The three most common home states of the Class of 2018 are Connecticut, New York, and Massachusetts. The class is made up of 1,437 students from 33 states (plus District of Columbia), and 21 other countries.
THREE’S A CHARM
“WHEN WE CAME HERE, WE WERE JUST ENAMORED OF EVERYTHING. IT JUST FELT LIKE HOME. WE JUST LOVE IT HERE.”

— Zachary Gutierrez '16

Amazingly, they first began harmonizing when they were only 3 years old.

“We would be in the car and my dad would hear a song on the radio,” Zachary explains. “He would just hum a note and tell us to sing a third above the note, that note, and another third and we’d be making a chord. That way, we would figure out the harmony. It was kind of weird that we figured it out that way at 3 years old, but we did.”

It helped that their parents were musical. Their mother, Tammy Crook, was a professional country singer in a band when she was younger. Their father, Roland Gutierrez, a substance abuse case manager, played guitar and saxophone. The triplets all studied with the same voice teacher and began performing professionally at 14, singing in nursing homes and holding concerts around the region.

Now the three baritones call The Hartt School their home away from home. They say they knew immediately when they first toured the University that they had found their college.

“When we came here, we were just enamored of everything. It just felt like home. We just love it here,” says Zachary, the most talkative of the triplets.

One of their professors, Edward Bolkovac, the Primrose Fuller Professor of Choral Music, took them to breakfast at a local diner when they first visited the University. They ate and talked music.

“I never thought from that day we’d have such a strong relationship with him. He’s just very supportive and caring, very much like a father figure in a way,” Zachary says. “I think it’s that way with all the faculty here. They all definitely are very supportive and caring about students,” he adds.

Despite the occasional disagreement, they enjoy being in college together.

“For the most part, it’s very nice to have your brothers attending college with you because there’s that sibling support that, if you were an only child, you wouldn’t have,” Zachary explains.

At Hartt, they have learned about various types of music and possible careers. Evan and Chase are majoring in vocal performance, while Zachary is studying choral conducting. They’ve also been able to develop their voices individually. Each is working with his own voice teacher to create his own sound. Evan says his voice professor, Robert Barefield, chair of the classical voice department, knew exactly what he needed to work on right away.

“He has helped me so much in terms of opening up my voice. He really cares a lot about his students, and he really wants us to succeed. I’m very lucky,” Evan says.

The triplets share the same circle of friends at college. “We’re kind of a three-for-one deal,” Evan laughs.

They also admit to having a kind of telepathy that multiples seem to share. “We’ll just look at each other and know what the other one’s thinking,” he adds.

“We also have this thing a lot of our friends have witnessed when we have to sing together. Most people call it the creative process, but we call it the “de-creative” process. It’s basically just us bantering back and forth and being silly together,” Evan says.

“If we are at lunch, or even hanging out with our friends, and we just get into a silly fight, the one who is being most annoying has to leave. Our friends will just scream out ’Triplet Rule,’ and one of us has to leave. We don’t really leave, so it’s kind of a joke,” Zachary says.

After graduating, they all plan to carve out careers in music. Evan hopes to perform eventually, while Zachary is considering music education, and Chase is exploring becoming a cantor. And wherever they end up, they all plan to make singing, as soloists and as a trio, an integral part of the future.

To hear the Gutierrez triplets sing, go to www.hartford.edu/triplets.
Summer Research Projects Give Students EXTRAORDINARY EXPERIENCES

BRINGING A HISTORIC ORGAN COMPOSITION TO LIFE

After spending the summer in preparation, Mary Pan ’15 performed a historic, 21-movement organ Mass, in alternatim with a women’s liturgical choir, or “schola,” this fall.

“It is rare for any organist to have played this entire work, and the fact that I am only an undergraduate and that I was able to play it in alternatim with an excellent women’s schola makes it even more unique,” Pan says. “It was an extraordinary experience.”

