

MARYLAND STATE MUSIC TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

AUTUMN 2026

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From the President

Greetings!

I trust that you have had a glorious summer and are excited about the year ahead.

We eagerly anticipate our upcoming October 18 IN-PERSON Conference. It will be wonderful to see one another and have the opportunity to connect in person again.

I am happy to share that the MSMTA history has been updated and is now available on our website. We are grateful to our immediate past historian, Yuri Chayama, for her dedicated work in completing this important project.

We continue to offer a wealth of performance opportunities for our students. Last year, we added the Hidden Treasures Piano Festival, which encourages students to learn and perform music by underrepresented composers. This year, another festival will make its debut: the Virtual Winter Piano Solo Festival, to be held on February 13, 2027.

I attended the MTNA Leadership Summit in Cincinnati, September 11–13. MTNA continues to celebrate its 150th anniversary through December 26, 2026—the actual anniversary date of the organization.

The sessions were delivered with expertise and enthusiasm and provided much valuable and informative material. I think it is important to know that 85 cents of every dollar paid in dues



MTNA Leadership Summit in Cincinnati: Eastern Division leaders, including Eastern Division Director Hendry Wijaya (front, middle) and Eastern Division Director-Elect Junko Takahashi (front, right)



Junko Takahashi (Eastern Division Director-Elect) and Edwina Hunter at the MTNA Leadership Summit in Cincinnati.

goes toward services for members. The nonprofit standard is 65 cents of every dollar, so MTNA does a commendable job of keeping overhead low while serving its members and fulfilling its mission to enrich lives, strengthen communities, and further quality music instruction by empowering music teachers through lifelong learning.

A major topic of discussion was the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA). We were provided with a guide outlining recommended practices for collecting information from participants under the age of 13 in accordance with the 2020 federal COPPA requirements. The law requires notice to parents and verifiable parental consent before collecting personal information such as a student's name, contact information, parent or guardian contact information, consent forms, and privacy/COPPA acknowledgments.

Many of us probably already have a studio form that allows parents to grant permission for photographs of students to be taken and posted on our personal social media, as well as in MSMTA and local association newsletters. If you do not already have this provision, it would be advisable to include such permission in your parent consent form. MTNA is working on an updated parental consent form template, which should be available soon.

If you have not already done so, I hope you will take some time to explore the new MTNA website. It offers a wealth of information and valuable resources.

Finally, the MTNA Conference will be held in St. Louis, Missouri, Friday, April 2–Tuesday, April 6, 2027. Early-bird registration ends December 15, 2026.

Best wishes, *Edwina E. Hunter*

Certification Update

Update from Helen Weems, VP Certification

MTNA Certification is your ticket to learning more about how your teaching is perceived, and paying into your own future with this feather in your cap. Congratulations to Alina Konshina who received her certification over the summer after completing the Piano Profile Projects. I run a certification study group to make the journey easier, budgeting the various projects over a year.

Please join us on October 23 at 10:30am at the studio of Gulnura Brown.

For more information, please contact me (Helen Weems) at weemspianostudio@gmail.com



Certification Study Group meeting for breakfast at Helen's house: (from left) Kazuko Ikemoto, Helen Weems, Gulnura Brown, and Livia Lai.

Upcoming Events

Sunday, 18 October 2026, 2PM-6PM: MSMTA Conference

Live at Calvary Lutheran Church

9545 Georgia Ave. Silver Spring, MD 20901

2:00 Greeting

2:15 Mini recital: Bonnie Kellert

3:00 General Membership Meeting - Edwina Hunter, President MSMTA

3:45 – 5:15 Master Class for Intermediate/Advanced Students - 3 students Bonnie Kellert

5:15 – 6:00 Reception

6 - 6:30 End of conference

Online registration – mail check – online on website DEADLINE 10/12/2026 \$15.00 for member \$20.00 for non-members | At door: \$20.00 members \$25.00 non-members – exact change – cash. **Students: free**

Mini-Recital Program:

Johannes Brahms (1833-1897)

Intermezzo, Op. 119, No. 1 in B minor Adagio

Intermezzo, Op. 119, No. 2 in E minor Andantino un poco agitato

Intermezzo , Op. 119 No.3 in C Major Grazioso e giocoso

Felix Mendelssohn (1809-1847)

Selected Songs without Words Op. 38, No. 2 in C minor, Allegro non troppo

Op. 30, No. 2 in B Flat minor, Allegro di molto

Op. 53, No. 3 in G minor, Presto agitato

Op. 67, No. 2 in F sharp minor, Allegro leggiero

Op. 85, No. 4 in D Major, Andante sostenuto

Sunday, 25 October 2026: Hidden Treasures Festival

MOVED from Steinway Gallery Bethesda, which has since closed its location

Please refer to MSMTA.org for update on location or contact Co-Chairs Edwina Hunter and Dorene Chen, 240-535-3070, edwina.hunter@gmail.com

