



# Paul Beaudry '90 creates musical harmony with his jazz diplomacy and Intentional Collaboration

Paul Beaudry '90 has done more for diplomacy than most diplomats. A jazz musician and producer, he has toured dozens of countries since 2000 with several world-renowned jazz artists. Through the U.S. Department of State, he has also performed with his jazz quartet and met with audience members and other musicians.

Based on the success of his musical efforts, he has developed a program that he calls Intentional Collaboration, which brings the best of the music world into areas of conflict to promote dialogue and healing.

The New York-based jazz musician has also produced several albums for other artists and recorded three CDs on his own that include many original compositions.

He has collaborated and toured with jazz greats such as Steve Turre, Wycliffe Gordon, Allan Harris, Winard Harper and Eric Lewis, and he currently leads his own quartet — Paul Beaudry and Pathways.

Beaudry, who is also on the faculty at Teachers College at Columbia University, first listened to jazz on his father's radio. "We always had some kind music playing in the house, from Sinatra to Duke Ellington, with some classical thrown in as well," said Beaudry.

He learned the piano, trumpet and drums and performed with his middle school band and at SI, where he played drums for the SI orchestra and pep band.

Beaudry was impressed by the great education he had at SI, "from the high quality English classes to the emphasis on service outside the classroom. SI is one of the top schools in the Bay Area if not the state, and my teachers pushed us to be the best we could be. SI taught us to bring to the community as much as we could and mean something to the world."

He went on to study computer science at Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo, where he received a full scholarship. He also switched to the electric bass because "living in a dorm, I had to play something quieter than my drums and trumpet," said Beaudry. "I didn't want to make any enemies."

He also listened to more jazz, including Miles Davis, Dave Brubeck and Ahmad Jamal and eventually made the transition from an electric to an upright bass. Before graduating from Cal Poly, though, he studied at Cal State Northridge and U.C. San Diego to see if he could break into the music business in Southern California. He returned to Cal Poly "as I didn't want to leave my bachelor's degree unfinished."

His musicianship earned him a fellowship to the Aspen Music Festival and School. He went from there to the Berklee College of Music in Boston and later to Queens College in New York, earning, respectively, a second bachelor's in classical composition and a master's degree in jazz performance. He learned to arrange, compose and produce while switching between piano and bass.

He has made New York his home and base of operations since 2000. He has played throughout the U.S. and, in 2004, started performing internationally with Wycliffe Gordon and Steve Turre, with initial tours in Helsinki, Istanbul, Athens and Paris.

Three years later, he began performing abroad through the U.S. State Department's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, which sent a jazz quartet in which he was performing to the Middle East. There, Beaudry found himself in a region opposed to U.S. politics.

"We had to be on our best behavior. Our purpose was to establish a personal connection with the people we met. Governments, laws and alliances may change, but the culture of any country will outlast everything else. Our hope was to give people a real view of what Americans are and see for ourselves what life is like for people in other countries."

In one performance in Jordan, one audience member stood up and shouted when he realized that the U.S. State Department had sponsored the event. "He called us blood-sucking capitalists. We didn't know if he had a bomb on him. Our

bandleader simply told him that we were there to connect as people. He sat down and listened to us perform. We met him afterwards and had a great conversation and real fellowship with him."

Music is the perfect medium to make fellowship happen, Beaudry said, "because sound and music predate language and evoke physical and emotional responses that happen even before thought takes place. When a musician and audience experience the same song, they have no barriers. It's even more powerful when you dance in the same room or sing in the same church. Then you become part of one thing. It may be a cliché, but it's true: Music is the universal language."

His travels and education have also taught Beaudry another central truth, that "people around the world share three things in common: music, math and love, and the best music includes both math and love."

Since his first State Department trip, Beaudry has continued to work as an unofficial ambassador. After he started Paul Beaudry and Pathways in 2009, he traveled to Latin America in 2010. He has since played in 37 nations in Europe, Central Asia and Latin America, sponsored both by Jazz At Lincoln Center and the State Department.

Audiences in these countries experience a bit of America just by seeing the racial make-up of Beaudry's band. "Our saxophone player and piano player are white, I'm mixed and the drummer is black. That helps those abroad see our band a certain way, and they treat us more warmly than if we were entirely white. People know what African Americans have gone through."

Beaudry's band released a self-titled debut CD in 2010 and another album, *Americas* in 2012. His third album is about to debut. He also recently released a program he calls Intentional Collaboration to encourage dialogue and compassion among people from disparate cultures. "When you collaborate with someone, whether it's playing music on stage or negotiating a business deal, you first have to examine your intentions. Do you want to build consensus or simply prove you are right? You need to build upon the premise that you have compassion for others as well as yourself."

Given the diverse groups with whom he has performed, Beaudry has studied what combinations work best. "Diverse teams outperform homogenous teams, unless that diversity is forced upon a group. Everyone has to be on board, and then you find better results. If you're open to wide perspectives and are willing to grow, then it's easier to compromise."

Intentional Collaboration also involves paying attention to the different ways people communicate and perceive — visual, auditory and kinesthetic. "Once you identify this for yourself and your partners, then you need to alter your communication mode to meet the perception style of the person you're talking to. At the end, you need to evaluate your success and, if necessary, make adjustments."

Beaudry has given one seminar on Intentional Collaboration and is working on a website and further seminars to help create bridges similar to those he has built as a musician. "I'm used to collaborating with artists on stage, and I've seen that musicians make connections easily because we are willing to throw prejudices out the window. High-level jazz musicians are dedicated to our music, and we'll do whatever it takes to make a great performance happen."

He also works to create collaboration on the basketball court, where he coaches his 13-year-old son's team. "Ironically, I've had some ecstatic moments on stage, but even more coaching my son's team."

For more on Beaudry's efforts, go to [www.intentionalcollaboration.com](http://www.intentionalcollaboration.com) and [paulbeaudry.com](http://paulbeaudry.com). ∞

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A. Paul Beaudry switched from drums to stand-up bass while in college in order not to make enemies playing in close quarters.

B. Beaudry and the group he founded, Pathways, has played in dozens of countries around the world on tours funded by the U.S. Department of State. He is pictured here in Livingston, Guatemala, where he taught students musical lessons.