

OMTA MUSIC NEWS

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UPCOMING EVENTS

2025 ESMAR Examinations

June 7, 2025
Willamette University, Dept. of Music, Salem, OR

2025 OMTA State Conference

June 27-28, 2025
Florence Events Center, Florence, OR

District Presidents Round Table

October 11, 2025 at 10:00-11:00 am
Virtual/Online

2025 Fall Board Meeting

October 11, 2025 at 11:00 am-2:00 pm
Virtual/Online



PRESIDENT'S CORNER



Heidi Evans, NCTM
OMTA President

Spring has just flown by, with a plethora of festivals, recitals, and performance opportunities! I believe every teacher is feeling the stretch, and we're almost to the end of the season.

Attending the MTNA Conference in Minneapolis was a delight this year! Wonderful recitals, master classes, workshops, lectures, and discussion groups throughout the five days. If you've never been, I highly recommend it. Next year is MTNA's

150th anniversary, and the celebrations and conference will be held in Chicago! Even if you only come for Pedagogy Saturday, it's well worth the time and travel.

A couple reminders:

Be sure to renew your MTNA membership as early as possible. I like to renew when it first becomes available in April, so I don't forget during the craziness of May and June festivities.

Be sure to log into Leggiero to download your student histories and your own archives. These records will all be gone at the end of June, so your printouts are your only record. Jeff and Ramona Goddard have provided clear instructions in Leggiero for how to do this, and it only takes a minute or two for each student (plus paper). Alternatively, you



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can download the PDF and email it to your students. One teacher suggested that we send a copy home with each student on the last lesson of the school year, and keep one for yourself if you keep records of this. *If you need help with this, please ask a district chair or officer for help.* Do this right away, don't delay. Also, take a few minutes to thank Ramona and Jeff for their work these past fifteen years. Their development of Leggiero totally modernized registration and scheduling for our Festival and Syllabus chairs and teachers!

The new registration system is expected to be debuted at Conference along with instructions for use. The system is scheduled to be online this summer with a brief beta test for Syllabus. A membership-wide email will be coming this summer, offering the opportunity for students to participate in a virtual Syllabus using the new system. This is a perfect opportunity for students who couldn't participate this spring. As you can all imagine, this has been a substantial effort by many this year!

Finally, I hope to see each of you at Florence for this year's OMTA Conference, June 26–28. OMTA President-Elect and Conference Chair, Amie Belisle, NCTM, has curated a wonderful lineup of events that you won't want to miss! Don't miss her article on this event, and see the OMTA website for registration details. The best part of OMTA is all of you—being together in person to learn about our art and craft of teaching and making music. See you there!



Heidi Evans, NCTM
OMTA President



The link below connects you to your local District Associations, OMTA Board of Directors, and Committee Chairs:
www.oregonmta.org/about/leadership

OMTA Board of Directors

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PAST PRESIDENT

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Liz Willis, NCTM

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Dr. Julia Lee

CONFERENCE

Amie Belisle, NCTM

EDUCATION

Dr. Janet Pollack

FINANCE

Valerie Ross

MARKETING

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Kathy Gault, NCTM

PERSONNEL & CONTRACTED SERVICES

Heidi Evans, NCTM

PUBLIC RELATIONS

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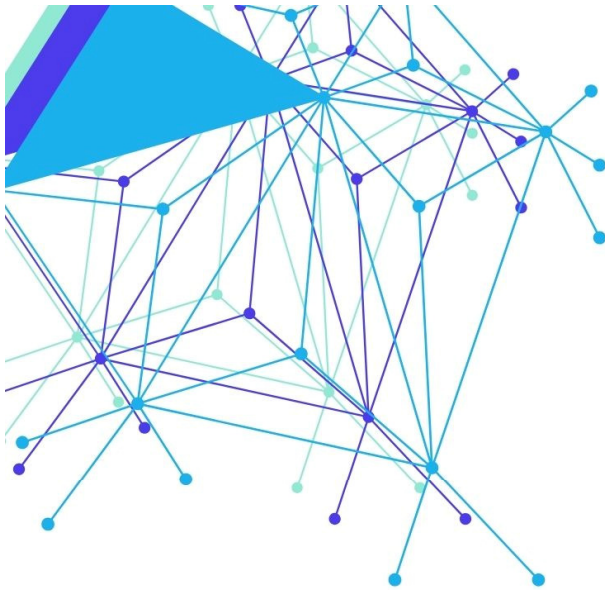
PUBLICATIONS

Jeremy Hatch

SYLLABUS

Barbara Roberts, NCTM

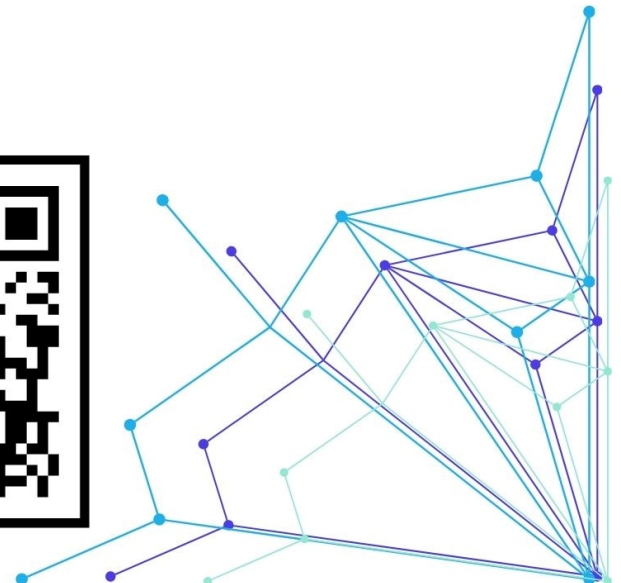
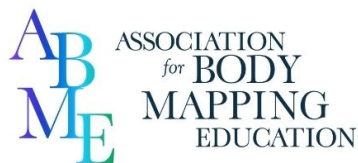




ABME Biennial Conference at
Portland State University

**“What Every Musician Needs to Know
About the Body”**

The Six-Hour Foundational Body Mapping Course
Wednesday, June 18th
4 Instrument-Specific Tracks





2025 Grand Scholarship Competition

Presented by the Piano Santa Foundation

Multiple winners of the 2025 Piano Santa Foundation Grand Scholarship Competition will receive the use of a grand piano for 2 years, including moving costs, annual tuning, and maintenance. The competition is open to all students, ages 12–16, who have passed at least Syllabus level 6 (or equivalent) and live in the Portland Metro area.