Pan, a 2014 Dorothy Goodwin Summer Scholar, is pursuing a double major in organ performance (The Hartt School) and health science (College of Education, Nursing and Health Professions).

During the summer, she studied Mass for the Convents (Messe propre pour les convents de religieux et religieuses), a 21-movement work for solo organ by the French Baroque composer FrançoisCouperin (written c. 1689), from both performance and historic research perspectives. Each week during the summer and early fall, Pan had a lesson and advising session with her faculty mentor, Renée Anne Louprette, adjunct professor of organ at Hartt, some of the lessons took place in historic churches in New York City and Boston, Mass.

As the culmination of her project, Pan performed the entire 21-movement work in October, together with the women’s choir, at St. Peter Claver Church in West Hartford, Conn., and at All Soul’s Unitarian Church in New York City. She also wrote a 4,000-word essay on her research.

ASSESSING CONNECTICUT’S RECORD ON GREENHOUSE GASES

Another Dorothy Goodwin Summer Scholar, Colleen McLoughlin ’15, spent her summer interviewing state legislators, a congressman, environmental workers, utility representatives, and others to assess Connecticut’s actions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

One utility executive was so impressed by McLoughlin’s questions and her knowledge of the power sector that he offered her a job in the utility’s corporate governance office after she graduates.

McLoughlin, a passionate environmentalist who is pursuing a double major in rhetoric and professional writing, and politics and government, worked during the summer with her faculty mentor, Katharine Owens, associate professor of politics and government, to assess Connecticut’s actions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

McLoughlin conducted extensive interviews with many of the major stakeholders on the issue. While there was consensus that climate change is a pressing problem, McLoughlin says that her “research findings suggest that climate policies in Connecticut up to this point have not been very strong because of gridlock between different actors in the policymaking process.”

Although McLoughlin has not yet accepted the job offer from the utility company executive, she says, “I am definitely grateful to have this opportunity to fall back on, and it’s all thanks to the Dorothy Goodwin Summer program.”

McLoughlin is working on her final paper, which she plans to submit to an environmental policy journal for publication, and she is working with Owens on her senior honors thesis, which addresses congressional rhetoric about climate change on a national level.

Pan and McLoughlin are two of four female undergraduates who were selected as 2014 Dorothy Goodwin Summer Scholars. The Summer Scholars program, which is run by the University’s Women’s Education and Leadership Fund (WELFund), provides undergraduate women with the opportunity to work one-on-one with a faculty mentor on a scholarly research or creative project.

The summer program has been so successful that this fall, WELFund launched a Dorothy Goodwin Academic Year Scholars program.

In addition to Pan and McLoughlin, this year’s Dorothy Goodwin Summer Scholars included Nicole Coumes ’16, who has been working to renew interest in traditional crafts through a symposium that she is organizing for early 2015, and Erin Sniffen ’16, who has been researching the role of women in a 1916 uprising by Irish citizens against British rule.
“Immigration is not just a border issue,” says Lisa Wisniewski, a 28-year-old student in the educational leadership doctoral program in the University of Hartford’s College of Education, Nursing and Health Professions. She is very familiar with the issue because she spent much of the last school year as a member of a White House working group that is developing recommendations for changes in immigration policies to help the Polish community in America. Wisniewski visited the White House in February for a full day of meetings with senior members of the Obama administration, and her working group has continued its efforts since then.

While she didn’t meet with the president personally, Wisniewski has worked with other political leaders, including U.S. Sen. Chris Murphy; Ryszard Schnepf, Polish ambassador to the United States; and members of the Polish Parliament, all of whom participated in a walking tour of Broad Street in New Britain, Conn., which is affectionately known as “Little Poland.” The officials came to New Britain to take part in a symposium that Wisniewski organized.

The major problem that the Polish American community has with the U.S. immigration system, Wisniewski says, is the difficulty in obtaining visas so that family members in Poland can visit relatives in America. “This country is missing out on a significant amount of tourism dollars because many Polish people are unable to get visas to visit their American relatives to celebrate birthdays, graduations, weddings, and a whole host of other events,” she says.

