

Member, Board of Supervisors
District 1



City and County of San Francisco

CONNIE CHAN

陳詩敏

第一區市參事

March 6, 2026

Speaker Emerita Nancy Pelosi
U.S. House of Representatives
1236 Longworth H.O.B.
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Emerita Pelosi:

I am pleased to offer my support for the Community Music Center's request for Community Project Funding to assist with the acquisition and relocation of a permanent home for its Richmond District Branch in San Francisco.

Founded in 1921, Community Music Center (CMC) has served San Francisco through its mission of providing high-quality music education that is accessible to people of all ages, backgrounds, and incomes. For more than 40 years, CMC has served the Richmond District, operating from the same neighborhood location and becoming a trusted cultural anchor for residents across the westside of San Francisco. With the pending loss of their longtime space, CMC is working to secure a new permanent home for its Richmond District Branch.

CMC's Richmond District Branch serves over 600 students through lessons, ensembles, and community-based programs annually, while employing over 40 professional teaching artists in the community. CMC operates a unique neighborhood choir program that engages older adults and adults with disabilities to address social isolation and loneliness among our aging population in the neighborhood. The center also partners with SFUSD to provide culturally responsive music education programs that help address equity gaps in access to arts education for public school students.

This effort represents an opportunity to stabilize and strengthen an institution that has played an essential role in San Francisco's cultural and educational life for more than a century. Federal support through the Community Project Funding program will help ensure that Community Music Center can continue its legacy of providing accessible music education rooted in the Richmond community for generations to come.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Connie Chan".

Connie Chan
San Francisco Board of Supervisors, District 1

March 6th, 2026

Dear Richmond District Friends,

Sharon Wayne
7807 Geary Blvd.
San Francisco, CA
94121
swayne@sfcmc.org

I am a longtime resident of the Richmond District. I first moved here in 1989 and, after an east coast hiatus, returned to my beloved Outer Richmond for good in 2019. The San Francisco Community Music Center has been the center of my and my family's life in many ways.

Both of my now-adult children studied music at CMC: my son took piano and sax lessons, and played in the beginning Jazz Ensemble; my daughter sang in CMC's tuition-free Children's Chorus, took piano lessons, and still studies voice at CMC, all of which have prepared her to attend Ruth Asawa School High School of the Arts (RASOTA) and to pursue a college degree in music. I first connected with CMC as an adult student myself, singing in the Coro de Camara at the Mission Branch.

Once I learned about this incredible school, I applied to teach Classical Guitar at CMC. Being at the Richmond District Branch (RDB) of CMC has given me so many opportunities to stretch and grow as a music teacher and as an artist. I currently have a studio of around 20 private lesson students at RDB, ranging in age from 6 to 60's. I also accompany the Older Adult Choir there every Tuesday morning, and I got to develop a new CMC Sparks beginning guitar group class for kids from 6-8 years old, from which students have continued with private lessons, and even into a beginning guitar orchestra!

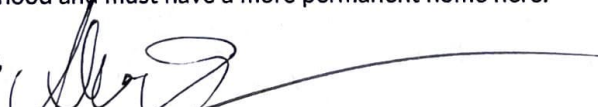
As a musician, I have benefited greatly from the stability of teaching at CMC, and have also made wonderful connections there. I have premiered works by fellow faculty composers, collaborated with faculty on artistic pursuits and projects, and shared the stage with both colleagues and our Older Adult choir members at venues ranging from SF senior centers to the CMC Shenson Faculty Series to the big Yerba Buena Festival. Much of this work has been supported by CMC faculty grants.

My private students, many of whom receive much-needed tuition-assistance, are very committed. Most continue to study for years, and I get to watch them grow as musicians, and to get to know many of their wonderful families. I have parents and children taking lessons with me. They take advantage of the many recital and performance opportunities that are offered here, and both young guitar students and our Older Adult Choir have performed at the annual Lunar New Year Festival here in the Richmond District. I am preparing young students who are planning to apply to RASOTA for guitar.