Applications and more information are available at <https://pianosanta.org/pianos-for-students/> or by scanning the QR code below. Contact us at info@pianosanta.org or (503) 245-6269 for more information.



Applications Due: May 19, 2025
Auditions: June 14, 2025

OMTA STATE CONFERENCE

June 27-28, 2025 · Florence Events Center · Florence, OR



Amie Belisle, NCTM
Conference Chair

OMTA Summer Conference Checklist

- Share your creative spirit with colleagues at the Florence Playhouse on Thursday night. It will be a festive and light atmosphere with an open bar. Comedy, fun and "outside the box" ideas are encouraged!
- Submit a small group discussion topic when you register through the "Ask a Colleague" field so that your experience is as relevant as possible. Early bird discounted registration ends May 15. Conference registration information can be found here: <https://oregonmta.org/teachers/conferences/omta-state-conference/>
- Encourage a member new to OMTA this year, or a collegiate student, to attend since they can do so for free!
- Choose your accommodations either by taking advantage of OMTA group rates at the local hotels, or by finding a rental elsewhere. Consider reaching out to a colleague to share a room or house to get to know each other better and save money. (Housing rebate information can be found through the above registration link.)
- Set aside time that weekend to explore the Central Oregon Coast - it's beautiful and you've earned some "me" time! <https://visitheoregoncoast.com/regions/central-coast/>



Oregon Coast at Florence



FOUNDATION

Conference Silent Auction Baskets and Donations



Liz Willis, NCTM

Past President and OMTA
Foundation Chair

As our state conference approaches, I want to remind everyone of the opportunity to donate items for the silent auction. Every year at the conference we hold both a silent auction and a “wall of wine” drawing to raise money for the OMTA Foundation. Foundation monies support MusicLink, travel grants, and special projects within OMTA, as well as contributing to funding Oregon’s nominee for MTNA Foundation Fellow. This year our MTNA Foundation Fellow is **Kathy Gault, NCTM** from Central Oregon District.

Historically, each of our districts donates an item for the auction—often a gift basket containing items representing the unique characteristics, foods, or products of their part of Oregon.

However, we also welcome personal donations! For example: art that needs a new home, ceramics, accessories with a musical theme (or not), or an antique bench that isn’t being used.

Feel free to contact me if you have something in excellent condition to donate. It might be a real treasure for a bidder at the conference!



CERTIFICATION

Newly Certified Teacher Spotlight



Anastasia Kitaev, NCTM
Certification Co-Chair



Sarah Barker Ball, NCTM
Certification Co-Chair



Congratulations to Joshua Hegg, NCTM, who recently completed the certification projects and would like to share his experience:

"I'm honored to be a nationally-certified teacher. My journey started after having coffee with a colleague, where they expressed their interest in getting certified to 'level up' their teaching. I come from a performance and audio engineering background, and with no formal pedagogical training in college, the idea of proving my teaching abilities to myself and others resonated with me.

"The certification process gave me the guidance to scrutinize and think deeply about how I teach and how I can be the most effective and inspiring mentor to my students. The certification projects are thorough and dense, but now, on the other side, I've noticed a self-assurance in my teaching that is deeper and stronger than before. Having NCTM after my name doesn't automatically make me a better teacher, but I can honestly say that going through the process has given me a renewed sense of confidence in my teaching abilities—and I've already noticed its positive effects in my studio!"

Have you ever considered becoming a Nationally Certified Teacher of Music? We encourage you to check it out! All the details can be found online at certification.mtna.org. If you have any questions, please contact us: certification@oregonmta.org. We will be happy to support you as needed in this exciting journey. We meet monthly on Zoom, on the first Thursday of the month at 9:00 AM to discuss topics of mutual interest.



Joshua Hegg, NCTM



EDUCATION GRANTS

Resources Available to You!



Laura Davis
OMTA Education
Grant Chair

Did you know that your OMTA membership gives you access to scholarships and grants for OMTA districts, individual teachers, and their deserving students? Requirements and applications are readily available on the OMTA website:

www.oregonmta.org

The various amounts available to be awarded each year are limited, so it is advisable to apply well before the annual deadline of September 30. No late applications can be considered. Scholarship and grant checks will be awarded in mid-October.

Grants for Students

Student grants are on the "Programs for Students" page. Scroll down to Need Based Grants:

<https://oregonmta.org/programs/scholarships>

This link lists all the OMTA resources for teachers and districts. Other grants from MTNA are also found on this link (scroll down for MTNA grants):

<https://oregonmta.org/teachers/grants>

Grants for Teachers

Here are some of the ways these valuable grants can propel you on your professional path:

- Help with costs of attending a professional conference
- Help with MTNA teacher certification fees
- Continuing study grants for teachers
- Study grant for teachers incorporating composition in their studio

Grants for Districts

Attention district presidents: there are two different Nellie Tholen grants for districts, so please be sure to carefully read all the information. These Nellie Tholen grants are handled by different volunteers. It is all explained on the website and links.

1. **OMTA/OCF Nellie Tholen District Enrichment Grant**, administered by Karen Huntsberger. Karen provides presidents of eligible districts with a roster of presenters with a variety of programs on offer. Work with Karen to plan your district's calendar for next year!



2. **Nellie Tholen Endowment Fund Grants**, administered by Laura Davis. All district presidents may apply for funds to assist in payment for presenters subject to approval by the OMTA Education Grants committee.

For this grant, please email or mail applications to:

Laura Davis, OMTA Education Grant Chair
12877 SE Braemark Pl.
Clackamas, OR 97015
(503) 312-1162
lauradavis47@gmail.com

3. **Technology Grant for Districts**
Districts that have exhausted the one-time \$1,200 District Technology Support Grant may apply for additional funds to support the technological needs of their district.