Wisniewski’s interest in immigration issues carries over to her work in the educational leadership program, where she has been working with Assistant Professor Kenny Nienhusser and Assistant Professor Diana LaRocco, as well as H. Frederick Sweitzer, associate provost and dean of graduate studies. Wisniewski praised her UHart faculty, saying, “They are so helpful and understanding, and have lots of ideas of how to move me forward in my path.”

“I love doing research,” she says, adding that she wants to pursue research as a career, hopefully in a university setting. “I have many research interests that I still want to explore,” Wisniewski says. She adds with a chuckle, “I came into the program with a Polish activist life, and they’ve been very supportive of that. It means the world to me.”
EMPOWERING CHANGE

The University of Hartford has a long and rich history of supporting civil rights and equal opportunity for all. In 1959 the newly formed University invited a young Martin Luther King Jr. to speak in Hartford, Conn., on “The Future of Integration.” Over the years, the University has presented honorary degrees to more than two dozen African American leaders and trailblazers, including opera star Marian Anderson; tennis champion Arthur Ashe; NAACP Executive Director Benjamin Hooks; playwright August Wilson; Bayard Rustin, organizer of the 1963 March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom (where King gave his “I Have a Dream” speech); and, during the 2014 Commencement, Marian Wright Edelman, founder and president of the Children’s Defense Fund.

The Martin Luther King Scholars program in the 1960s and the University’s current Hartford Scholars program have helped make the dream of college a reality for hundreds of Hartford residents. Today, 34 percent of the University’s undergraduate and graduate population are students of color, creating a rich and diverse campus community.

In September the University continued its tradition of promoting dialogue and action on civil rights and social change when it held a landmark, weeklong observance of the 50th anniversary of the signing of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Titled “Empowering Change,” the observance was designed to involve all University schools and colleges, students, and faculty in events that drew inspiration and insight from the past, and encouraged use of the lessons of the Civil Rights Movement to bring about change for today and the future.

“Empowering Change” brought to campus nationally known speakers, including civil rights leaders Ruby Sales, Robert Moses, and Eva Jefferson Paterson. Also in attendance were those who broke barriers—Guion Bluford, the first African American astronaut in space, and Elizabeth Horton Sheff M’12, Hon’13, the named plaintiff in Sheff v. O’Neill, the landmark civil rights lawsuit that resulted in a mandate to provide equal access to quality, integrated public education in Connecticut.

Students gave stirring performances of words and music from the civil rights era, expressions of their thoughts through colorful sidewalk art, and speeches about ways that they can make a difference for the future. Faculty members joined with journalists, authors, and activists to examine civil rights and social change through the lenses of many different disciplines, including education and healthcare, business, and technical innovation.

The weeklong program coincided with a previously planned reunion of African American alumni, in honor of the 50th anniversary of the student organization known at various times as Black People’s Union (BPU), African American Students Association (AASA), and Brothers and Sisters United (BSU). During the reunion, African American alumni joined current members of BSU for panel discussions, networking receptions, and a tour of campus. The tour ended with a ceremony recognizing past student activism that had resulted in the naming of several residence halls in honor of prominent civil rights leaders.

DeLois Traynum Lindsey, assistant vice president for student development and director of multicultural programs, said, “This was a chance for current students and alumni across five decades to come together and touch the living history of an organization that has given much to the University of Hartford.”

“Empowering Change,” which was supported by Newman’s Own Foundation, was spearheaded by Robert Forrester, president and CEO of Newman’s Own and a University of Hartford alumnus and regent. The University event was held a week after the opening of a landmark exhibition at the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C., titled The Civil Rights Act of 1964: The Long Road to Freedom, which is also supported by Newman’s Own Foundation. The University awarded an honorary degree to James Billington, librarian of Congress, at the culminating event.

