

THE CLARION

Volume LXIX, No. 15 · March 2018

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President's Corner



Krista Seely
WSMTA President

As I write this, the Winter Olympics have been dominating the news and video screens everywhere. We have been dazzled by winners and losers whose performances were separated by mere thousandths of a second or hundredths of a point. Reaching this level of competition requires absolute devotion to one's sport—and a perfect storm of physical and mental fitness, weather conditions, equipment, and more.



I'm looking forward to being on hand for the performances of WSMTA's top representatives in the MTNA National Student Competitions in Florida later this month. Seven top-notch performers from our state will be vying for top prizes in their divisions. If you are registered for the conference and would like to join me in supporting these students, please contact me for a schedule of Washington's students in performance.



7 students from Washington have advanced to the MTNA National Performance Competitions and will compete at the national conference in Lake Buena Vista, Florida.

Many of us are working diligently to prepare our own students for their performances in the Music Artistry Program, local competitions and festivals. I hope you're planning to attend our outstanding joint state conference in Vancouver in June to hear some of Washington and Oregon's most dedicated and talented young musicians. There will be numerous honors recitals, along with master classes and more. Read more on pages 5-9! Registration is open, so now's the time to get the "early bird" rate and reserve your hotel room at The Heathman Lodge in Vancouver.

Best wishes for a stellar month of teaching and learning!

Krista Seely

—Krista Seely, WSMTA President

Fèlicitations

In every issue of The Clarion, you'll find a wealth of great ideas in inspirational reflections in the Teacher Enrichment section. It takes time and organization to get those ideas ready for print each month!



Rose Freeman, NCTM (Snohomish Chapter), our Certification Chair, encourages us to break down the big goal into smaller steps and to remember that “Consistency is the Key to Growth.” In every issue, you'll see the names of newly certified members who have been assisted through the process by Rose. *Read Rose's Certification Corner article on page 11. She will also present a session on MTNA Certification at the WSMTA/OMTA Joint Conference in June 2018.*

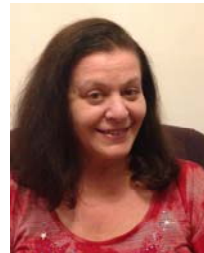


Joann Richardson, NCTM(Kitsap Chapter) has been a stalwart member of the National Organists Guild as well as a long-time member of WSMTA. As our Organ Chair, Joann offers her unique perspective in her column, “Pedal Points.” Joann is also committed to making sure that there are workshops for organists at our state conferences, and this year is no exception.

You'll find more information in the information about conference in this and future issues this spring. *Read Joann's Pedal Points article on page 12. Joann and Martha Natiuk will present a session titled “Some of Our Favorite Organ Music” and lead an extended pre-conference organ workshop at the WSMTA/OMTA Joint Conference.*



Michelle Mielke, NCTM (Pullman Chapter) can pull more applicable apps out of an iPad than anyone you'll ever meet. With literally millions of new apps coming on the market every year, you need to read Michelle's column so you can cut to the chase and find the tried-and-true apps for teaching the basics, from reading to rhythms and much, much more. *Read Michelle's Studio Technology article on page 13-14. She will also present a session titled “Free Stuff on the Internet!” at the WSMTA/OMTA Joint Conference.*



RoseMarie Tamburri (Seattle Chapter) tackles tons of thought-provoking topics as chair of our Independent Music Teachers Forum. Past columns have covered marketing basics and perspectives on competition, as well inspiring ways to use a solar eclipse as a metaphor for teaching phrasing. *RoseMarie will lead an interactive IMTF session at the WSMTA/OMTA Joint Conference. See page 6 for the full conference schedule.*

We appreciate this dedicated group of colleagues for sharing their inspiring ideas with us! Please join me in thanking them for the many ways their ideas enrich our teaching and learning.

—Krista Seely, WSMTA President

HAS YOUR NAME OR ADDRESS CHANGED RECENTLY?

Be sure to let MTNA, WSMTA, and your local chapter know about any changes to your contact information. Contact each one separately in order to make sure all three know about any changes. Contact the WSMTA Office at wsmtaoffice@gmail.com if you have any changes to your contact information.

HAVING TROUBLE LOGGING INTO WSMTA.ORG?

If you have any problems logging in, please contact Executive Manager Kirsten Carlson at wsmtaoffice@gmail.com. Please keep in mind that if you have not paid your membership dues to MTNA, you won't be able to login to the WSMTA website.