Over the course of my 40 years of teaching, across five community music schools, Santa Clara University, and SFCM, the sense of joy and community here, among students and teachers alike, is stronger than anywhere I have ever been. Every week I see our Older Adult Choir members forming deep connection, singing together, chatting, and often arriving or leaving together at the end of class.

I love being able to walk to my work at the RDB, and running into my students and their families around the neighborhood. The Richmond Branch of the Community Music Center is and has been for generations an absolutely vital part of our neighborhood and must have a more permanent home here!

Sincerely,



Sharon Wayne, Guitar Instructor, Accompanist, and CMC Faculty Council Chair

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Office of the Speaker Emerita
90 Seventh Street, Suite 2-800
San Francisco, CA 94103

Dear Speaker Pelosi,

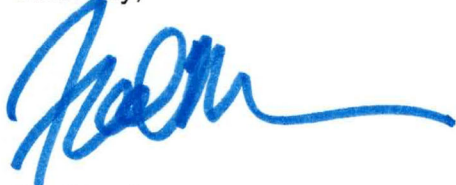
For decades, the Shenson Foundation has been proud to support the work of Community Music Center. Our partnership with CMC reflects a shared belief that access to music education and cultural participation should be available to everyone, regardless of financial means. Over many years, we have seen firsthand how deeply this remarkable organization enriches the lives of San Franciscans of all ages and backgrounds.

CMC's commitment to accessibility, artistic excellence, and community connection has helped thousands of people discover their creativity and find belonging through music. The Shenson Foundation has been honored to support many milestones in the organization's growth, including the expansion of CMC's Mission District campus and the extraordinary growth of its scholarship and tuition assistance programs. These investments have opened the doors of music education to generations of students who might otherwise never have had the opportunity to study music.

Because of this long history, I know how thoughtfully and responsibly Community Music Center approaches its work. The proposed expansion and permanent home for CMC's Richmond District Branch represents an exciting and important next chapter. For more than 40 years, CMC has served families, students, and teaching artists in the Richmond District, and establishing a permanent home there will ensure that this vibrant community resource continues to flourish for decades to come.

I cannot imagine a more deserving investment. Community Music Center has demonstrated time and again its ability to strengthen neighborhoods, celebrate the cultural richness of San Francisco, and transform lives through music. I am proud to support this effort and enthusiastic about the opportunity to help bring an expanded, permanent home for CMC to the Richmond District.

Sincerely,



Fred Levin
The Shenson Foundation

March 5, 2026

Speaker Emerita Nancy Pelosi
US House of Representatives
Washington, DC

Dear Congresswoman Pelosi,

I am writing to express my wholehearted support for Community Music Center's application for a Community Project Funding grant, and also to share my experience – not only as a CMC student, but also as the mother of a CMC student with special needs. My daughter and I both learn music at CMC's Richmond District Branch, Mission Branch and at one of their partner organizations, the OMI Senior Center.

My time with CMC began when I joined the CMC OMI Senior Center Choir along with my daughter, Joyce who is in her early twenties and has autism. We learned about the choir when one of Joyce's friends, also with special needs, and his father joined this choir which serves older adults and adults with disabilities. They highly recommended it and since Joyce and I both love singing, we were happy to join. We found that the choir director, Beth Wilmurt, is very skilled at teaching older and disabled singers. I love the way she teaches and chooses songs that are appropriate and enjoyable for older and special needs singers.

After some time singing together in the choir, Joyce and three of her friends, and myself and their parents, approached Beth about forming a smaller choir for special needs adults at CMC's Richmond District Branch. Beth approached CMC staff about this idea, and they approved it. This small group is bringing out everyone's potential. One member is almost non-verbal, but Beth encouraged her mom, assuring her it would be good for her. Sure enough, she joined and started following the tunes, which functioned as speech therapy for her. Soon she started to remember the songs and sing along! Three of the four singers have behavioral issues, but because they love singing and the way Beth teaches, these problems lessen while they are in class. Beth makes choral singing fun and easy for all four of them and they enjoy their time in class, with all of their moms sitting nearby in the same room and singing along.

