

Hoff-Barthelson Music School

Meet HBMS Dean of Programs Chris Kenniff



Hoff-Barthelson Music School is pleased to announce the appointment of Chris Kenniff as its new Dean of Programs, effective November 29, 2018. In this vital role, Chris will lead the ongoing development and delivery of the School's comprehensive music education programs for students of all ages and at all levels of development.

"As I join HBMS, I am struck by the school's comprehensive music programs; its reputation for rigorous, conservatory-style training; and its excellent, committed faculty," said Kenniff. "I have long considered Hoff-Barthelson to be an aspirational model for its thoughtful approach to student placement, and the value the school places upon offering students an opportunity to 'go deep' at all levels of their training through ensembles, clubs, outreach programs, and musicianship training."

Chris comes to Hoff-Barthelson having served for seven years as Director of the Mason Gross School of the Arts Extension Division at Rutgers University. Under his leadership, the Division honed its mission and increased the breadth of programs offered to provide education for students from child and adult beginners to advanced students preparing to enter leading conservatories.

"Impressively, the Division grew more than 300% during Chris's tenure," said Hoff-Barthelson's Executive Director, Ken Cole.

Chris has an accomplished background as both a musician and an educator. He holds *magna cum laude* Bachelor and Master of Music degrees from Southern Methodist University in Dallas and an Artist Diploma from Indiana University.

A classical guitarist, he has won numerous awards including first prizes at the Concours de Guitare (Quebec) and the National Foundation of Music Clubs Biannual Competition. As a teacher, he developed and maintained robust classical guitar studios at Kean University (2001–2012) and the Wharton Institute for the Performing Arts (1997–2004), employing both Suzuki and traditional methods to teach beginning to advanced collegiate and pre-collegiate students, including frequent award winners who have gone on to pursue professional performance careers. In recognition of his extraordinary teaching abilities, the American String Teacher's Association of New Jersey honored Chris with their 2008 *Teacher of the Year Award*.

In addition to his lifelong commitment to music and music education, Chris is a self-professed coffee snob, avid hiker, and aspiring chess player. He and his wife Gretel are the proud parents of two school aged sons, both of whom are eager to continue their music studies at HBMS.