

Hi, I'm Julie, the Principal Second Violin and Operations Manager for the Tampa Bay Symphony. I've played the violin since I was a young kid, though my passions for music were deeply stirred when I began taking lessons under a violinist in the Philadelphia Orchestra and later joined the Philadelphia Youth Orchestra. This was the best place to be surrounded by like-hearted friends who also loved playing classical music, and it gave me roots to become a life-long music lover.



**SENSEI JULIE TOLLEN, A.K.A, JET**

I thought I'd major in music in college, but ended up studying religion instead, completing my degree at Naropa University in Boulder, CO. While there, I took up as a player with the Longmont Symphony, where I again made amazing friends (one of the great side-benefits of playing music). Shortly thereafter, I went to Japan to teach English. I stayed for 5 years and had the pleasure of playing with the Kumamoto Symphony while living abroad.

These days, I play with great joy under Maestro Sforzini's baton and head daily operations for the symphony. I also play with several chamber music groups in the Tampa Bay area, such as the Ibis Quartet (we're on Facebook if you need a string quartet! ;-)). As Principal

Second of the symphony, I endeavor to be a vessel for the inner voices of the orchestra. I lead a group of warm-hearted and multi-talented folks, and feel fortunate to be a part of our section.

When not among musicians, I spend a lot of time teaching and training in the Japanese martial art of Aikido. I achieved third-degree black belt a few years ago, and have been teaching since 2009. I manage the facility and am director of the youth program at Tampa Aikido in Ybor City, a martial arts studio founded by my husband and his close friend in 2013.

In addition to those things, I work as calligrapher, bookkeeper, events coordinator and administrator for a non-profit martial arts association called ASU.

Just as musicians work together to convey joy and foster understanding into the world through music, in the peaceful martial art of aikido, a practitioner works to put positive action out into society. So even though I practice martial arts, I like to think I'm a peaceful and approachable person!

I'm particularly glad to be a member of the TBS, helping spread joy through music, since 2013.

