"Guitars for Change"
A program of the Baltimore Classical Guitar Society

Who would have thought that a non-profit music organization like the **Baltimore Classical Guitar Society** would be able to put guitars in the hands of Hispanic immigrant children and inspire them to learn music in an after-school program in Annapolis, Maryland?

No one! But, that is exactly what we do.

"Guitars for Change" is an after-school program designed to engage and inspire at-risk immigrant children through the power of music, which is a powerful tool for positive social change.

Students are provided with free guitars and accessories, and receive weekly lessons at the Center of Help (Centro de Ayuda) in Annapolis. Immigrant Hispanic children are especially at risk for induction into gangs because there are fewer after-school programs in which they can take part. Providing them with a safe place to learn music after school, until their parent(s) or caregiver(s) come home, is paramount.

We provide an expert instructor who adapts to the pace, skill level, and interest of the students in the program. Access to instrumental music in this community affords the students the opportunity to express themselves, think creatively, and to work together in a guitar ensemble which helps them to acquire, and hone, their problem-solving skills.

The 2019-2020 school year was our 2nd year offering "Guitars for Change" and we had nineteen children enrolled in the program.

We are particularly proud to report that seven children were selected to perform with our artist-in-residence, Meng Su, in a concert on Sunday, March 8, 2020 celebrating Maryland Guitar Orchestras and Ensembles, at Linehan Concert Hall of UMBC.

In the fall of 2020, we are expanding the "Guitars for Change" program! We will be offering free after-school guitar lessons to elementary school children in Baltimore City, in a school whose student body is about 75% Hispanic and 25% Black. These children face many of the same challenges as those in Annapolis, which is why "Guitars for Change" is so needed there.