

WATCH: Inmates make music behind bars - ABC Columbia

by Grace Joyal

Inmates at Lee Correctional Institution in Bishopville are collaborating with an NYC-based chamber ensemble to compose original songs

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BISHOPVILLE, S.C. (WOLO) – Inmates at Lee Correctional Institution in Bishopville are collaborating with an NYC-based chamber ensemble to compose original songs.

This week, Decoda is collaborating with about 40 inmates from the “Better Living Incentive Community,” or BLIC. This is the program’s third year at Lee.

S.C. Department of Corrections Director Bryan Stirling says this type of program is not just an outlet for the people serving time; it’s a safeguard for the people working within prison walls.

“This gives them something to look forward to,” Stirling says. “If they’re just sitting in their cells all day, it is very dangerous for our

officers.”

At the end of the five-day session, the participants will perform a special concert showcasing their work to their peers and prison staff.

The music does not stop when Decoda goes home. Lee has a thriving music program. Ten inmate music teachers work with up to 120 inmates every week, teaching them instruments like cello, mandolin and guitar.

To learn more about Decoda’s mission, click [here](#).