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GORINI**
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long breath"*



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EDUCATION AND FESTIVALS

Festival Updates

Dr. Janet Pollack, Education and State Festivals Chair

The OMTA **2025 State Baroque Honors Festival/Recital** took place on Saturday, March 15, 2025 at the Saint Mark's Lutheran Church in NE Salem. I am pleased to report that participation was high, and all enjoyed the event. A special thank-you is extended to the co-chairs Natalya Klimov, Gayle Bland, NCTM and Kellene Goff for their excellent work in making this event a success. I am also delighted to announce that Natalya has agreed to continue as a co-chair of the State Baroque Honors Festivals for next year. The date of the **2026 State Baroque Honors Festival** is confirmed for **Saturday, March 14, 2026** and will again take place at Saint Mark's Lutheran Church in NE Salem. For any and all questions please contact Natalya Klimov at romanatalya@gmail.com.

Please be aware that the changes to the rules will remain in place for the 2026 festival. They are as follows:

1. The 3x winners' program is eliminated;
2. Last year's percentage of 30% selected winners in each division is reduced to 25% per division;
3. There will no longer be alternates selected;
4. No videoing will be permitted during adjudication (i.e., when an adjudicator is in the room); and
5. The state entry fee will be raised to \$35 to bring it in line with other state festivals.

The **2025 State Composition Festival** virtual recital will take place June 1, 2025. The deadline for online registration is May 10. The registration fee is \$35, and this now includes the booklet of compositions. Dianne Davies, NCTM is the chair and can be contacted at diannedavies00@gmail.com for further information.

ESMAR is scheduled for June 7, 2025 in the Department of Music on the campus of Willamette University, Salem. Lorraine Alner, NCTM is our new chair and can be reached at lyant@samford.edu for additional information.

The OMTA **Fall 2025 Sonatina Festival** will again take place **October 2026** in the Frohnmayer Music Building, University of Oregon in Eugene. Marla Hansen, Sandy Hull, NCTM and Dr. Janet Pollack are confirmed as co-chairs. The repertoire committee—Dr. Grace Ho, Ellen McQuilkin, NCTM and Sandy Hull, NCTM—finalized the required repertoire in January 2025 and posted it to the OMTA website. Please check https://oregonmta.org/wp-content/uploads/Sonatina_Festival_Repertoire_List.pdf for the list of required pieces for all levels. All remaining documents will be updated and posted to the state OMTA website in the coming months. For any questions or concerns, please reach out to either Marla Hansen (4marlarae@gmail.com) or Janet Pollack (janetkippollack@comcast.net).

The **2025 State Ensemble Honors Festival** will again take place December 2025 in the Frohnmayer Music Building, University of Oregon (Eugene) and will be co-chaired by Dr. Janet Pollack. We are in **dire need** of another co-chair. If you wish to volunteer, please contact Janet Pollack at janetkippollack@comcast.net.



GRANT PROGRAMS

OMTA/OCF Nellie Tholen District Enrichment Project Programs: Teacher Enrichment for All!



Karen Huntsberger, NCTM
Nellie Tholen Grant Coordinator

The grant presenter roster for 2025–2026 is being assembled and will be available to district presidents and program chairs by June 1, 2025.

Visit the Teacher Enrichment page for the latest program updates:
<https://oregonmta.org/teachers/enrichment-workshops>

Questions? Email me at grant.coordinator@oregonmta.org.

Upcoming Grant Programs:



Central Oregon District

Friday, June 13, 2025, 10:45 AM–12:15 PM

Location: Check with district president for location

Dianne Davies, NCTM

Composition: Stealing From the Masters

This workshop encourages teachers to present repertoire to students as a guide to their own creativity. Dianne's "Rainforest Animals" were inspired by two Debussy Preludes.



OMTA HONORS COMMITTEE CORNER

Oregon MTNA Foundation Fellow, Honorary Life Members, and 50+ Year Member Awards

Fern McArthur, NCTM, Susan Todd, NCTM, Honors Committee Co-Chairs

Foundation Fellow

Seeing OMTA's own Sarah Barker Ball, NCTM honored as the 2025 Oregon MTNA Foundation Fellow at the Conference Gala in Minneapolis in March was a highlight of the conference. Our OMTA members attending the gala (Heidi Evans, NCTM; Cindy Peterson-Peart, NCTM; Dr. Chiharu Sai; and Susan Todd, NCTM) were all smiles and cheers when Sarah's name was announced. Sarah was nominated by the OMTA board in spring 2024, and donations funding her nomination came from friends, colleagues, and family members. OMTA support included donations from our 2023 Conference Raffle and support from Hillsboro, East Portland, and West Portland Districts.

The OMTA Honors Committee is pleased to announce Kathleen Gault, NCTM as the **2026 Oregon MTNA Foundation Fellow** nominee. The MTNA Fellow program is a prestigious honor that recognizes outstanding individuals in the music community while supporting the efforts of the MTNA Foundation Fund through donations in the

nominee's name. If Kathy's nomination is fully funded by January 15, 2026, she will be honored at the annual MTNA Conference in March 2026 in Chicago, Illinois.

The OMTA Honors Committee encourages all members to consider adding a donation in Kathy Gault's name to the



Kathy Gault, NCTM

MTNA Foundation when renewing their MTNA dues this spring, or sending a donation to MTNA directly. The MTNA Foundation actively supports students and teachers throughout the country through commissions of new music, awards for excellent performances, scholarships, study grants, and awards such as the Studio Teacher Fellowship, which is given to an independent music teacher to assist in developing and enhancing a newly established studio. Donating to the MTNA Foundation is a meaningful way to honor exceptional leaders in the music community like Kathy Gault and support the important work of the Foundation.

Kathy Gault, NCTM comes from a long line of musicians and grew up making music with family and friends. As the only pianist in the bunch, she was assigned the role of accompanist and thus developed the ability to read music well and think fast on her feet! These skills came in handy at Humboldt State University, where she worked as a part-time staff accompanist, played lots of piano ensemble and chamber music, and graduated with a Bachelor of Music in 1974.

