors Program.

The partnership between USF St. Petersburg and the Florida Orchestra will continue to develop and provide students more exposure to classical music and the orchestra's work in the community.

"It adds a dimension to the students' life that they wouldn't otherwise have," Smith said. "It worked out nicely, so we're going to keep doing this."

-USF St. Petersburg-



**Jeff Multer**