Sunday, 06 December 2026: Ann S. Matteson MSMTA Composers and Improvisers Circle

Chair: Deborah White-Bondhus Tel. and text - 410-292-5848 Email: debbondhus@gmail.com

Date: Sunday, December 6th, 2026, 3:00 pm

Deadline: Monday, October 26, 2026

Fee: \$25.00

Location: University United Methodist Church, 3621 Campus Drive, College Park, MD 20740

Objective: The purpose of the Composers and Improvisers Circle is to encourage students and teachers to compose and improvise, and to provide a venue for their compositions and improvisations to be heard.

Note: Compositions and Improvisations are to be performed live. No recordings shall be used without the permission of the chair. Students should play memorized compositions and improvisations unless they have gotten permission from the chair to use printed scores.

How to Submit Compositions: Composition student(s) of MSMTA members, or a teacher member herself, may submit a manuscript and one CD of all original compositions to the chair for consideration for performance at the Composers and Improvisers Circle concert. Student compositions must be sent in (i.e., emailed or mailed) by the teacher (or other adult composer belonging to MSMTA). Each submitted score and submitted CD must be labeled with (1) the name of the composition, (2) the name of the composer, and (3) the composer's [address], [phone number], and email address].

Note: for privacy reasons, items in [brackets] may be withheld from the cover sheet of the composition (if so desired). However, address, phone number, and email address must appear on the application (which will not be published).

Deadline for Next Newsletter

Please e-mail all notices for inclusion in the Fall MSMTA newsletter by Friday, January 29, 2027 to VP Publications, Yee-Ning Soong:

ningsy23@gmail.com

The MSMTA newsletter is published three times annually by the Maryland State Music Teachers Association. It is available for viewing at msmta.org.

ADVERTISEMENTS

Ads will be accepted on a first-come, first-served basis. Contact ningsy23@gmail.com. Rates are:

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1/2 page	\$80	\$90
Full page	\$135	\$150

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Historian

Grant McMullan

Member-at-Large

Ann Matteson

Immediate Past-President

Junko Takahashi

Upcoming Meetings**Board of Directors**

Monday, January 25, 2027

Thursday, June 17, 2027

Student Activities

TBD

From the Board...

Twenty-two members met virtually on Monday, September 14, 2026. Edwina welcomed the new members to the Board: Grant McMullan, historian; Dorene Chen, Co-chair of the Hidden Treasures festival; James Qian, Co-chair, MTNA Competitions; Krista Keysar, President, Charles County MTA. She acknowledged the additional offices of two Board members: Junko Takahashi, MTNA Eastern Division Director-elect, is also president of Montgomery County MTA, and Helen Smith-Tarchalski, president of Anne Arundel MTA, is also now MSMTA President-elect.

The Board voted unanimously to accept High School Audition chair Deborah White-Bondhus' proposal to update the eligibility of students:

Eligibility for the Maryland State High School Examination

A student is eligible to participate in the Maryland State High School Examination if the student resides in the State of Maryland OR is receiving instruction from a teacher who resides in Maryland or teaches within the State of Maryland. Teacher membership in any Maryland state professional association or organization is not required for student eligibility. A student residing outside Maryland may therefore qualify through a Maryland-based teacher, provided all other examination requirements are met.

The Board voted unanimously to honor past MSMTA president, Constance Fischel, as an MTNA Fellow. Her award will be presented at the MTNA conference in St. Louis in April, 2027.

Keyboard Musicianship Report

The Keyboard Musicianship exams are scheduled in nine local centers between October 16, 2026 and April 10, 2027. Check the msmta website (click Activities Calendar and scroll down to Exams) for the list of dates and deadlines, as well as the 2020 Syllabus, practice tests and the "Teacher Resource & Information Guide" in the "members only" area of the website. This program is an excellent way for students to be motivated to develop their scales, arpeggios, cadences, sight-reading, transposition, harmonization or lead sheets, and improvisation! Students are not required to take every module, but it is great for them to try new skills. Teachers who have questions about the program can contact their local chair, or the state chair at msmta.kmp@gmail.com. We would love to help you learn more about the Keyboard Program!

My deepest appreciation to our local chairs this year: Olga Kuperstein (Howard-K); Mary Stevens (Southern MD & Charles); Anne Chen (Greater Columbia-C); Christopher Hall (Howard-H); Svetlana Volkova (Montgomery); Edwina Hunter (Greater Columbia-H); Kim Roberts (Frederick); Joanna Greenwood (Greater Baltimore) and many thanks to Liuba Pupo for taking over the Bowie chair position this year!

One change from the past few years: Registration papers and checks will be mailed to Laurel Carroll. The address will be on your printed registration page.