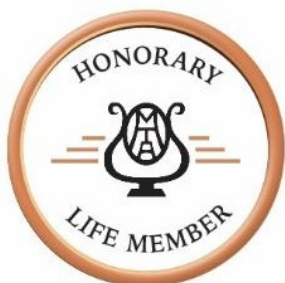
Kathy has been an OMTA member since 1975 and was immediately pressed into service in the tiny new Central Oregon District. She served as district President twice, as Secretary and as Treasurer, she created a Keyboard Carnival, Piano Monster Concert, and served as co-chair for other events.

Kathy is pianist and keyboardist for the Central Oregon Symphony and Cascade Winds, and teaches students of all ages in her home studio. Along the way she has done graduate studies in Piano Pedagogy with Mary Kogen, and piano with Mary Kogen and Harold Gray at Portland State University. She also had the great good fortune to be a Keyboard Arts Associate, learning from Richard Chronister and David Kraehenbuehl through their teacher improvement outreach programs. Kathy is



also a Certified Flower Essence Practitioner, knows a lot about astrology, sound healing, fountain pens, Central Oregon geology, climate, hiking, wildflowers, and tomatoes. In her spare time, she teaches gardening classes for COCC Community Education.

Kathy says “membership and participation in district programs, as well as state conferences, has been the best pedagogical training and collegial experience she could have had as an independent music teacher. OMTA and MTNA have been a lifeline and the source of deep friendships for my entire teaching life.” Kathy is Past President of the Oregon Music Teachers Association.



Honorary Life Members

This spring your Honors Committee also received OMTA Board approval for two new Honorary Life Members: Cherise da Cunha, NCTM and Heidi Evans, NCTM. The Oregon Music Teachers Association State Honorary Life Member award brings recognition to individuals who have given extraordinary service to OMTA at both the district and state levels for many years. Recipients are recognized at the OMTA Conference and receive free membership at the state level for life.

Cherise Ann da Cunha, NCTM, Hillsboro Area District

Cherise Ann da Cunha received a Bachelor of Music degree with a major in Piano Performance, and a Master of Music degree with a major in Piano Pedagogy from Texas Christian University (TCU) in Fort Worth. She graduated Magna Cum Laude and was the recipient of the prestigious Lili Kraus Scholarship during her studies at TCU. Cherise



Cherise Ann da Cunha, NCTM

began her piano studies in Bombay, India, following the curriculum of the Trinity College of Music, London, under the instruction of Mrs. Ivy Fernandes. Upon her immigration to the United States, she continued her piano instruction with Mr. John Owings, first at Indiana University at South Bend (IUSB) and subsequently at TCU. Cherise has taught students of all ages and levels, ranging from preschool Kindermusik and Piano Readiness through Adult Class Piano, and has collaborated with other artists in the US and Canada, as well as in the UK and India. She has been a prizewinner in the Annual Gary Martin Piano Competition and winner of the IUSB Concerto Competition. Cherise is a member of Pi Kappa Lambda, National Music Honor Society.

Cherise began teaching as a teen and has been teaching consistently since her college years. She was on the piano faculty at Pacific University in Forest Grove for five years. She has served as President of Portland District-OMTA, is an adjudicator for OMTA Syllabus Examinations and is also involved with OMTA's Syllabus Committee at both State and Local levels. In addition to maintaining a full private studio, Cherise is currently on the piano faculty at Portland Community College's Sylvania Campus, teaching Applied Piano and Group Piano for Music Majors and Non-Music Majors. She is also an active pianist and accompanist at local area churches.

Cherise was nominated by Holly Counts, who wrote that Cherise has a lively studio in the Orenco Station neighborhood of Hillsboro. Her students of all ages have participated in OMTA Syllabus and recitals, and



are always well-prepared. Cherise is highly regarded by her studio parents, who write that they enjoy their time in lessons and have developed a life-long love and appreciation of the piano under her tutelage. Liz Willis, NCTM added: "Cherise has served in many Syllabus positions over the years. She has served as a coordinator of all of the West Portland Syllabus districts, as well as Syllabus district chair for both Jazz Syllabus and Hillsboro multiple times in years past. Her commitment to the teachers and students of Portland is evident in the countless hours she has volunteered in those positions, especially as past president of the Portland District."



Heidi Evans, NCTM

Heidi Evans, MST, NCTM, West Portland, Tualatin Valley Districts

Heidi Evans is a Nationally Certified Teacher of Music through Music Teachers National Association and holds a Master of Science in Teaching Music from Portland State University. She studied piano with Professor Harold Gray and trained in pedagogy with Professor Mary Hall Kogen. Her previous teachers include Dr. Leonard Richter, Sandy Mauchley, Elma Curry, and her mother who started her at age six.

Heidi currently holds the position of President in the Oregon Music Teachers Association, secretary in Oregon Federation of Music Clubs, and various district positions, including Virtual Syllabus chair.

Heidi enjoys learning, performing, and listening to music from all eras, and attending concerts, recitals and master classes. Her teaching experience includes twenty-five years with students of all levels and ages. Her foremost belief is that learning is a process, full of enjoyment and exciting new discoveries. Heidi's ultimate goal is to teach each student to teach themselves, so that music can be a lifetime experience. She maintains a private studio in the greater Portland area, and is married with two children, ages 20 & 17. She also enjoys playing the harp, reading, hiking, white-water rafting, gardening, her two black cats, and tea parties.

Heidi was nominated by Tualatin Valley District Co-President Karen Huntsberger, NCTM. Karen wrote that Heidi's commitment to her students is evidenced by her preparation for each lesson and her respect for each student's learning style. One of her passions is seeking out new repertoire, both newer works and works by underrepresented composers. That repertoire has enriched her own student's learning, and through her presentations on under-represented composers, she has provided new repertoire ideas to teachers across the state.