CLARION INFORMATION

The *Clarion* is the official bulletin of the Washington State Music Teachers Association and is published nine times during the school year: September–December, February–June. The *Clarion* includes membership news announcements as well as pertinent news of the Music Teachers National Association (MTNA).

WSMTA EXECUTIVE MANAGER

Kirsten Carlson
732 N 74th St, Seattle, WA 98103
206-783-1975
wsmtaoffice@gmail.com

CLARION EDITOR

Samantha Yeung
c.samantha.yeung@gmail.com

CLARION SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

- Please send submissions to Samantha Yeung at c.samantha.yeung@gmail.com no later than the first day of the month preceding the publication date. You will receive a confirmation message.
- Please send your submission and all relevant attachments (photos, documents) in **one email message**.
- Submissions must be formatted in Microsoft Word (.doc or .docx) or Google Docs. Hard copy submissions are not accepted.
- When possible, please include a headshot of yourself with your submission. Your photo must be a head and shoulder shot.

WSMTA BOARD OF DIRECTORS



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ks88keys@gmail.com



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Karen Hollenback, NCTM
karen.hollenback@gmail.com



IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT

Janice Smith, NCTM
jsmithpiano@gmail.com



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Kathy Mortensen
kmortensenpiano@gmail.com



EXECUTIVE MANAGER

Kirsten Carlson
wsmtaoffice@gmail.com



TREASURER

Patti Robertson, NCTM
parpiano2@gmail.com



DISTRICT I VICE PRESIDENT

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jbyingto@shoreline.edu



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nicoleykim@aol.com



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mary@marygrantpiano.com



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kiratheine@hotmail.com



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sauerstudio2@gmail.com



DISTRICT VI VICE PRESIDENT

Carissa Jones
cpitkin@gmail.com



DISTRICT VII VICE PRESIDENT

Lori Germer, NCTM
lorigermer@gmail.com



MUSIC ARTISTRY PROGRAM CHAIR

Stephanie White, NCTM
swhitepiano@gmail.com



CLARION EDITOR

Samantha Yeung
c.samantha.yeung@gmail.com

EDUCATION BOARD CHAIR

Laurie Eash, NCTM (*see Education Board*)

WSMTA EDUCATION BOARD



EDUCATION BOARD CHAIR

Laurie Eash, NCTM
laurie52@aol.com



EDUCATION BOARD MEMBER

Dianne Johnston, WSCTM
diannej23@comcast.net



EDUCATION BOARD MEMBER

Janice Smith, NCTM
jsmithpiano@gmail.com



EDUCATION BOARD MEMBER

Greg Presley, NCTM
gregpresley@netzero.com



EDUCATION BOARD MEMBER

Peter Mack, NCTM
mackpeter@earthlink.net

ED. BOARD MEMBERS, EX-OFFICIO

Krista Seely (*see President*)
Stephanie White, NCTM (*see Music Artistry Program Chair*)
Kirsten Carlson (*see Executive Manager*)

DATES AND DEADLINES

March 1: Deadline for submitting articles for the April *Clarion*

March 17-21: MTNA Conference at Disney Coronado Springs Resort in Lake Buena Vista, Florida

April 1: Deadline for submitting articles for the May *Clarion*

April 20: Competition Recital Results Due

April 20: Last Day for the Music Artistry Program (formerly Adjudications)

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Eastside

Myra Chaney, Pei-Hsin Kao, Emily Tien, Pei Wu

Gig Harbor

Isabella Jie

Kitsap County

Jennifer Yarbrough

Olympia

Cayce Bernhardt

Puyallup Valley

Shelli Wiebersch

Skagit Valley

Barbara Hunter

South King County

Vincent Ford

Tacoma

Kelly Walk



Like us on
Facebook

Stay connected with WSMTA on Facebook! Find us at
www.facebook.com/wsmtahome



Conference Fee Waivers and State Dues Waivers



SMTA offers conference fee and state dues waivers for members experiencing financial difficulties.

If you would like to attend the 2018 WSMTA/OMTA Joint Conference in Vancouver, WA and would benefit from some assistance, you can apply for a conference fee waiver. Complete the application at <https://wsmta.org/2018-wsmta-conference-fee-waiver-application> (Find it on wsmta.org > Information for Teachers > Grants & Enrichments) before **May 15, 2018**.

