

SINFONIA MEXICANA

MARIACHI

YOUTH ACADEMY

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The Sinfonia Mexicana of San Bernardino established the Mariachi Youth Academy in February 2009 at the Sturges Auditorium for the Performing Arts as an opportunity for area youth to learn and perform Mariachi music as well as understand its origins and cultural significance.

The Mariachi Youth Academy's Mission – Is to establish a continuing and comprehensive course of study that will challenge and enhance the student's ability to read music, master their instruments and enhance stage presence through the art of performing mariachi music.

Our Goal – Is to prepare and encourage academy students to further their musical education. The program instills responsibility, discipline and stresses the advantages of higher education.

The Academy currently has forty-seven students that attend middle and high schools from San Bernardino, Rialto, Fontana, Colton, Bloomington, Yucaipa, Riverside, Oak Hills, Phelan and Hesperia. Classes are currently being taught from beginner to advanced students.

With world-class musicians/instructors guiding the program, the Mariachi Youth Academy is poised to be a nationally recognized learning institution for the advancement and promotion of the art of mariachi music and performance.



Oscar Tostado

Director – Mariachi Youth Academy

STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

EDUARDO TORRES



My name is Eduardo Torres and I'm a first generation American that's very proud of my Mexican heritage, of which was highly influenced by my parents. My mother first opened my initial perspective to it when she enrolled me, and two of my other brothers, to Ballet Folklórico, a dancing program at our local church, which included a large array of different styles of dances from all over México. I grew fond of the different styles, but I didn't necessarily like dancing them and neither did my brothers. One of my brothers told my mother of a mariachi program at that very church, so he and my youngest brother enrolled. I refused to join because of my unpleasant experience with ballet folklórico. Months passed until I heard an instrument, the vihuela, which made me change my mind. My mother surprised, because of my initial refusal, was quite dubious and believed I would not go far.

Upon being enrolled I started learning quite fast, because I became infatuated with the large, powerful sound of the . First, second and third chords in about two distinct keys is what I learned, not to mention the quickly paced rhythms of sones and huapangos, but

I was never told about music theory or reading sheet music, in fact, I really didn't even know why I played certain chords in certain situations or quite frankly what a chord was. I was only proficient in memorizing, which did come in handy for school, but I really needed the academic portion of music, which finally happened when I became part of Sinfonia's Mariachi Youth Academy. The Academy stresses music theory and the ability to read sheet music in order to improve musicality. It was difficult because I basically had to start from scratch, learning the basics of music theory, but it was worth it. Finally, I knew why I played chords in certain situations and not to mention what a chord was. I also excelled in my ability of improvisation, adding more chords based on the context of a musical piece and/or rhymes. Sinfonia Mexicana also provided me with the opportunity to perform in theaters, like the California Theater.

The music of my heritage and because of Sinfonia Mexicana, I now plan to major or minor in music at Cal State University San Bernardino. I am very grateful for Sinfonia Mexicana because it not only perpetuated my musical abilities, it also taught me many things that will aide me in other future professions.





CONCERTS & EVENTS

Special Appearance by the Sinfonia Mexicana Mariachi Youth Academy

MARIACHI CHRISTMAS

Featuring
**America's First
 All Female Mariachi
 Reyna de Los Angeles®
 and
 Grandeza Mexicana Folk
 Ballet Company**

Saturday, December 10, 2011
Performance begins at 7:30 PM

Sinfonia Mariachi Youth Academy's goal is to "challenge and enhance the student's musical ability" by teaching students to read music and musical theory. Mariachi music is inherently taught by learning how to play by ear with little, if any, emphasis in learning music theory and how to read music. The significance of learning these skills is to allow students to expand their musical knowledge beyond mariachi. These skills will also be helpful in opening doors in furthering their education. To many of these students, learning to read music has been a difficult challenge.

Academy instructors Cindy Shea, Alberto "Beto" Jimenez Maeda and Martin Barboza-Zarate have extensive knowledge and degrees in music. These instructors have been teaching students by using various methods to successfully overcome these musical/educational challenges.

I believe the Mariachi Youth Academy is accomplishing its goals of educating, building confidence, discipline and responsibility to

these students. With these core values, these students will have no limits to what they can achieve.

A beginner's class of 31 students, ages 8 through 12, was started February, 2011. Instruction includes the basics of music theory. Instruments will be introduced at a later time. Instruction for intermediate and advance Academy students continues. Students have also been practicing their music, singing and stage presence/performance.

On March 13, 2011, the Mariachi Youth Academy, with the Symphonie Jeunesse Orchestra, was the featured artist at the "Stars of Tomorrow" performance at the Sturges Center for the Fine Arts. The San Bernardino Valley Concert Association sponsored the event.

We extend "un gran abrazo" to our sponsors and Board members for recognizing the dedication and accomplishments of these students and instructors and allowing this wonderful program to continue.

Oscar Tostado

The Sinfonia Mexicana Mariachi Youth Academy is made possible by financial assistance from:



A Special Thank You to our Adopt a Student Mariachi Program Sponsors:

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On behalf of students of *Sinfonia Mexicana Mariachi Youth Academy*, we invite you to become involved as a sponsor of this worthwhile program. Your financial investment will be a motivational stepping stone for our youth as they pursue education and career goals. *Adopt a Student Mariachi Sponsorships* are available for one year or 2 years. A one-time gift or donation for our Scholarship Fund is also welcomed.

For further information, please contact Sinfonia Mexicana at 909 884-3228 or e-mail anthony@sinfoniamexicana.com

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