See more at hartford.edu/change.

1 In the Hartford Hawks Multi-Sport Youth Clinic held during “Empowering Change,” young children from the community learned new skills from University student-athletes with a little help from Howie the Hawk.

2 Fifty-seven students entered the “Voices for Change” essay contest, in which they were asked to write about a lesser-known civil rights leader. The five student finalists (left to right) were Zeephyr Strawer ’15, Anna Pan ’15, Christina Palagia ’18, Ruby Nightingale ’15, and Colín Worsh ’17. Nightingale won for her presentation on poet and activist Audre Lorde. Civil rights leader Ruby Sales (seated at right) was the guest speaker at the event, and ESPN’s Bob King (at the podium) served as emcee. The contest was sponsored by WELFund and the SGA.

3 Events planned for Brothers and Sisters United’s 50th anniversary were included in the “Empowering Change” program. Current members of BSU led alumni on a tour of campus that featured drumming.

4 The University’s Hartford Art School encouraged students to draw their dreams, in pictures and in words, on the sidewalks outside Gengras Student Union.

5 Robert Moses (standing), a civil rights leader and founder of The Algebra Project, and Eva Jefferson Paterson, a civil rights attorney and cofounder of the Equal Justice Society, were among the panelists who discussed “Civil Rights: Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow” on the closing night of “Empowering Change.” Educators, policymakers, and healthcare providers addressed ways to ensure equal access to quality education and healthcare during a panel discussion sponsored by the University’s College of Education, Nursing and Health Professions (ENHP). Pictured (left to right) are moderator Diane Orson of WNPR; State Senator Beth Bye; Gislaine Ngounou, chief of staff, Hartford Public Schools; Marie Spivey, vice president of health equity, Connecticut Hospital Association; and ENHP faculty members Kenny Niemilus, John Tapper, and Karen D’Angelo.

6 Panelists talked about ways to address discrimination in a discussion titled “What Would You Do?,” sponsored by the University’s College of Arts and Sciences (A&S). The panel included (left to right) Marissa Lawrence ’16, a University of Hartford student and copresident of Women for Change; Cheryl Sharp, deputy director, Connecticut Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities; Elizabeth Horton Sheff M’12, Hon’13, community activist and plaintiff in the landmark Sheff v. O’Neill education lawsuit; and Rabbi Stanley Kessler, a former civil rights Freedom Rider. The moderator for the discussion was Warren Gladston, professor and chair of the history department, A&S.

7 Regent Commons in the Shaw Center, Hillyer Hall, was filled to capacity for the Music and Poetry for Social Change program, organized by Hillyer faculty members Joyce Askhatantang and Anthony Rauche.

8 Robert Forrester, president and CEO of Newman’s Own Foundation, which supported “Empowering Change,” was one of the speakers at a panel discussion titled “Business as Leaders of Social Change,” sponsored by the University’s Barney School of Business.

9 On the final night of “Empowering Change,” the University of Hartford presented an honorary degree to James Billington, librarian of Congress. The Library of Congress had previously opened a landmark exhibition in Washington, D.C., titled The Civil Rights Act of 1964: The Long Road to Freedom. Pictured are Billington (left) and University President Walter Harrison.

10 The University’s College of Engineering, Technology, and Architecture (CETA) hosted a program that looked at the role of technological innovation in creating social change. The event featured remarks from Guion S. Bluford Jr., the first African American astronaut to travel in space. In addition, four organizations were honored for their contributions to empowering change. Pictured, from left, are CETA Dean Louis Marzoni; Bluford; Michael Kitter of Pratt & Whitney; Peter Stevens of JCI Architecture; Jeff Brown of Newman’s Own Foundation; and Hisham Alnajjar, CETA associate dean and director of the Connecticut Space Grant Consortium, who represented NASA.

11 Audience members held hands and sang “We Shall Overcome” during the final night’s program. They were led by students from the University’s Hartt School.