The state portion of your MTNA dues can also be waived. WSMTA dues are \$47. To receive a state dues waiver, complete the application at <https://wsmta.org/wsmta-state-membership-dues-waiver-application> (Find it on wsmta.org > Information for Teachers > Grants & Enrichments) before **August 31, 2018** in order for it to be applied to your 2018-2019 dues.

Please contact Kirsten Carlson at wsmtaoffice@gmail.com for assistance with your waiver application.

WSMTA Music Artistry Program Fee Subsidy Application



SMTA has set aside \$500 to enable teachers to enter low-income, deserving students in the WSMTA Music Artistry Program. Applications are made by the teacher on behalf of the student(s). Teachers are asked to limit their applications to students with real financial need (maximum of two students per teacher). WSMTA adjudication subsidy grants will be awarded on a first-come first-served basis. *(This program is aimed at students of teachers who do not participate in MusicLink. MusicLink students should continue to apply in the usual way.)*

Submit applications to **Peter Mack, MAP Fee Subsidy Chair**, via mail or email by **April 1st**:
1906 26th Ave E, Seattle, WA 98112 *or* mackpeter@earthlink.net

TEACHER NAME: _____ CHAPTER: _____

TEACHER EMAIL: _____

TEACHER TELEPHONE NUMBER: _____

STUDENT NO. 1: _____

INSTRUMENT _____ Duration of Time Slot (10, 15, 20, or 30 minutes) _____

MUSIC ARTISTRY PROGRAM FEE (see MAP booklet) \$ _____

STUDENT NO. 2: _____

INSTRUMENT _____ Duration of Time Slot (10, 15, 20, or 30 minutes) _____

MUSIC ARTISTRY PROGRAM FEE (see MAP booklet) \$ _____



2018 WSMTA & OMTA Joint Conference

Wednesday-Saturday, June 20-23, 2018
The Heathman Lodge · Vancouver, WA

W

e are very excited to be offering a wide variety of sessions: playing with more freedom, movement and rhythm; students and sports; practicing and technology; and more! There will be two master classes and several lectures given by our invited artists. You will have the opportunity to listen to fabulous performances through the many student recitals along with not to be missed evening concerts. The schedule is packed full of choices!

Start the conference with a more relaxed feeling by enjoying an afternoon of student performances, attend a hands-on organ workshop and take advantage of opportunities to explore the surrounding area. Top off your evening with the Winners Recital, an amazing array of students who were winners at the State MTNA Competitions and Outstanding Artist Competition. Then rest up in your luxury hotel room to get ready for the days to come of learning, listening and socializing. There truly is something for everyone!



Conference Guest Artist
Hans Boepple



Northwest Guest
Charlie Albright



Northwest Guests Kenji Bunch
and Monica Ohuchi



Relax and Rejuvenate at the
Heathman Lodge



Explore Historic
Downtown Vancouver

Registration Dates & Details

Full Time Early Registration: Members \$140 and Students \$75

Online Registration: <https://wsmta.org/2018-wsmta-omta-joint-conference>

Early Registration Deadline: **May 15, 2018**

Hotel Reservations

- Call 1-888-475-3100 or book online at <https://tinyurl.com/WSMTA-OMTAJointConference>
- Book by May 31st for the WSMTA/OMTA room rate of \$144/night + tax

Find the **Conference Schedule** on page 6 and the **Master Class Application** on page 8 of this issue!

Visit <https://wsmta.org/teacher-programs/conferences/wsmta-conference> for conference online registration, hotel information, description of the conference sessions, the conference schedule, descriptions of the conference sessions, master class applications, and bios of our guest artists. See you in June!

—Jani Peterson, NCTM (WA), Cindy Peterson-Peart, NCTM (OR) & Selina Manson (OR), 2018 Conference Chairs



2018 WSMTA/OMTA Joint Conference

June 20-23, 2018 · The Heathman Lodge · Vancouver, WA

CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

WEDNESDAY—BONUS DAY

1:00—2:30 P.M. HONORS RECITAL #1

1:00—5:00 P.M. Organ Workshop *Joann Richardson, NCTM & Martha Natiuk*

3:30—5:00 P.M. HONORS RECITAL #2

7:30 P.M. WSMTA WINNERS RECITAL
(reception to follow)

THURSDAY

8:00 A.M. Registration

8:30 A.M.—5:00 P.M. Vendors and Displays

9:00—9:40 A.M. Separate WA & OR
Opening Session

9:40—10:00 A.M. Joint WA/OR Opening
Session

Morning Coffee Break

10:30 — 11:30 A.M.