Heidi has been an extremely active district member. She joined the Tualatin Valley District in 1999, a year after it was formed, and was the only Nationally Certified Teacher in the district until 2005. She has chaired festivals and volunteered at festivals in which her students have participated. She served as district President in 2004–2005 and 2012–2013, and was Secretary in 2019–2020. Heidi's work on the state level has been extensive. She has been a Syllabus Adjudicator since 2009. In 2012, she was invited to serve on the Syllabus Repertoire Committee and remains an active member of that committee. Her passion for repertoire makes her very adept at quickly figuring out the correct level for a piece. From 2017–2022, she served as Syllabus Chair, one of the most difficult volunteer positions in OMTA. She had to punt during the pandemic and quickly came up with ways to keep the program going via online exams. Many new procedures and forms had to be created. She is still actively involved with Syllabus,



most recently with the revision of the Syllabus Manual. As President-Elect, she organized the state conferences in Ashland in 2023 and Portland in 2024. She has served as State President since July 2024. Heidi continues her education by attending regional meetings and national conferences.

Heidi is an excellent communicator. She is empathetic and grateful for everyone's contribution to OMTA programs. She represents the highest ideals of our organization while being enthusiastic and fun. I can't think of anyone more dedicated to OMTA than Heidi Evans, and I highly recommend her to receive this award.

50-Year Plus Members

OMTA Proudly recognizes our members who have been in our organization for over 50 years. We encourage you to give them a call to learn some of their wonderful teaching experiences.

70+ years:

- Virginia Hawly Buhn, NCTM, Eugene

60+ years:

- Barbara Straw, Linn-Benton
- Barbara Parker, East Portland

50+ years:

- Pauline Eidemiller, NCTM, West Portland, Tualatin Valley
- Phyllis Pieffer, NCTM, West Portland, Hillsboro Area
- Carol Ratzlaf, NCTM, East Portland
- Mary James Swanson, Linn-Benton
- Christine Mirabella, Eugene
- Jill Geil, Central Oregon
- Lanetta Paul, NCTM, Blue Mountain
- Katherine George, NCTM, East Portland
- Hiroko Nelson, NCTM, East Portland
- Marilyn Reischke, Salem
- Margaret Littlehales, NCTM, Central Oregon

The Honors Committee reviews nominations for the above awards as well as the OMTA Nellie Tholen Excellence in Teaching Award, presents nominations to the board, and follows through with publicity work and communicating with MTNA. The work is important, but not very time-consuming. If you would like to help serve on this very fun committee, please contact OMTA President, Heidi Evans.



MEMBERSHIP



Andrew D'Antonio, NCTM
Membership Chair

The 2025 Membership Survey is complete! A full report was sent to district presidents and membership chairs, as well as the state board. Below are a couple key highlights from the survey. Please note that members could often select more than one answer, so percentages will not add up to 100%:

The top three OMTA programs participants use:

1. Syllabus (73%)
2. District Meetings and Workshops (65%)
3. District Festivals/Recitals (59%)

It is worth noting that these are all events that happen at the district level. While many members still participate in various state events like state festivals, competitions, grants, and scholarships, the participation is considerably lower than district events. One exception would be the state conference, which was 52%.

The primary reasons participants are members of OMTA:

1. Peer Support & Networking (65%)
2. Participation in OMTA Programs (64%)
3. Professional Development (56%)

Less popular were MTNA offerings, such as discounts, business resources, competitions, etc. Recruitment of students was 14%.

Looking at just these two survey questions, one of my big takeaways is that what is happening on the district, local level is very important to our members—often more important than the state and national offerings.

There was much more in the survey: participants also submitted ideas to improve their local district as well

as the state district, we asked questions about volunteering and certification, and had a section for general feedback. It's all more than we can include in this article! However, if you are interested in seeing the full report, please email me at: andrew.a.dantonio@gmail.com, and I'd be happy to send it along to you.

Lastly, I'd like to share one lovely quote from the survey:

OMTA is a wonderful organization for teachers and their students. It helps teachers teach with a logical progression (Syllabus) and gives students goals throughout the year. Many thanks to the leaders all around the state. Thanks to OMTA, experience, and further education, my teaching is at a different level than it was when I had my first student years ago.

New Members!

We have many new members to OMTA! Please welcome the following:

- Emily Lassen is a new active member of Eugene
- Rose Huynh is a new active member of Hillsboro Area
- Shawn Lutz is a new active member of Mid-Columbia
- Kelly Miller is a new active member of Salem
- Nat Bartels is a new collegiate member of Eugene
- Suyeon Hwang is a new active member of Eugene
- Jack McGaughey is a new collegiate member of Eugene
- Monica Roundy is a new active member of Linn-Benton
- Marlene Fernandez is a new collegiate member of Eugene
- Aaron Petit is a new active member of East Portland

Welcome to OMTA! We look forward to meeting and working with you.



MTNA COMPETITIONS

Doctoral Students from University of Oregon Win 2025 Stecher and Horowitz Competition

Dr. Grace Ho, Membership Chair, Eugene District

At the 2025 MTNA National Conference, two UO doctoral students—Dasol Um and Jun Yun—competed in the Stecher and Horowitz Two Piano Competition. They performed a program that began with the first movement of Mozart’s Sonata for Two Pianos in D Major, K. 448. The charm and effervescence of Mozart’s style came out in the energetic tuttis and playful dialogue between the two pianos. The pair continued with a full performance of Poulenc’s Sonata for Two Pianos. The four-movement work features both modern sonorities and romantic lyricism. It was in this piece that Dasol and Jun really shined in their thoughtful interpretation and colorful nuances. Their last piece was “Tres Romances Argentinos Para dos Pianos” by Carlos Guastavino. The rhythmic energy and Latin flair provided a strong contrast to the preceding Poulenc piece.

To the delight of the OMTA and UO members who watched the competition in Minneapolis, Dasol and Jun were awarded the top prize! The esteemed judges were Jean Barr, Kevin Fitzgerald, and Thomas Hecht.

Dasol and Jun are both doctoral students at the University of Oregon. Dasol is in her final year, and Jun is in his second year. The piano duo was coached by Dr. Brian Hsu, Dr. Alexandre Dossin, and Dr. David Riley.



