

# Amadeus Music Program

**Grant Type:** *Dollar and programming*

**Grant Amount:** *\$6,400 (2000); \$106,000 budgeted for 2014*

**Organization:** *Serimus Foundation*

## What was the objective of your grant or initiative?

Amadeus Music Program was originally designed to provide private piano lessons to children who otherwise could not afford them; lessons were taught by volunteer music teachers, including high school students, at local youth and family centers, elementary schools, and home studios. We wanted to make sure children who wanted to learn how to play piano had access to lessons.

## What was your approach?

We learned that providing lessons where low-income children tended to be—with volunteer teachers who may sometimes have conflicting priorities—could sometimes make the experience feel “discounted” or even undervalued.

Our goal became to provide the same high-quality lesson experience any other child would have access to: an experienced instructor paid for his or her time, new materials and lesson books, and lessons in a professional studio.

## What were the outsized results?

After many lessons learned, Amadeus today provides:

- Mentored music lessons of any kind taught in professional studios
- A middle-school instrument rental scholarship program
- Funding for an elementary schoolwide violin and mandolin program

Amadeus has also inspired the creation of a nonprofit music school headed by one of our first piano instructors from years ago and another Serimus Foundation program, Boundless, which provides lessons of any kind to underserved children.

The lessons we learned through Amadeus, our earliest program, informed and shaped our subsequent grantmaking and helped us hone in on the elements we feel are critical to the success of any program we run or support: to provide access to mentored enrichment and skill-based learning opportunities of a child’s choosing.