Joyce and I still sing with the OMI choir. I look forward to it every week, because taking care of a disabled adult is very stressful, and the group atmosphere of the choir and the songs we are singing are a great relief. Every Friday, we have an afternoon that's all about music – first OMI choir rehearsal, then a 2-hour break, and then Joyce's chamber choir from 4:00 - 5:00 pm.

Because of singing, and the way Beth teaches, Joyce has had fewer behavior problems. In addition to her choirs, she studies violin, and voice at the Richmond District Branch and drumming at Mission Branch.

Community Music Center, and the Richmond District Branch specifically, have a huge impact on my family because there are not many activities for disabled young adults in San Francisco. I wish there were more organizations like CMC who know how to accommodate special needs, so people like my daughter can have more activities they enjoy and benefit from. I cannot emphasize enough how important CMC's presence and services are to the Richmond District, and to families all over the west side of San Francisco. I urge you to consider their request for funding and award the highest amount possible.

Sincerely,



Julia Zhang

CMC OMI Choir member, CMC parent

March 5, 2026

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to express my support for the Community Music Center (CMC) and its endeavors to establish a new and permanent Richmond District Branch after 40 years of service in that area. I am excited about CMC's new initiative and its potential to preserve and expand accessible music education for residents of the Richmond District and surrounding neighborhoods through private lessons, group classes, and ensembles for students of all ages, tuition-free ensembles for youth, and tuition-free choirs for older and disabled adults.

Mission Neighborhood Centers / MNC Inspiring Success has collaborated with CMC since 2011, when we partnered to launch the tuition-free MNC Coro Solera Neighborhood Choir for older adults and adults with disabilities. The choir is taught bilingually in Spanish and English by Martha Rodriguez-Salazar and Jennifer Peringer and sings songs in Spanish from Latin America. The choir has an enthusiastic membership of 40 singers who stayed together throughout the Covid pandemic, and now come again to MNC to practice, sing, help organize concerts, and perform in the community. The choir has played a vital role in bringing in new people to the Center who subsequently learn about other services and resources.

This choir led to CMC's participation in the UCSF led and NIH funded research study which through the development of 12 new choirs, it was determined that singing in a choir engages older adults more fully in life and decreases loneliness, both important social determinants of health. We appreciate and value our partnership with Community Music Center and are proud that our work together is part of the creation story of their Neighborhood Choir Program which now is embedded at 17 neighborhood and senior centers around the City. One of those choirs meets at CMC's Richmond Branch in collaboration with the Richmond Neighborhood Center.

I hope you will consider CMC's proposal for funding and award it fully. I would be thrilled to hear that our fellow San Franciscans on the West Side of our great city will continue to enjoy the enduring benefits of music participation.

Sincerely,

Aurora Alvarado

Aurora Alvarado
Chief Programs Officer



Phone.
415-206-7752



Website.
mncsf.org



Address.
362 Capp St, San Francisco, CA 94110

March 5, 2026

Letter of Support for Community Music Center

Three years ago, on April 24, 2023, I had the honor of speaking at the Community Music Center Gala as a senior at Ruth Asawa School of the Arts and a student in the Mission District Young Musicians Program. At that time, I spoke about the impact CMC had on my journey as a young musician. As part of a letter of support for Community Music Center's efforts to relocate and establish a permanent home in the Richmond District, I would like to share an update to my remarks and reflect on how CMC continues to shape my life after graduation.

I began playing the violin in the fourth grade when I was nine years old, and at the time I had no idea what I was doing. A year later I joined my school mariachi program, and soon after my teacher created an ensemble called Mariachi La Misión. Being part of that group helped me strengthen my connection to mariachi music and to the cultural traditions I grew up with.

Around the same time, I began taking violin lessons at the Community Music Center when I was ten years old, and later voice lessons when I was fourteen. At CMC I learned not only to play with technique, but also how to play with heart. The teachers, mentors, and community there helped me grow both as a musician and as a person.