Dasol Um and Jun Yun



SYLLABUS



Dr. Barbara Roberts, NCTM
OMTA Syllabus Chair

I hope you are all doing well in the middle of the busiest part of OMTA's Syllabus year! At this point, many of you may be looking towards the end-of-the-year recitals and awards. OMTA has two ways of honoring students who have successfully participated in the Syllabus program: Medals and Plaques, and the Level VI and Level X Honors Recital.

Syllabus Level VI and Level X Medals and Level X Plaques

In the past, teachers could only order medals and plaques for students completing Syllabus Level X. OMTA paid for the medals and plaques, and teachers had to verify their students' participation.

This year we have added Level VI medals. The ordering process has also been simplified, and there are no forms to fill out. Teachers may order medals and plaques directly from the OMTA

Marketplace. (OMTA is no longer funding Medals and Plaques because of budget constraints.)

Syllabus Level VI and Level X Honors Recital

Eligible students for the Level VI and Level X Honors Recital can participate either in person or virtually, or both. The in-person recital will be held June 8, 2025 at 2:00 PM at Portland Piano Company in north Portland. For more information, download the Recital Form from the website, and direct any questions to Lacie Mitts, the Recital Chair.

Please remember to check the new Classical Piano Syllabus Manual 2025, which is now available on the website to OMTA members. We will use this manual exclusively starting Fall of 2025.

I hope to see you at the conference in Florence, Oregon at the end of June!



CENTRAL OREGON DISTRICT

Grace King, Central Oregon District Secretary

Hello from Central Oregon! We held our regular meeting this month at Renee Dugan's home in Redmond, and a wonderful guest presenter, Melissa Terrall, gave a presentation on managing performance anxiety.

We also spent time commemorating Patti Petersen, honoring her legacy and friendship with remembrances and photos. Please see the article at the end of this newsletter for some of these photos, and to learn more about her life and legacy. Patti was my piano teacher in high school and college, and I

am very grateful to have known her. She was an inspiration to me in many ways, and I have lovely memories of lessons with her.

Our Winter Festival was held March 15 in Bend, with eight studios represented. The theme, "Music for the Dance", encompassed a wide variety of beautiful music.

We are gearing up for Spring Syllabus, and enjoying spring's arrival in the high desert!

SALEM DISTRICT

Deborah Butler, Salem District President

Well, we blinked and the year went whizzing by—and what a wonderful musical year it was!

We once again enjoyed being spoiled by Magnolia on the Green at Christmas time, a special event where we meet in a room with a view and have our own personal waiter and cook. We were energized by Dr. Crystal Zimmerman's presentation *Succeeding with Sonatinas*, Dr. Lark Powers' interesting lecture on *Piano Methods from Around the World*, and Deborah Cleaver's presentation on *The Taubman*

Approach. These meetings were attended by between four and nine teachers, so we are discussing if a different day might help increase attendance.

Our Baroque Festival was a success, chaired by Kellene Goff. Our Vice President, Melissa Terrall, performed quite a few piano concerts, too! Spring Syllabus is coming up next month, with chairs Deborah Butler and Kellene Goff working relentlessly on what we humorously call the 'Syllabus Puzzle.'



EAST PORTLAND DISTRICT



Andrew D'Antonio, NCTM
East Portland District President

Spring has been chugging away! We have now wrapped up a very successful lower and upper division Syllabus. A cancellation for our mid-March district meeting presenter left us trying to find someone new, and when we were unsuccessful, we decided to meet at a bakery for coffee, a brief business meeting, and an opportunity for socializing with no planned program. This turned out to be an unexpected delight! We loved the chance to spend time together without a program, and are considering doing more of these in the future.

Our Composition Festival had a small but mighty turnout this year. For our April meeting, Dr. Grace Ho, piano pedagogy instructor of University of Oregon, gave us a special intermediate master class; the students and teaching were excellent. The performance repertoire and share has been going strong as always, with more teachers volunteering to host and showcase their beautiful studios.

The nominating committee has officially selected Dr. Stephen Lewis, NCTM as President-Elect, and pending the vote at our May meeting, we are looking forward to Dr. Lauren Fraley, NCTM transitioning to President and myself to Past President.

At the March meeting, a financial aid committee was formed to create scholarships for students facing financial barriers to participation in district events. While MusicLink and OMTA offer many wonderful scholarships, we found that we needed something more local and with fewer requirements to make things immediately available to our students. The details are still being developed, but we are looking at providing 50% scholarships for participation in Syllabus and district festivals, and 100% scholarships for district winners who are participating in state festivals. We estimated that with as little as \$600—a number we could easily work into our district budget—we could provide over 20 scholarships to our students to help them participate in these wonderful programs. We are still developing the application process, but East Portland members can expect to hear more about this over the summer. For districts interested in replicating this for their own local populations, we would be happy to share our template. Please reach out to me about that if you are interested!



EUGENE DISTRICT

Dr. Janet Pollack, Eugene District Corresponding Secretary

As usual, the Eugene District has been busy and productive over the past months. We held our District Baroque Festival on February 22, 2025, and although participation was down from last year, it was an overall success with many fine performances. The adjudicators were serious and tough and did their job admirably. On March 9, our District Spring Recital took place, with 35 students participating—an increase from last year. On March 10 we held our business meeting via Zoom, which allowed more members to participate. And on April 5, the now-adjudicated District Composition Celebration took place, with more than 10 students participating. To cap off this busy start to the year, the much-anticipated master class with Dr. Peter Mack, NCTM took place on April 12 at the University of Oregon. Since Dr. Mack offered so many insightful musical gems, I recount but a smattering of them below.

Dr. Mack's morning master class was geared toward nurturing the performance skills of OMTA teachers. Throughout the morning, he offered a wealth of incisive comments on musical and performance issues to each of the four performers while telling delightful tales and sharing his own musical experiences. Dr. Genevieve Mason started the workshop with a technically assured rendition of Beethoven's "Eroica Variations" Op. 35, a work seldom heard in concert. Dr. Mack demonstrated the



Genevieve Mason performs Beethoven's "Eroica Variations" for Dr. Peter Mack's master class.

importance of the physical gestures a performer makes before actually playing a note to help the audience anticipate the type of piece to expect. The physical gesture creates drama and is part of the total performance. He

also brought up an important and often overlooked issue: "On repeats, do you play the section verbatim, or do you vary the music in some way?" No definitive answer was or can be given, but the question deserves serious consideration whether it is a binary Baroque dance or a set of Classical variations.



