

**From the President's Garden Party  
"Celebrating Our Students"  
May 18, 2010  
Speech by President Seligman**

[http://www.rochester.edu/president/memos/2010/garden\\_party/](http://www.rochester.edu/president/memos/2010/garden_party/)



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Our Eastman School of Music is home to undergraduate and graduate students. Catherine Branch is a graduate student who has never let the experience of having cerebral palsy slow her down. In sixth grade she wanted to play the cello. The instrument was too large to handle without falling over, so her parents bought her a flute. After graduating from Rice University and receiving a grant, Catherine commissioned new works and embarked on a yearlong world tour. She performed and taught, using music and her experience to spur conversations on difference, disability, and diversity. At Eastman, she's a master's degree student who, in addition to taking music and performance courses, is enrolled in the Arts Leadership Program. Catherine is continuing to build audience connections through a concert series she's creating called "Music of Difference." For the first performance, she's putting together a multimedia event, with other Eastman musicians and an artist-designer, which will be presented in Rochester in May.