After graduating from high school in 2023, my journey with music and CMC continued in ways I never expected. That summer, shortly after graduation, I was invited to join Mariachi Femenil Orgullo Mexicano, the first and only all-female mariachi in the Bay Area. Becoming part of this professional ensemble was an important step in my growth as a musician and performer.

Later that year, on September 16, 2023, I performed with Mariachi Femenil Orgullo Mexicano at Fiesta de las Americas in San Francisco. This performance was especially meaningful to me because it was my first major public performance with the group and it took place at an event where I had performed with my earlier ensemble. That same day, my former teacher and now mentor, Martha Rodríguez-Salazar, along with Chantel Hernandez, coordinator of the Mission District Young Musicians Program, approached me about helping start an adult mariachi class at Community Music Center. It was a meaningful full-circle moment to be invited back to the same community where I had once been a student, this time as a teacher helping build a new program.

In January of 2024, we officially launched the adult mariachi program at CMC. Since then, I have continued teaching there and have also had the opportunity to be involved in other programs, including participating in CMC's mariachi summer camp in June 2025. Teaching and working with younger musicians reminded me how powerful music education can be and how important spaces like CMC are for young people to grow creatively and build confidence.

Beyond CMC, I have also continued giving back to the broader mariachi community. I currently volunteer with the SFUSD mariachi program, teaching middle school and high school students who are beginning their own journeys in mariachi. Being able to mentor students in the same school district where I once learned feels incredibly meaningful.

Music continues to shape my academic and professional goals as well. I am currently a student at City College of San Francisco and will be graduating in May with an Associate in Arts Degree for Transfer in Child and Adolescent Development and an Associate in Science degree in Liberal Arts and Sciences with an Emphasis in Social and Behavioral Sciences. This fall, I will be attending San José State University, where I plan to pursue two bachelor's degrees: one in Music Education and one in Child and Adolescent Development so that I can continue working with young people through music.

Looking back, it is incredible to see how the opportunities provided by Community Music Center helped shape the path I am on today. What began as violin lessons and mariachi classes grew into mentorship, teaching, and a commitment to giving back to the same community that supported me.

I will always be grateful for my time as a student at CMC and now as a teacher within the same community that helped raise me.

Sincerely,

Daphne Gonzalez Cambambia

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Daphne", written in a cursive style with a large initial "D" and a horizontal line underlining the name.



March 3, 2026

To Whom It May Concern:

I am pleased to offer this letter of support for the Community Music Center (CMC) and its efforts to establish a permanent, relocated home for its Richmond District Branch, which serves students and families across the Richmond District and the western portion of San Francisco.

For more than 35 years, San Francisco Unified School District has partnered with the Community Music Center to connect students from across the city to their tuition-free Young Musicians Programs. Students on the west side of San Francisco, including Alice Fong Yu Alternative School, Lafayette Elementary School, and Argonne Elementary School, A.P. Giannini Middle School, Abraham Lincoln High School and George Washington High School, rely on the Richmond District Branch for consistent, high-quality weekly instruction.

For more than a decade, CMC has also been a key partner in supporting SFUSD's Mariachi programs. Their teaching artists help develop repertoire, provide direct instruction, and support community-based cultural opportunities, including performances connected to San Francisco Carnaval. This partnership plays an important role in expanding cultural equity in music education. CMC's artists bring essential expertise and authentic cultural knowledge that strengthens instruction for our students. In turn, SFUSD refers Mariachi students, along with other historically underserved Latinx and African American students, to CMC's tuition-free programs for deeper musical study. These opportunities help students build both artistic skill and a strong sense of cultural pride and community connection.

SFUSD views the Community Music Center as a vital partner that shares our commitment to ensuring every student has access to a high-quality arts education that is rigorous, sustained, and culturally relevant. We strongly encourage your support for the Community Music Center's efforts to secure a permanent facility in the Richmond District so that it can continue serving students and families across San Francisco for years to come.

Sincerely,

Ron Machado

Director, Arts Department

San Francisco Unified School District