Alexis Gibbons performs Rachmaninoff's Prelude in B minor, Op. 12, No. 10.

Alexis Gibbons, NCTM, next delivered a heartfelt performance of the darkly evocative Prelude in B minor, Op. 12, No. 10 by Rachmaninoff. Inspired by a painting known as *Die Heimkehr* (The Homecoming), this prelude is an emotionally intense work with technical challenges for a pianist with small hands. Discussed was how to deal musically with chords that span a tenth, and whether or not to retain the composer's voicing and spread the chord, re-voice the chord to make it playable, or reduce the number of notes played by leaving out duplicated tones but retaining the voicing. These decisions depend on whether or not the performer is a "purist" intent on executing the notes on the page exactly, or is more concerned with expressing the harmonic continuity of the melodic line and underlying meaning of the piece. Again, it was emphasized that there is no right answer.





Ayden Katterman performs Schubert's Impromptu Op. 90, No. 2.

Ayden Katterman was the third pianist of the morning, who performed with aplomb the technically terrifying Schubert Impromptu Op. 90, No. 2. Noted was the need to play louder when moving to the upper register of the keyboard to compensate for the weaker sound. The final piece of the workshop was Prokofiev's Sonata Op. 28 No. 3, performed stunningly by Michelle Sulaiman, especially the ascending parallel 6ths. Mentioned was the need to



Michelle Sulaiman performs Prokofiev's Sonata Op. 28, No. 3.

start a piece with appropriate energy and the importance of knowing where the climax ("the point") is in every section. Overall, it was a wonderful workshop. After lunch, Dr. Mack returned to present a program focused on familiar and frequently taught pieces such as "Für Elise".

Many more events are scheduled for the spring. Eugene's Syllabus took place April 25, closely followed by the Beverly Soul Memorial Scholarship Auditions on April 27. Our Spring Potluck and final business meeting of the season will take place May 12 at the home of our President, Alexis Gibbons. Looking further in the future, there are a number of eagerly-anticipated events to mention. The Cascadia Composers event "In Good Hands" will be coming to Eugene, which offers students the opportunity to play original pieces by Oregon composers. Another exciting event for students is Eugene's first Silent Film Festival on October 25. This is a fun new non-competitive event headed by two of our members where students work together to provide the soundtrack for a silent film. If you wish to join us or need additional information about any of these OMTA past or future programs, please contact our Vice President Dr. Brian Hsu at brianhsu@uoregon.edu.

One final note—composer and pianist Paul Safar from Eugene District visited Croatia to attend the 33rd Music Biennale Zagreb, and to present at the concurrent conference. He hopes the experience of attending exciting concerts and meeting interesting people of various artistic disciplines will influence his future compositions and music-making in general.

We wish all our colleagues a warm and wonderful spring!



Sandy Hull taking notes during Dr. Peter Mack's master class.



HILLSBORO AREA DISTRICT



Sarah Ball, NCTM

Hillsboro Area District President

It was a joy to welcome our state president, Heidi Evans, NCTM, to our meeting in March. She shared her informative and encouraging program, *Point of View: Syllabus as a Teacher, Syllabus as an Adjudicator*. Teachers listened with rapt attention and asked many good questions along the way. Several who were unable to attend in person watched the video recording that we made available upon request. Her talk was especially helpful due to the new edition of the Syllabus manual coming into use.

Other recent highlights included Lower Division Syllabus in March with 26 students and 10 teachers

participating, and Upper Division in April with 22 students and 10 teachers. We want to thank our Syllabus chairs, Junko Gilliland and Cherise Ann da Cunha, NCTM.

We have just one adjudicated festival, the All-Period Festival that was held in mid-April this year. We were delighted to welcome Andrew D'Antonio, NCTM as our adjudicator. Students were very receptive to his comments. They left the event with a sense of significant achievement and eagerness to practice the new ideas. Many thanks to our co-chairs, Wilma Hawkins, NCTM and Susan Todd, NCTM!



ROGUE VALLEY DISTRICT

Terri Horn, Rogue Valley District President

We in the Rogue Valley were snowbound for a week in February! It was unusual and an adventure of sorts: most events in the Valley were cancelled or postponed. After the snow melted, we held our annual Joyce Stevens Scholarship Recital, which was enthusiastically supported by our community. Many of our members performed on the piano, along with our fabulous voice teacher, Bernadette Mondok Keller. The generous donations received will be used to provide scholarships for college students who are pursuing a degree in piano or voice performance.

In March, we hosted an all-day gathering of 17 members and guests. Our Tholen Grant-funded presenter was Dr. Michelle Huang, who we heartily recommend to any district looking for new programs! Her first topic was *Creating Beautiful Tone in Piano Playing*, followed in the afternoon by a discussion about *The Art of Memorization*. Dr. Huang has a warm personality that invites all to participate. Her presentations thoroughly covered the topics, and

many new ideas were exchanged. Particularly in the area of memorization, traditional rules are becoming more relaxed, which is a welcome trend. We look forward to hearing her presentation on pedaling, hopefully next year.

We had a district meeting on April 14 and celebrated the performance by Anna Christina Streletz, who had been invited to perform Beethoven's Piano Concerto No. 3 in the spring concert given by the Three Rivers Community Orchestra in Grants Pass. She was sensational! Hence the photo below showing her wearing a crown!

Our year has been rewarding in many ways. Even with the ongoing challenge of attracting new members, we are offering educational opportunities for many appreciative music enthusiasts in our community. We are thinking about fun activities that may draw in more people. As always, we are open to your ideas and success stories.



Celebrating Anna Christina Streletz's performance of Beethoven's Piano Concerto No. 3 with the Three Rivers Community Orchestra in Grants Pass.



