Chee-Hang took a huge leap of faith in coming to the College. He’s from Singapore, and though he researched the College, he didn’t really know much about South Carolina. “I had considered some other universities, but College of Charleston seemed like the right size and the right fit for me.”

After he arrived, his instincts were confirmed. “What I experienced is that professors really get to know the students here. This is especially true in the music department.”

For Chee-Hang, that’s crucial. “At this point in our careers as musicians, we’re all trying to become better and make a mark for ourselves. Without a professor who will guide you closely, it’s easy to just get lost. It’s not only the lessons we get. My closest professor doesn’t just teach me piano. He also performs a lot and has so many contacts in the field of music. He introduces me to sponsors, and I meet people who come here for the concerts. Also, he encourages me by allowing me to play in numerous concerts, and that helps a lot.”

Chee-Hang’s professors encouraged him to apply for a summer research grant. He and a fellow student received sufficient funding to travel to Italy and perform as a piano duo at several festivals. He recalls performing in amazing Renaissance spaces such as the famed Basilica di San Pietro. “Our final research project for the grant was actually the performances we gave. Research funding isn’t something you expect to have happen as a music student, but it did.”

Now, Chee-Hang is continuing his interest in piano duets. When he graduates, he’ll earn a degree in music with concentrations in performance and music history. Where will that lead? Graduate school, possibly. Additional performances, definitely. But wherever he ends up, Chee-Hang knows he can rely on his support network at the College.