

PROFILE

Balancing act

Busy Puebloan still has time for music career

BY ZACH HILLSTROM
THE PUEBLO CHIEFTAIN

For Pueblo native and South High School graduate Christy Colalancia, life these days is, in a word, hectic.

Between pursuing a graduate degree in public health at the University of Colorado-Denver, working full time as a tissue bank coordinator for the University of Colorado Cancer Center and playing violin for the Denver Philharmonic, free time is a luxury that the 24-year-old rarely enjoys.

Despite the 40-hour workweek and a demanding social life, Colalancia somehow finds time for her master's program studies.

"Coursewise and going to class, I'd say it's probably equivalent to a part-time job, so (I spend) 20-35 hours per week depending on homework and stuff like that," she said.

On a typical Monday during the school year, Colalancia said she usually wakes up by 4:30 a.m., in order to have her lunch packed and to be ready for work at 6:30.

At the University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus, Colalancia assists in the coordination of clinical trials for the Oncology Research Information Exchange Network, a research partnership project that utilizes collaboration



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CHRISTY COLALANCIA
PUEBLIAN

among North America's top cancer centers to aid in cancer research.

"What we're doing is consenting patients and building a bank of tissue, blood samples and urine samples that hopefully can be used for researchers in the future," she said.

After a few hours at the hospital, Colalancia heads over to UC Denver for a full day of class before returning to the hospital to finish her shift.

Then, around 5:30 p.m., more than 12 hours into her day, Colalancia heads home, not to relax but to prepare for the second part of her Monday responsibilities — rehearsal for the Denver Philharmonic.

"After a full day at work I'll get home and grab a bite real quick, so then I have close to an hour between getting home and when I need to leave for rehearsal. And then by the time that's over, I usually end up getting home around 11.

"It's a lot of extra work but it's very gratifying

and something I couldn't imagine not making the time in my schedule to do," she said.

But after the kind of day that would make most people want to hide away in a cave and hibernate for the winter, Colalancia simply heads to bed and gets ready to do it all over again the following day.

Despite her challenging schedule, Colalancia said she always makes time for the things she cares about most.

"One important thing that I've always found with managing time is placing an emphasis on things that are important," she said.

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COURTESY PHOTO

Christy Colalancia, a South High School graduate, plays violin for the Denver Philharmonic while balancing a slew of other responsibilities and activities.

tant, so I always make time for those. Family is important, so I make time for that," she said.

"With all of those things it's just a matter of balancing things out through the day."

zhillstrom@chieftain.com