TUALATIN VALLEY DISTRICT



Karen Huntsberger, NCTM
Tualatin Valley
Co-President



Mahroo Hamedani
Tualatin Valley
Co-President

It's been a busy few months! Our annual Teacher's Recital was March 14 at our district meeting. We enjoyed terrific performances by Lorraine Alner, NCTM, Abigail Gerhardt, NCTM, Audrey Horowitz, Dianne Davies, NCTM, Myrna Setiawan, Auksole Jackunaite, and Victoria Drozdova.

On March 19, teachers also performed at the noon concert at The Old Church in downtown Portland. Hear their stunning performances at this link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X268zZqadc8&t=2s>. Thank you to the teachers for performing. Many thanks also go to Dianne Davies for coordinating our playing group, and to Myrna Setiawan for hosting playing classes at her studio.

Our scholarship audition was held on April 6. We look forward to hearing the winner perform two selections at our annual May brunch.

At our April 11 district meeting, Co-President Mahroo Hamedani reported on her experiences in March accompanying the Jackson Middle School Choir at Carnegie Hall in New York City. She stated that it was "her best experience ever performing with the perfect Steinway!" After the business meeting, we heard an educational presentation by Dr. Susan Chan entitled *A Multimedia Lecture Recital of New Teaching and Performing Pieces by Major Contemporary Chinese Composers*.

Students and teachers enjoyed our annual Festival of Ribbons held Saturday, April 12. With 76 student entries, adjudicator Dr. Crystal Zimmerman, NCTM had a busy day. Many thanks to Chair Audrey Horowitz, and her Co-Chairs Lorraine Alner and Anna Danese, NCTM.

Our last meeting of the year will be our May 9 brunch. There will be plenty of time to socialize with colleagues with a short business meeting to install new officers.

For a complete list of our meetings, festivals, programs and deadlines, please visit our website at <https://tvomta.org/>. Our calendar will continue to be updated as we make adjustments throughout the year.



Festival of Ribbons Chairs L-R: Anna Danese, Lorraine Alner, and Audrey Horowitz



WEST PORTLAND DISTRICT



Marla Hansen

West Portland District President

Congratulations to all the students and teachers who participated in Syllabus this spring. Your hard work should be celebrated! As summer approaches, here are a few updates on the activities we've had recently and the end-of-the-year events coming up.

On March 21, West Portland hosted a master class with Ines Irawati. She worked so well with our students, and we all enjoyed the burst of inspiration and energy she provided.

The Romantic/Contemporary Festival took place April 26 and 27. Registration was high, with 112 students and 28 teachers participating, so we held the festival at two venues. This year, our Concerto festival is taking place a bit earlier than usual, on May 10.

We have one more festival for our students, the E-Festival, which consists of pre-recorded videos. Students receive written comments from an

adjudicator and we create a YouTube playlist of performances. It's a great end-of-the-year project for students, as repertoire from all periods is eligible. E-Festival registration closes on May 16 and videos are due June 1.

We are excited to have a potluck social event with East Portland on May 28. Be on the lookout for a district email with all the details. We hope to see many of you there!

And an extra thank you to members who participated in the OMTA state survey—we will take your feedback to heart! And as always, please reach out if you are interested in any volunteer positions and leadership roles. Please contact Marla Hansen at 4marlarae@gmail.com if you are available.

See you at the conference in June, if not earlier!



IN MEMORIAM: PATTI PETERSEN

Many readers will have seen the email sent out to the OMTA distribution list regarding the passing of beloved OMTA member Patti Petersen. Some of the same information is shared here, plus a few additional memories. Patti was a member of OMTA for 50 years, was on the adjudicating staff for 35 years, was past State President, an MTNA Foundation Fellow, and a beloved member of Central Oregon District for nearly 45 years.

Patti spent most of her childhood in Portland, earning degrees from Oregon State University and Lewis & Clark, where she studied with Nellie Tholen. She married Jim Petersen upon graduation and spent several years traveling with him while he was in the Air Force. They settled in Beaverton, where she began teaching, before moving to Bend in 1980. She had many award-winning students and was herself a concert-level pianist.

Fellow Central Oregon district member, Kathy Gault, shared these words: "Patti will be remembered for her fine teaching, beautiful playing, dedication to her students, and her constant support and encouragement of her colleagues. She always stepped forward to help when asked, was super well-organized, and effective as a leader. But most of all, she was kind, humble, thoughtful and a wonderful friend. She will be missed terribly by her friends,

family and fellow musicians."



Patti Petersen

Margaret Littlehales, another Central Oregon member and close friend, wrote that "you will never find a more kind, organized, knowledgeable, beautiful, friendly, talented teacher and musician, who made everyone feel like they were her best friend. Patti was a special person, and the world is less special without her in it."



Patti at the 2019 MTNA Foundation Fellow event.

Heidi Evans, current OMTA President, recalls a couple of skits that Patti put together with Margaret Littlehales and Myrna Elmore. One very memorable skit was shared at Heidi's first Syllabus Adjudicator Retreat, where Patti played the role of a student performing Für Elise for Syllabus, but she could only play the first page because her dog had eaten the second page! Patti played the famous theme during the entire

dialogue with her adjudicator (Margaret) about the unfortunate desecration of the score, complete with a description of the number of chewed pieces of paper that remained. This skit had the adjudicators laughing until the tears ran!

The second skit that Heidi recalls was requested by then OMTA President Fern McArthur for the OMTA Conference at Skamania Lodge back in 2012 or so. Featuring Patti, Margaret, and Myrna, and inspired by "The Wizard of Oz", they wrote and enacted a skit with Patti as Glinda the Good Witch, escorting Myrna as Dorothy, on a journey from one district to the next, learning about what made each district unique, before being chased out by Margaret as the Wicked Witch of the West, complete with thunderclaps. This skit was fun and memorable, and had the same effect on its audience as the first.

Patti's smile, wisdom, and keen musical insights made her a beloved adjudicator, and her outstanding leadership skills elevated Oregon's members during her tenure. She followed up after her presidency by supporting current and future leaders. Her example is one we can all aspire to emulate.



L-R: Margaret Littlehales, Patti Petersen and Kathy Gault



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