Remember that teachers who plan to enter 6 or more students in a center they haven't been to before must contact the local chair at least three months in advance of the registration deadline with an estimate of how many students they plan to enter. This will help the chair make sure that they have the venue scheduled to amount of time needed to complete the testing.

Keyboard AWARDS will have NEW application forms posted online. Please discard any old forms and follow the new instructions carefully to apply for the awards. Teachers can only make one order per year, so be sure you have ALL your students names who are eligible to apply this year when you apply.

Wishing everyone a wonderful year of music!

Laurel Carroll, Keyboard Musicianship Program Chair

Local Association Presidents

Anne Arundel All-Shore MTA
Helen Smith Tarchalski

Bowie MTA
Brian Gorman

Greater Baltimore MTA
Joanna Greenwood

Carroll County MTA
Teresa Bliss

Charles County MTA
Michele Avrick

Greater Columbia MTA
Deborah White-Bondhus

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Howard County MTA
Christopher Hall

Greater Laurel MTA
Jan Puckett

Montgomery County MTA
Junko Takahashi

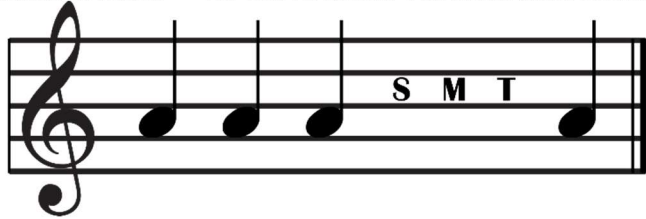
Prince Georges MTA
Janice Kilgore Wood

Southern Maryland MTA
Debbie Smedley +
Mary Stevens

Local Association Reports

Anne Arundel-All Shore MTA

Anne Arundel — All Shore Music Teachers Association



AA-ASMTA welcomed new member and chairperson Yee-Ning Soong for our Nature and Water Music Festival, held in July at Truxtun Park. We enjoyed picture perfect weather, and the students and families were grateful for this unique opportunity to showcase programmatic music celebrating the outdoors and our beautiful waterfront town. The event ran smoothly in Ning's capable hands, and every aspect felt like a true celebration. Our festival keeps students enthusiastically engaged with practicing during the summer!



We welcome new co-chair Eva Chang for this year's Eastern Shore Fall Concerts, joining Cheryl Florin, and Deb Dew will continue as co-chair for the Spring Concerts. Thank you to Cheryl who single-handedly chaired these events to get us up and running on the Eastern Shore. Cheryl will also chair our first Eastern Shore theory center, which will be at Seaside Christian Academy in Ocean City. Also, a special thank you to Glenn Clutter and Cunningham Piano Company in Delmar for graciously hosting our performance events on a beautifully prepared Bösendorfer grand.

We also welcome Dorene Chen and Julia Tulloch-Skinner as new co-chairs for our Holiday Festival.

Participants and audience members enjoyed record enrollment for our Spring Concerts and MSMTA Scholarship Competition held at Anne Arundel Community College. Thanks to event chairs Bill Bloomquist and Beatrice Cheung for organizing and smoothly facilitating a very busy day! David Holmes and Carol Wolfe-Ralph did a fabulous job adjudicating our packed schedule of students.

In addition to chairing the Spring Concerts, Beatrice Cheung prepared truly artistic certificates for participants in all of our events. We said a fond farewell to long-time member Jeannine Case, who has retired and moved from her home and studio in Crofton after decades of providing outstanding piano instruction. She and her husband moved to the Charlestown retirement community, where she is continuing to coach and accompany vocalists as well as teach some adult students.

(AA-AS MTA, continued)

Our little local association is growing and continuing to expand our borders! In addition to new local members John Einhaus and Mary Hofmann, several prospective members have contacted us. Sarah Espinosa is continuing her membership while she is living in Italy for three years, and Lorena Brougher, who is continuing to teach online students who live in our area, is continuing her membership after her move to Mexico.

In November, we will enjoy our Fall Concerts event on the Western and Eastern Shores, and in December, the popular Holiday Festival at Severna Park Baptist Church.

Helen Smith Tarchalski, AA-ASMTA President

Greater Columbia MTA

GCMTA is a professional group of music teachers in the Greater Columbia Maryland area. We offer a variety of performance opportunities for students of all levels and ages as well as opportunities for professional development for our teacher members.



We have 46 members this year. We are thankful that Lorena Brougher will be participating remotely from

Mexico. We are sad to see Constance Fischel retire this year. Please note: We hold all meetings and events in person, for a better human experience for our members and, more importantly, a superior educational experience for our valued students.

