

Elizabeth Blakeslee plays second harp with the National Symphony Orchestra. Previous performing positions include principal harp with the Richmond (Virginia) Symphony Orchestra and principal harp in the Orquesta Sinfónica de Colombia. Although primarily an orchestral harpist, Elizabeth has performed many concerti with orchestra including those of Debussy, Ginastera, Mozart, Piston, and Ravel and has recorded with many Washington-area choral groups. Having a keen interest in expanding the repertoire for the harp, she has commissioned several works for the instrument and performed the West Coast premiere of "Procession and Carols" by James Bingham, for women's choir and harp, at the 2010 AHS (American Harp Society) Conference, in Tacoma, WA. She also presented the premiere of "Fantasia" by Rachel Laurin, for organ and harp at the 2010 American Guild of Organists Convention with French organist Jean-Baptiste Robin.

Elizabeth is passionate about teaching and instilling a love for music as well as a discipline to excel in all of her students. Her students have been prize-winners in local, state, and national competitions and have been accepted to top conservatories in the nation. She works closely with the American Youth Philharmonic Orchestras and with local schools to provide opportunities and repertoire for young harpists to participate in ensembles. Additionally, Elizabeth works with many composers in an effort to help them apply the craft of composition to the harp and has developed a number of transcriptions and teaching pieces.

Elizabeth is currently Director-at-Large on the Board of Directors of the AHS, and serves as ASTA liaison. Past positions include serving on the AHS Board of Directors from 1995-2001, as Mid-Atlantic Regional Director, Secretary, and Membership Group Coordinator. She also was Publications Manager from 2000-2005, and editor of the AHS Teachers Forum from 1997-2004. She is currently developing a new format for the AHS Teachers Forum to include an online component as well as a printed publication. She has served on the Board of Directors for the Virginia String Teachers Association since 2006, and also chaired the committee to develop a harp curriculum for the Certificate Achievement Program of the American String Teachers Association.

She studied harp with Marjorie Tyre at Auburn University, graduating summa cum laude with a Bachelor of Music and an equivalent major in French literature. She earned a Master of Music at Virginia Commonwealth University, completing her studies with Marilyn Costello.