- Rubato in Context: How Architecture and Phrase Structure Affect the Time We Take
Jeffrey Savage, NCTM
- Classical Music on the Spot: The Teaching of an Eighteenth-Century Improviser
Johnandrew Slominski

11:45 A.M.—1:15 P.M. **Lunch**

1:00—2:30 P.M. HONORS RECITAL #3

1:30—2:30 P.M.

- Piano Methods From Around the World
Lark Powers, NCTM
- Music Technology in Today's Private Studio: The Pedagogical Summit
Elizabeth Morris

Afternoon Coffee Break

3:00—4:00 P.M.

- Sports vs. Music: How to Use Your Student's Athletic Pursuits to Their Musical Advantage
Stephanie White, NCTM

4:00—5:00 P.M. WA District VP Meeting

4:00—5:30 P.M. YOUNG COMPOSERS
PROGRAM & COMMISSIONED COMPOSER
RECITAL (reception to follow)

5:30—6:00 P.M. Meetup for Young
Professionals

Dinner On Your Own

8:00 P.M. GUEST ARTIST RECITAL—HANS
BOEPPLE (reception to follow)

FRIDAY

8:00 A.M. Registration

8:30 A.M.—5:00 P.M. Vendors and Displays

8:00—8:50 A.M.

- IMTF: *RoseMarie Tamburri*
- WA MAP Chairs: *Stephanie White, NCTM*

9:00—10:00 A.M.

- Towards Advance Playing, Part 1:
Technique
Hans Boepple, Guest Artist

Morning Coffee Break

10:30—11:30 A.M.

- Connecting the Part to the Whole:
Enhancing Freedom and Support for the
Arms
Anita King, NCTM

- Embody Rhythm—From the Inside Out
Mary Kogan

11:45 A.M.—12:45 P.M. **Lunch**

- Certification: *Rose Freeman, NCTM (WA)*
and *Monica Sanders, NCTM (OR)*

1:00—2:15 P.M. MASTER CLASS—HANS
BOEPPLE

2:30—3:30 P.M.

- The Secret Diary of “Monica’s Notebook:”
The Nuts and Bolts of Creating New
Repertoire for Piano
Monica Ohuchi and Kenji Bunch

Afternoon Coffee Break

4:00—5:00 P.M.

- When Practice Is Not Enough
Yelena Balabanova, NCTM
- Free Stuff On the Internet!
Michelle Mielke, NCTM
- Some of Our Favorite Organ Music
Joann Richardson, NCTM & Martha Natiuk

4:15—5:30 P.M. HONORS RECITAL #4

6:00 P.M. Social Time

6:30 P.M. Banquet

8:00 P.M. RISING NW STARS CONCERT:
CHARLIE ALBRIGHT, MONICO OHUCHI &
KENJI BUNCH (reception to follow)

SATURDAY

8:00 A.M. Registration

8:30 A.M.—12:00 P.M. Vendors and Displays

8:00—9:00 A.M.

- MusicLink: *Amy Vanacore (NW Chair), Debra Sostrin (OR Chair) and Karen Monroe (WA Chair)*

8:15—9:00 A.M.

- WA Chapter Presidents: *Krista Seely*

8:30—10:00 A.M. OR CLOSING SESSION

9:15—10:00 A.M. WA CLOSING SESSION

Morning Coffee Break

10:15—11:30 A.M. MASTER CLASS—
CHARLIE ALBRIGHT

11:45 A.M.—12:45 P.M.

- Towards Advance Playing, Part 2:
Musicianship, Artistry, and Performance
Hans Boepple, Guest Artist

12:45—1:00 P.M. JOINT WA/OR CLOSING
SESSION

1:00 P.M. **Home!**



2018 WSMTA/OMTA Joint Conference

June 20-23, 2018 · The Heathman Lodge · Vancouver, WA

CONFERENCE ADVERTISING & SPONSORSHIPS

Sponsor a Reception or Coffee Break

Sponsors of breaks and receptions will have their names listed in the conference program booklet as well as having their names displayed prominently at the break or reception they have sponsored.

