

Kirsti Pajunen is currently pursuing doctoral studies at Caltech in Pasadena, CA majoring in aerospace engineering. She graduated with Bachelor's degree in mechanical engineering from the Milwaukee School of Engineering in 2014 and Master's in aerospace engineering from Caltech in 2015. She has played the cello since age 9. She was a member of the Milwaukee Youth Symphony Orchestra for seven years and was co-assistant principal in Senior Symphony during her senior year of high school. Her teachers have included Cel Fitzgerald, Carol Waldvogel, and Adrien Zitoun of the Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra. She also likes playing the piano. She was principal cellist of the UWM University Community Orchestra for two seasons and principal cellist and a conductor of the MSOE Symphony Orchestra. She was cellist in the South Shore Youth Opera Ensemble for six years and was the cellist for the professional quartet, Angelic Strings. She is currently cellist in the Caltech-Occidental Symphony Orchestra in Pasadena. Her awards have included four Gold cups from the National Federation of Music Clubs, the MYSO Ptoker award, and MYSO and MSO concerto competition honorable mentions. She performed in the Stars of Tomorrow MSO concert in 2010 at the Pabst Theatre and performed a solo concerto with the MSOE Symphony Orchestra in 2012. She is a performing member of the MacDowell Club and Harmony Club of Milwaukee and loves to perform with the clubs when she is in town.