

# Department of Music at Dartmouth College

## Erich Kunzel Class of 1957 Fund

The Erich Kunzel Class of 1957 Fund was established by the Dartmouth Class of 1957 in honor of their classmate, a prominent conductor, who was enthusiastic about encouraging music students at Dartmouth. The Kunzel Fund supports three kinds of activities:

- On-campus or off-campus student musical performances
- Undergraduate musical research
- Travel grants to pursue off-campus music-related projects

Project support is normally limited to a maximum of \$2,000.

Project proposals are reviewed by the Music Department three times a year for projects to be undertaken during the following term. That is, if you are seeking support for a Summer project, you should plan to apply for support in the Spring. The annual deadlines are as follows.

Support for Winter term	Deadline: October 15
Support for Spring term	Deadline: February 15
Support for Summer OR Fall term	Deadline: April 15

Please email the complete proposal to the Music Department administrator  
Samantha Candon at: [Samantha.Candon@Dartmouth.edu](mailto:Samantha.Candon@Dartmouth.edu)

### PROJECT PROPOSAL

Eligibility: Currently enrolled Dartmouth undergraduates who will undertake their project prior to graduation. (You may undertake your project during an “off” term, but you may not, for example, undertake it the summer after your commencement.)

1. Name: Tanaka Chikati  
[redacted]
2. Email address: \_\_\_\_\_  
[redacted]
3. Phone number: \_\_\_\_\_  
2025
4. Dartmouth class: \_\_\_\_\_
5. Major(s) and, if applicable, minor(s): Music, International Studies
6. Timeframe for the proposed activity: June 13th to August 1st
7. Amount requested: 2500

8. Project description (~500 words): Describe the work you plan to undertake and explain how your project relates to other music-related activities in your life, whether or not connected to Dartmouth.

When I was 9 years old, I wanted to learn how to play the mbira dzaVadzimu. This instrument is integral to the Shona people, and has 24 keys. It is used in sacred ceremonies called "Mapira". During the ceremony we communicate with our ancestors and get guidance from them. My parents, worried about the strong ancestral ties that this instrument has, and how it puts people into trances, refused to allow me to play this mbira. We came to a compromise, and I started learning the Nyunganyunga mbira which has 15 keys and no ancestral ties. Now that I am older, I want to reclaim the knowledge that I was denied at a young age. I want to learn how to play the mbira dzaVadzimu.

This summer, I will learn how to make and play the mbira dzaVadzimu under the instruction of Irene Chigamba. Her family has been playing the mbira for generations and passing this knowledge down to others like Dr. Tanyaradzwa Tawengwa, a Princeton University alumna, and many other successful mbira players. The mbira realm is a male dominated space, from the mbira makers to the mbira players. As a woman, I hope to enter this realm and learn not only how to play the mbira but how to make it.

In my senior year of highschool, I attempted to make a mbira, but because of the pandemic, many complications arose and I could not complete the project. I am hoping to complete the dream I had, and make a mbira that I can proudly call my own.

When I was researching how to make a mbira, I realised that there is a lack of documentation of the process. The only book I found was made by someone who wasn't Shona. I would like to record the process of making a mbira and archive the process, so that we can expand the access to knowledge about how to make it. I would also like to record the mbira lessons so that I can teach other women who have an interest in this instrument. I intend to do research, increase my scholarship and keep Shona music alive.

9. Project preparation (~300 words): Describe any preparation you have undertaken or plan to undertake prior to the start of your project.

In my senior year of Highschool, I started making a mbira but I could not finish the project due to COVID complications. I also did some research on the mbira, which you can access here:

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1P52GcU8rE5vQwGCsp8K1OTQVPh1i3wTRRJcBoNY2zZI/edit?usp=sharing> .

I intend to continue this research with Irene Chigamba over the summer.

In 2019, I worked at the National Institute of Allied Arts in Zimbabwe. I watched phenomenal mbira players perform, and I always wanted to learn how they were making the music that they were making.

I intend to create a website that can serve as an archive for the knowledge that I will acquire over the summer, and I am currently taking a CS class in order to familiarize myself with design.

10. List any coursework or extracurricular activities, whether or not in the Music Department, relevant to your project (~300 words).

I took "Songwriting 1" with Professor Alvarez in the fall term. This class equipped me with the tools that I will use to write my own music. I wrote two songs with the Nyunganyunga mbira, and I hope to write more with the mbira dzaVadzimu. In the winter term, I took "Sonic Arts 1" with Professor Fure. This class equipped me with the skills to use Ableton as a digital audio workspace. I will be able to record mbira music, master, and release it, all thanks to this class. I also took "Noise" with Professor Alvarez. This class enabled me to explore the different ranges of my voice and find comfort in making weird sounds. Mbira music, in contrast to Western Music, includes many sounds such as shrieks, screams, and ululations. This class helped me appreciate those sounds, which I will make in the summer. I am part of the Coast Jazz ensemble under the instruction of Taylor Ho Barnum. I currently play the marimba, and I would love to add the mbira dzaVadzimu to the band, after my summer lessons.

11. Budget: Provide an **itemized budget** of anticipated costs and expenses. Please note that the Kunzel Fund typically does not support the purchase of equipment. Please consult with Jones Media Lab and the Music Department for equipment needs.

Plane ticket to Zimbabwe: 900 USD

Cost of Lessons: 15 dollars/hour x 9 hours a week for 7 weeks = 945 USD

Materials for mbira making and traditional dance outfit making: 655 USD

- 4-pound hammer
- Anvil
- Hardwood of 180mm (w) x 230mm (l) x 30mm (d)
- Impact Drill
- 15 combination drill bit set
- 4 fasteners
- Eyebolt and nut M6 x 50
- 1.5mm of 6mm high tensile steel rod
- 1 steel rod of 4mm
- 1 steel rod of 5mm
- Hacksaw
- Chisel
- Mallet
- Sandpaper

12. Please provide the name of a Dartmouth faculty member, Hopkins Center ensemble director, or other music professional who can speak to the quality of your proposal and your preparation to undertake the work you propose. **You should notify this sponsor prior to submitting your application.** If the sponsor is not affiliated with Dartmouth, please provide a brief explanation of your relationship to the individual and an email contact.

Cesar Alvarez, Ted Levin