Chapters who would like to contribute to a break or reception but cannot afford full sponsorship of one event are welcome to contribute any amount over \$50 to partially sponsor an event. Visit www.wsmta.org for more information and to become a sponsor.

BREAK OR RECEPTION	DAYS SERVED	LOCAL AFFILIATE AND ASSOCIATE MEMBER SPONSORS	NON-MEMBER SPONSOR
Morning Coffee Breaks	Thursday Morning Friday Morning Saturday Morning	\$400 per break	\$600 per break
Afternoon Coffee Breaks	Thursday Afternoon Friday Afternoon	\$300 per break	\$500 per break
Washington Winners Recital Reception	Wednesday Evening	\$200	\$400
Young Composers Project and Commissioned Composer Recital Reception	Thursday Afternoon	\$200	\$400
Young Professionals Meetup	Thursday Evening	\$200	\$400
Hans Boepple Recital Reception	Thursday Evening	\$200	\$400
Rising Northwest Stars Recital Reception	Friday Evening	\$200	\$400

Advertise in the Conference Booklet

Visit www.wsmta.org for more information and to place an ad in the conference booklet.

AD SIZE	DIMENSIONS	COST
Full Page	8" W x 9-3/4" H	\$200
Half Page	8" W x 4-3/4" H (horizontal only)	\$150
Quarter Page	3-7/8" W x 4-3/4" H (vertical only)	\$100
1/8 Page	3-7/8" W x 2-5/16" H (horizontal only)	\$50
Front or Back INSIDE Cover	Full Page 8" W x 9-3/4" H	\$250





2018 WSMTA/OMTA Joint Conference

June 20-23, 2018 · The Heathman Lodge · Vancouver, WA

PIANO MASTER CLASS APPLICATION FORM

To apply for either master class, please go to <https://wsmta.org/2018-wsmta-conference-piano-master-classes-application/> or complete the form below.

**APPLICATIONS (ONLINE OR PAPER) ARE DUE MAY 1, 2018.
NO LATE APPLICATIONS WILL BE ACCEPTED.**

Please check which master class you are applying for:

Piano Master Class with Hans Boepple on Friday, June 22, 2018 at 1:00 pm

Piano Master Class with Charlie Albright on Saturday, June 23, 2018 at 10:15 am

Guidelines for Applying:

1. Submit only one piece (or movement) from a single composer from any style of music.
2. Only one student per teacher may apply.
3. Please be mindful of the length of the piece. The conference committee would like to include as many students as possible. A shorter piece (no more than 5 - 7 minutes) is preferred.
4. Application and Link (e.g. YouTube, SoundCloud, etc.) of the student performing the piece must be received by May 1, 2017. To apply with an MP3 recording, please use the online registration.
5. Teachers will be notified by May 15, 2018 if their student has been accepted to perform in the master class.
6. If completing form on paper, please send completed form to: Cindy Peterson-Peart, Conference Co-Chair, 13030 SW Heather Ct., Beaverton, OR 97008.

Student Name:	Student Age:
Teacher Name:	Teacher Email:
Title of Piece:	
Composer of Piece:	Playing Time of Piece—Number of Minutes:
Link (e.g. Youtube, SoundCloud, etc.) of Student Performing Piece:	

Eastern Washington University

Music Department Scholarship Auditions

Jan. 27 and March 2 and 3

or by appointment

Degrees Offered

Bachelor of Music

Instrumental, Vocal, Piano Performance
Composition and Jazz

Bachelor of Music Ed.

Bachelor of Arts in Music

Master of Music

Be a part of EWU's highly acclaimed Department of Music

For audition appointments and inquiries contact

Colleen Hegney

chegney@ewu.edu | 509.359.2241

www.ewu.edu/music



It's Silent Auction & Raffle Time Again!

The WSMTA Scholarship Fund provides study scholarships and travel scholarships for students serious about their music studies and for students traveling to compete at the MTNA Northwest Division Performance Competition and MTNA National Performance Competition.

Every year, attendees at the Washington State Conference enthusiastically participate in raising money for the Scholarship Fund. So, come to Vancouver, WA and join in the fun of the Silent Auction and Raffle!

We need help and support from our local chapters and members. Please consider donating:

- Local Chapter Baskets are always a big hit!
- Books
- Bottles of Washington wine
- Chocolates or something special from your area
- Gift Cards
- Perhaps your local music store would donate a larger item for a special raffle
- Businesses—spa day, B&B
- Cash Donations in memory of former teachers

Be creative and think outside the box! Let's up the ante and make this the best raffle yet!

