

# STRINGS

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## Rachel Barton Pine's Global HeartStrings Heading to Haiti

By [Stephanie Powell](#) posted April 15, 2015



[Global HeartStrings](#), one of three programs under violinist [Rachel Barton Pine's foundation](#), will be sending a donation of instruments, strings, bows, music stands, rosin, reeds, and method books to Haiti for aspiring musicians.

Global HeartStrings has partnered with [BLUME Haiti](#), a nonprofit that facilitates musical education on the island, to provide instruments and basic supplies for students and teachers who don't have access to what many musicians take for granted as everyday items.

The instruments and supplies will be split among all of the 18 music programs affiliated with BLUME Haiti, and will be in use throughout the country.

"It's amazing how much stuff accumulates in our closets," Pine says of what sparked the program's inception. "If we switch to a different brand

of shoulder bar, rosin, or chin rest we put our old one in a box somewhere to gather dust. All of those items are so useful for people who either don't have enough money to buy them themselves, or who don't have access to such things because they are simply unavailable where they live."

Pine and her sister Hannah Barton, Global HeartStrings' administrative director, recognized the need for a program after receiving messages from musicians in other countries asking if Pine would send her discarded strings to them.

This is Global HeartStrings third international donation, with two previous projects working with the [National Symphony Orchestra Ghana](#) and a group of young people in Nigeria. For Haiti, the program has collected 38 instruments: 20 stringed instruments, 18 woodwinds; 532 individual strings; 326 reeds, and 258 method books.

"We encourage people to donate—whether it's a youth orchestra, a professional orchestra, a school, a teaching studio, or a violin shop," Pine says over the phone after a rehearsal in Los Angeles. "Often [these places] have lots of stuff that they just don't need and all of it is useful for people in developing countries."

A milestone for the students in Haiti, Pine notes, is that it will be the first time they will all be able to play together simultaneously. Previously, the students had been playing out of different method books and taking turns sharing instruments.

“Even if it’s an American program in an underprivileged area, you still just assume everyone is playing out of the same brand of school book, that there will be enough rosin for each person, or that someone can replace a string,” Pine says. “Even with the most struggling musicians [in the US], there are still things that we take for granted that over there are actually not so necessarily plausible. It’s really eye-opening.”

The Rachel Barton Pine Foundation has two other noteworthy programs—its instrument loan program and grants for education and career, which both cater to talented students and young artists aiming for a professional career in music, who are facing financial challenges. Pine notes that all three programs work effortlessly well together.

“Our young artist recipients have helped gather supplies for Global HeartStrings,” Pine says. “When we get a donation for the loan program, and if the instrument is not quite the quality that would be appropriate for [one of our young artists] we will often tell the donor, ‘well, this doesn’t quite fit our young artists’ needs, but perhaps you would consider donating it to our Global HeartStrings program’ and vice versa.

“If Global HeartStrings gets a donation that is such high quality that perhaps it should stay with a professional young artist as opposed to staying with a student, then we’ll ask for the donor to donate to the instrument loan program. So there is a nice relationship between the two programs.”

Pine says that Global HeartStrings will continue to support its first three projects by continuing to send supplies. The program is also currently reviewing queries from a few Central American countries as potential next stops on its mission.

“We’re evaluating and we’re very open to receiving more requests,” Pine says. “We’re hoping to support as many people as possible.”

Involvement in organizing supply-gathering drives and donation-collecting boxes is wide-ranging when it comes to age, she says.

“What’s been really cool is to see how excited American teenagers and college kids get because it’s not just professional colleagues—it’s also students who [collect donations] for Global HeartStrings,” Pine says. “The model that I like to describe it as is [similar to] clothing and food drives. You just have a box there, it fills up, and you send it on. That’s exactly what people have been doing with these music supplies.

“These youth orchestra kids have taken it on to do their own supply drives, which is a great way that kids can do something really substantive and meaningful to help others.”

Financial contributions are accepted through the Rachel Barton Pine Foundation’s website by clicking the “Donate Now” button. The website also features forms for donating instruments and supplies, and instructions for setting up your own donation box or supply-gathering drive.