



MAKING THE MELODY

CCHS fine arts department teacher Shelynn Scott plans to build the Chorus, Piano and Guitar program for students.

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VARIETY STAFFER ALIYAH WYMBS:
WHAT WAS THE MOMENT THAT YOU REALIZED YOU WANTED TO PURSUE A CAREER IN FINE ARTS?

AW: AS THE NEW CCHS CHORUS TEACHER, HOW WILL YOU ENCOURAGE STUDENTS TO APPRECIATE ALL GENRES OF MUSIC?

Clarke Central High School fine arts department teacher Shelynn Scott: First day, sixth grade band, I had Mr. Ayers. He was our band director and I was enamored with the way that he helped us all get our instruments out and put them together. We all made a sound. It wasn't the best, but it was a lot of fun and I was just really pumped up and energized about middle school band. I remember telling my parents I want to do what he just did.

SS: That's my job to invoke that appreciation. I can't make you like it, but I gotta at least sell it. I gotta show you, "Hey, this is what I like about it, this is what I find interesting about it and this is what I've taken from it to make me a better musician." You might not be all that interested in history, but this is how history can be connected to something else that you want to do. If you don't know this and learn this, you can't be successful at what it is that you want to do. Everything's a building block.

Above: HAVING HARMONY: Clarke Central High School fine arts department teacher Shelynn Scott leads the chorus in a new song on Sept. 21. Scott, a CCHS alumna, returned home to bring chorus into a new light. "I'm an introvert. I found ways to be successful within being an introvert. It's not a disadvantage. In my classroom, I'm more at home than I am at my actual home because I'm doing what I'm passionate about," Scott said "All these years I've been a singer has helped me teach my kids and get through to them and build relationships with them." Photo by Isabelle Duncan

AW: SINCE YOU'VE TAUGHT CHORUS TO A WIDE RANGE OF STUDENTS FROM ELEMENTARY TO HIGH SCHOOL, WHY DO YOU THINK ENROLLMENT DROPS IN HIGH SCHOOL?

SS: There's no chorus at the middle school, so you have music from kindergarten to fifth grade. Then, when they go to middle school, they can either do band or orchestra. So, when there's not a presence and there's not a chorus teacher there, cultivating those relationships and building those skills creates a deficit at the high school. So, I gotta go to middle schools and show that there's an interest. There are kids at the middle school that want to sing in this county. I got to show that those kids want to be involved. Once I prove that and prove myself, then I will see the fruits of the labor here at the high school and we'll have a booming program here.

AW: HOW DO YOU PLAN TO BUILD UP THE CHORUS PROGRAM WHILE BEING HERE SINCE THAT'S ONE OF YOUR GOALS?

SS: I have to go to the middle schools. Next semester, I unfortunately I have guitar, piano and music tech, so that means there's no singing going on here. So when I leave here, I'll go to Clarke Middle (School) on Mondays and Wednesdays. I'll go to Burney Harris on Tuesdays and Thursdays. I'll put in an hour and a half whatever it takes, to get that number base up. I will continue working with the kids that I'm establishing relationships with right now. We will have morning rehearsal, teach (during) my day and then I'll go to the middle schools.

AW: HOW ARE YOU GOING TO CONTINUE YOUR LEGACY SINCE YOUR MOM, GEORGIA SCOTT, TAUGHT IN THE MATH DEPARTMENT HERE IN THE DISTRICT?

SS: My mom had math tutoring when she got to CCHS. She taught all day. She ran the tutoring for the entire school. Then, (when) we got home, we (would) drive in the driveway, there'd be two cars sitting there for math tutoring. She loved it thoroughly. She's very passionate as she took her job very, very seriously. She took her responsibility teaching math very seriously. She thought it was just disrespectful not to come in 100% every day for students and teach them the way that they deserve to be taught, love on them the way that they deserve to be loved. So I got to remember that and stay focused and stay passionate about what I'm doing.

Top, middle and bottom: PURSUE PASSION: Clarke Central High School fine arts department teacher Shelynn Scott plays piano in Room 261 on Sept. 21. Scott taught across Georgia at multiple schools in the past, including Oconee Middle School and Loganville High School, but believes that no matter the school, teaching music brings her students together. "It's different, different demographics. But the music is always the equalizer, the commonality," Scott said. "Kids are kids, no matter where you are, and I was able to relate to middle schoolers. I was able to relate to high schoolers. I just go in love, teach them. We do what we gotta do." Photos by Isabelle Duncan