—Cinda Redman, NCTM,
Scholarship Fundraising Chair



PHOTO COLLECTION FOR WSMTA.ORG

WSMTA is seeking new photos for our website! We'd like to invite member and non-members to share relevant photos. If you have music-related, teaching-related, or WA-state-geography-related photos, please send them in so they can be featured!

You will be required to seek permission for use from anyone in the photos that you send. We will inform you if your photo(s) will be featured on our website.

Apply for the WSMTA Chapter of the Year Award!

W

ouldn't your Chapter's name look marvelous on our WSMTA "Chapter of the Year" plaque? Our State has fantastic Chapters and we'd like to hear your story! Make a New Year's Resolution now to apply (by May 1st) so we can honor you. Information, along with the application, can be found at the wsmta.org under the "Information for Teachers" tab.



Past Chapter of the Year Winners:

- 2007 Moses Lake Chapter
- 2009 Okanogan Chapter
- 2010 Lynden Chapter
- 2011 South King County Chapter
- 2012 Grays Harbor Chapter
- 2013 Spokane Chapter
- 2015 Edmonds Chapter
- 2016 Kitsap County Chapter
- 2017 Pullman Chapter
- 2018 *Your Chapter?*

—Harriet West, Chapter of the Year Chair

Call for Lois Whitner Student Study Grant Applications

An article in our February Clarion summarized the history of our Student Study Grant Program which was established in 2003 with a bequest from the Lois Whitner estate. This program will be accepting applications for the 2018-2019 year. The purpose of the program is to provide financial assistance for continued private study to music students who demonstrate financial need and who show serious commitment to music study. The following guidelines apply:

1. The grant is open to music students currently in **grades 8-11** who have studied a **minimum of 4 years** and whose teachers are members (of at least 12 months standing) of WSMTA.
2. The applicant will be considered on a basis of financial need and commitment to music study.
3. The applicant must have participated in the WSMTA Music Artistry Program (formerly Adjudications).
4. Grants up to \$1,500 may be awarded. The applicant must explain specifically and in detail how the funds will be used. The grant will be for a period of not more than one year. Students may re-apply in subsequent

years by submitting another full application to the committee for consideration.

5. The grant may be used to offset the cost of music lessons, theory, or composition classes, or tuition for music camps.
6. The grant will be sent directly to the teacher or camp/program director.

The five-part application form can be downloaded from www.wsmta.org. From the navigation bar, select "Programs for Students" and then "Scholarships."

If you have questions or need further information, please contact me at cchungate@comcast.net or 206-232-0117.

Application deadline is **May 1, 2018**.

—Connie Hungate, WSCTM, Grants & Scholarships Chair,
cchungate@comcast.net

Certification Corner: Pursuing Excellence



Rose Freeman, NCTM
Certification Chair

Happy spring, fellow teachers! I'm excited this month to share an encouraging article written by **Laura Amoriello, NCTM, MTNA Eastern Division Certification Commissioner.**



Just over a year ago, I became a parent, and I've since learned a crucial lesson that applies not only to raising my daughter, but to my teaching: it's not about perfection. What matters is that we strive for excellence.

MTNA offers us this pursuit through Professional Certification. My parenting lesson comes with a great deal of self-reflection, and it is this component of the Teacher Profile Projects that, I believe, most inspires teaching excellence. Question 2B in Project 3 asks applicants to evaluate their teaching performance. Pacing, diagnosing musical and technical problems, communication, teaching style, and preparing the student for practice are just a few of the items for review. I would encourage applicants to answer these questions honestly, without concern for mistakes in the teaching. In a profession in which constructive criticism reigns, it is tempting to desire a flawless performance. But none of us is a perfect teacher; what matters is that we observe, evaluate, and plan for improvement. And if we fall short? The good news is that we can always begin again. I never feel as confident in a teacher's project as when an area for growth is noted and, perhaps most importantly, applied at the following lesson. This combination of reflection and

revision, is, in my opinion, indicative of teaching excellence and a true mark of caring about our teaching practice.

