



Isaac J. Roang, who plays French horn in the Concord Chamber Orchestra, was selected as a 2012 "Forty Under 40" honoree by the Business Journal. This award honors Milwaukee's up-and-coming leaders. The winners were selected for their success at a young age and for the difference they are making at work and in the community. They were honored in a special section of the Business Journal on February 24 and at an awards event on February 27.

We caught up with Isaac as he and his wife, Cookie, were driving their young family to Texas to visit relatives, and he graciously consented to an interview while on the move:

Residence? Milwaukee's Bay View neighborhood

Instrument? French horn

How long with Concord? Since 2008

What is your earliest musical memory? My mother singing to me, especially Joni Mitchell's "The Circle Game."

What was your involvement in music growing up? I played the cello in elementary school. When I got to middle school, I wanted to play a band instrument, and I wanted to play the tuba. The only instruments left were the French horn and the oboe. I played French horn in my middle school and high school bands, and in the Wisconsin Youth Symphony Orchestra in Madison. I earned a high school varsity letter in jazz, playing the first trombone part on my French horn. I began studying with the French horn professor at UW-Madison while still in high school, and went to UW-Madison, where I was a French horn performance major, graduating with a Bachelors of Music degree.

Why do you perform with Concord? It means donating a lot of your time; what do you get out of it in return? The time commitment fits in with my professional schedule, and being in Concord is fun! I enjoy my fellow musicians, both playing with them in the orchestra and wetting my whistle with them after rehearsals and concerts. My favorite thing about Concord is playing the "out concerts" at retirement communities the Wednesdays before our formal concerts at St. Matthew's Lutheran Church. I enjoy taking this music to those who may not be able to make it to our regular concerts, and seeing their delight at hearing us perform.

What has been the high point of your involvement with Concord? When we played Sibelius Symphony No. 2 in 2009.

What do you do for a living? I am an attorney in the Real Estate Group of the Milwaukee office of national law firm Quarles & Brady LLP. I also devote substantial time and effort to pro bono legal assistance and community service activities, including leadership roles in the Milwaukee performing arts community.

Tell us about your family? I am married to Cookie, who I met in Kenya while we were both serving in the Peace Corps. We have two children, 21 month old Malaika (which means "Angel" in Swahili), and 2 month old Victoria (Cookie and I got engaged at Lake Victoria on Valentine's Day). It may be too early to tell if the children will share my interest in music, but I hope they will.

What are your hobbies besides practicing and playing? Tai chi and changing diapers.

What is your favorite recording -- any genre? Miles Davis, "Bitches Brew"

Who is your favorite composer? Gustav Mahler

What is one thing most people don't know about you? I can juggle and complete other clowning activities, including balancing objects on my chin.

What is your advice for kids who are interested in music? Do whatever you are passionate about, be it music, academics, sports or any combination of activities. If you are a musician, be sure to practice!