

Matthew Vaughn Pooler, Cellist and Pianist

Matthew (age 18) is a recent graduate of Navarre High School. He is an incoming freshman at Florida State University. He has been studying and performing Cello and Piano for 8 years. He will be pursuing a dual-degree in Performance Cello and Computer Science. He trained under Dr. Aleksandra Pereverzeva, Principal Cellist, Pensacola Symphony Orchestra, and Professor Blake Riley, Associate Professor and Director of Collaborative Piano, Dr. Grier Williams School of Music, University of West Florida. Matthew currently performs weekly as a cellist intern with the First Baptist Church of Pensacola Orchestra. He previously volunteered as pianist and cellist at First Baptist Church in Navarre, Florida.

Matthew has performed in numerous competitions, most recently in the 2025 PMTA Sonata Contest, where he was awarded 1st Place, Bill Dollarhide Graduating Senior Scholarship for Strings (Cello, Elgar Cello Concerto), 2024 UWF Music Study Club Competition (Cello, 1st Place), 2023 UWF Music Study Club competition (Piano, 1st Place), 2023 PMTA Concerto Competition (Strings Division (Cello) 1st Place, District 1, Sr. Level), and the 2023 PMTA Bill Jennings High School Music Sonata Contest (1st Place, Piano). He was also a finalist in the 2023 NFSO, John Leatherwood Concerto Competition (Strings, Cello).

In July 2022, Matthew was invited to attend musical training at the InterHarmony Music Festival in Acqui Terme, Italy, studying with an internationally-recognized artist faculty, and meeting musical colleagues from around the globe.

In 2024 Matthew was accepted to the Ascent International Cello Festival, held at the University of Cincinnati, College Conservatory of Music, and also the Summer String Academy, Jacobs School of Music, Indiana University.

Matthew resides in Navarre, Florida, with his parents John and Inja, along with his older brother Jason and younger sister Emma.