MTNA sets an example of reflective practice through certification and renewal; it's up to us to continue engaging in that process through our teaching career. In this month of resolutions, why not seek this opportunity to improve your teaching, whether through certification, renewal, or continued education? You don't have to be perfect. Just excellent." —
Laura Amoriello, NCTM

In light of pursuing excellence, I have a couple reminders to those of you working through the five teacher profile projects! First, remember to have your parents sign a video recording authorization form. This form needs to be included in your document. Second, it is best to include photos right in your Word document to go along with your projects. This makes the evaluation process simplified with photos right in with your text! Third, you don't have to rewrite each question. However, I encourage including titles to each project. When you complete writing responses to your five projects, export your Word file to a PDF document. That's the best professional format for the evaluators to review your projects.

Congratulations to **Elizabeth Morris** and **Ericka Thielke** who each received a \$100 WSM TA grant to cover half of the MTNA Certification application cost! There are currently six more certification grants of \$100 each available to help you with the application cost. Send me an email if you'd like to apply for a certification grant!

—*Rose Freeman, NCTM, WSM TA Certification Chair*
pianoteacherose@gmail.com

ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIPS

WSMTA has a level of membership for businesses, corporations, institutions, organizations, and individuals who have an interest in furthering the mission of WSM TA. Associate Membership entitles one person from the business, corporation, institution, or organization the rights and privileges of active membership with the exception of holding office or of entering students into WSM TA competitions and activities. WSM TA Associate Members receive several membership benefits:

- Monthly copies of our newsletter, *The Clarion*
- A link on our WSM TA website
- Advertising in *The Clarion* at member rates
- A 25% discount on fees for the WSM TA mailing labels
- A 10% discount for advertising and/or exhibiting at the annual WSM TA Conference in June (20% if both an advertiser and an exhibitor)

If you know if a business or organization that would be interested in supporting WSM TA in this way, please direct them to our website: <https://wsmta.org/about-wsmta/associate-members>.

Pedal Points: Now a Word About... Funerals



Joann Richardson, NCTM
Organ Chair

If you are an organist, playing for funerals and memorial services may be some of the most important work that you do. Let me give an example. Several years ago, I played for the funeral of a middle-aged man who died suddenly. The prelude consisted of a variety of mostly “classical” music. Following the service, the deceased man’s widow approached me and said “My stomach has been tied in knots ever since my husband died. When I walked into this church and heard your music, the knots began to unfurl. Thank you.”

Many people are uncomfortable with the whole idea of funerals. When my organ students have the realization that organists play for funerals, it is not playing the music that worries them. They are often most concerned about what they are going to see and what they will have to say to people. This is not just my teen-age students. Some of my adult students are just as funeral-phobic as the youth. In addition to having prepared their music carefully, it is helpful for organists to be emotionally prepared for what they may encounter at a funeral. Here are some non-musical aspects of funeral preparation I cover in lessons based upon questions I have been asked frequently.

Question 1: Will I see a body? Answer: Maybe. Some memorial services happen without the remains present. At others, either a container of cremains or a closed casket is present. Sometimes a pre-service open-casket viewing takes place and the casket is closed for the service itself. At other services, an open casket is front-and-center for the entire service. Internet searches such as “what can I expect for an open-casket service” can also help the student prepare.

Question 2: If I encounter the family of the deceased, what do I say to them? I don’t know these people. Answer: Simply introduce yourself as the organist and offer words of condolence. Something like “Hello, I’m _____, the organist for today’s service. I’m so sorry for your loss.” is usually enough.

Question 3: I was close to the deceased and/or family. I’m afraid that I’m going lose my composure and not be able to play. What do I do? Answer: Call a family member prior to the service. “Hello, Tom, this is Joann. I’m calling to offer my condolences.” Converse for a few moments. Then explain to the family member that if you seem a bit distant before or during the service, it is so you can maintain composure in order to play. People are very understanding of this.

Question 4: What should I wear? Answer: Look nice. If you customarily wear a choir robe for church services, this is appropriate for funerals. Otherwise, for men—a coat and tie or a suit. For women—nice slacks paired with a sweater or blazer; or a dress. It’s better to err on the side of too dressy rather than too casual.

Question 5: What if I start crying? Answer: This is normal, even if you don’t know the deceased. Have plenty of tissues available. Take deep breaths. Turn your head away and try to stop looking and listening for a few moments. Focus on the next piece of music you are going to play and mentally start practicing. Only listen enough for your next musical cue. Sometimes it is necessary to disconnect from the proceedings to do your job. That is okay. Be aware that, even if you hold your emotions in check during the service, you may end up crying afterward. Be glad that you are a person full of love and empathy for others.

Although playing for a funeral may be awkward for our students, over time they will realize the value of their work. Music is a wonderful, spiritual mystery that can provide comfort, strength and hope. It is our job as teachers to help prepare those who do this important work to do it with compassion and professionalism.

A note about the WSMTA/OMTA Conference: in addition to one organ workshop during the conference itself, an afternoon of pre-conference organ workshops will take place on Wednesday, June 20 from 1:00-5:00 pm. I warmly invite you to attend!

—Joann Richardson, NCTM, Organ Chair
organistjoann@gmail.com

An advertisement for Henry Bischofberger Violins, LLC. It features a drawing of a violin and bow. The text includes the company name, "Third Generation Violin Maker", and a quote from Evening Magazine. It also provides contact information: a website, social media links, an email address, and a phone number.

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Studio Technology News: Help for the Visiolibriphobic (*suffering from the fear of Facebook)



Michelle Mielke, NCTM
Studio Technology Chair,
Pullman Chapter President

According to a Google search I just now ran, there is a solid body of scholarly research devoted to generational usages of social media platforms. And this research shows that even though younger generations are increasingly utilizing platforms like Instagram, Twitter, Snapchat, Vine and Periscope, Facebook is still the king with over a billion daily users (Nagy, Jennifer. HospitalityNet, 8 June 2017. Accessed Jan 31, 2018). No matter your personal views on social media,

Facebook is an effective advertising and communication platform, and here are my best tips to help you utilize this free resource.

Some Justifications: Our most effective advertising should be placed in front of our clients, and the bulk of our clients (i.e. parents with children) are clearly using Facebook. Furthermore, Facebook advertising makes use of digital word-of-mouth (referrals to a Facebook business page tend to come through an existing or former client), which is arguably the most effective form of advertising for studio teachers. Additionally, you can manage most of your Facebook advertising for free. Now who doesn't want to get more quality referrals for free?

Step 1: If you don't have a Facebook page for your business, it's time to make one. But you need to first start with a personal Facebook account: the software requires an actual person to hold an account (not a business, and using your personal page for commercial purposes may result in a temporary account suspension), so take a deep breath and create an account with your name, cover photo and a bit of personal data. I recommend Daniel Patterson's free e-booklet "The Piano Teacher's Ultimate Facebook Guide" at www.growyourmusicstudio.com/fbguide to walk you through the process.

Posts



An example of a Facebook post on my business page.

Step 2: Invite your clients to Like and Follow your business page. Promote your page within Facebook and within your studio (add your Facebook link to your email signature and to your webpage). Ideally your business page should be your word-of-mouth community, so add lots of photos and events (see Step 3 to build your community content (it's a great idea to add a line to your studio policies for a parent/guardian signature agreeing to allow their child's photo on the Facebook page; see the helpful article at <https://composecreate.com/piano-lesson-photo-release>). Facebook advertising works best if it is personable, so add your clients as your friends on your personal page. If you're uncomfortable with the line between your personal profile and your business page, you can set privacy restrictions so those client-friends are limited in what content they can view on your personal page. Here's a great resource for setting privacy restrictions and filters: www.cmsturjeon.com/itconf/faculty_guide_using_facebook.pdf.



An example of a Facebook event on my business page.

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Step 3: Add content to your business page: Decide what kind of news you would like to focus on (as a reminder to yourself to keep adding content): student successes, performances, student-of-the-week, etc. Then begin adding photos, videos and text (Note: Facebook doesn't publish strictly audio files, so if you want to post an audio recording, first turn it into a video with a slideshow or random graphic). If you have a smartphone, this is pretty easily accomplished. You can snap a photo or shoot a short video of a student or event, edit it with a photography or other app if necessary, and upload directly to Facebook.

If you don't have a smartphone, you can still use a camera or video camera but you'll just need to upload your files to a computer first (one extra step, probably some extra cables). You may want to make Facebook Events for recitals, so your Facebook Friends can RSVP and share the event. You don't have to already be familiar with professional-level editing programs to make a Facebook post (I use the Typic app on my phone or create a PowerPoint slide and save it as a jpg file). There are great tutorials on YouTube to walk you through the steps of creating a post or event on your business page, so I encourage you to start exploring!

—Michelle Mielke, NCTM,
Studio Technology Chair



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