Begun in the fall of 1993, the Greater Columbia Music Teachers Association was founded by local independent music educators wishing to encourage a spirit of cooperation among teachers, students and parents. The emphasis then and now is to focus on the joys and pleasures of learning, teaching and performing music. We offer a wide variety of activities which include recitals, festivals Music tells the Story and Friends and Family (Helen Weems and Janice Puckett), solo competitions (Helen Weems), the MSMTA Keyboard Musicianship, (Anne Chen and Edwina Hunter) and Theory exams (Grant McMullan), the MSMTA High School Exam for Recognition or Credit, and the MSMTA High School Award (David Holmes). Active GCMTA members in good standing are eligible to enter their students in GCMTA events. If you wish to enter your student into a GCMTA event, and are not a member, please contact our Membership Chair, Anne Chen

We are affiliated with both the Maryland State Music Teachers Association and Music Teachers National Association.

Upcoming Events for the Fall include:

September 18 @ 9:00 am - 10:30 am Membership Meeting Please contact our President, Deborah White Bondhus, 10637 Green Mountain Circle, Columbia, Md 21044 November 2026 November 21 @ 9:00 am - 4:00 pm MSMTA Keyboard Exams – Columbia I - Chair Anne Chen 1 st Presbyterian of Howard County, Presbyterian Circle, Columbia, MD, United States Deadline for entry is Sunday, October 10, 2026. See the Maryland State Music Teachers Association website for online registration and details. \$15 December 2026 December 6 @ 4:00 pm - 5:30 pm Outreach Recital 1 - Chair Patrice Donnelly - first of four outreach recitals Sunrise, Freetown Rd. Columbia, Md Outreach recitals bring together

students (of teacher members), family members and teachers with a senior community who welcome the music makers. The programs include a wide range of solo and ensemble literature. While most performers are pianists; vocal, string, brass and woodwind solo and ensembles are also welcome. Date for entry is December 7, EMAILED.

Deborah White-Bondhus, President GCMTA

Greater Laurel MTA

Our students have had a productive summer with our sixth set of Summer Recitals. These were started in 2020 during the doldrums of pandemic quarantining by Doug Guiles and have been hugely successful at keeping students lightly motivated through the summertime. The virtual event has remained popular with students since they get to perform, are motivated by seeing others do so as well, and still get to enjoy their vacation. The virtual event also has a lightly competitive element where students vote for their top 3 favorite performances. The live, non-competitive, event that follows in the weeks after are just as populated with eager performers and proud parents.

Please consider joining us; we offer events almost every month of the year.

September: Fall meeting; October: Halloween Festival, Composition Festival; November: Orchestra Concerto Competition, Piano Concerto Competition; December: Ensemble Festival; January: Winter meeting, Keyboard Exam (joint with GCMTA); February: Theme Festival (this year "Around the World"); March: Ensemble Competition, Chamber Music Competition, Theory Exam (joint with GCMTA), Young Musicians Competition and Evaluation; April: French Competition; May: Kirchhof Competition, Spring Potluck meeting

May everyone have a smooth start to the new academic year; hope to see you at a local or state event soon!

Yee-Ning Soong, Vice President

Howard County MTA

The Summer of 2026 was a time of important milestones for HCMTA. Donald Watts, who had first joined HCMTA in 2025, was a former Professor of Cello and Theory at Towson University and Theory at the Cleveland Institute of Music. Sadly, he passed away in June before we had the opportunity to know him. Alta Thomann, one of HCMTA's founding members in the late 1970s, passed away in August. Alta had been our membership chair for a number of years and had entered her piano students in our Student Recitals for over 35 years. She was also a long time member of the choir at Christ Episcopal Church in Columbia, the former location of HCMTA's student performance events for many years. As an ongoing legacy, HCMTA has made a contribution in Alta's memory to Christ Church towards the purchase of new choir music.

Long time HCMTA members Sima Elkis, Zhanna Kukelyansky, Alla Merport and Vera Yakirevich retired at the end of the 2025-2026 school year. All were active serving as HCMTA Recitals Chairs and their students continually participated in our performance events throughout their time as members.

Sima shares she has many wonderful memories and Vera says she enjoyed being involved and interacting with HCMTA colleagues. Alla sends the following message: " I really enjoyed being a member of HCMTA, met a lot of good and professional friends and miss them. I wish everyone health, happiness and success."

HCMTA thanks Sima, Zhanna, Alla and Vera for the contributions of their time, talents and

students' performances through the years. You will most definitely be missed, and HCMTA will not be the same without you.

HCMTA welcomes the following new first time members in 2026 (as of August 31): Korlis Britt, Eunice In Hwa Lee, Grant McMullan, Arielle Summitt, Andrew Truong, Yuhe Wang, Jiahui Yu and William Zvarick.

HCMTA's May 16, 2026 High School Award Piano Competition was held at Howard Community College.

In the 9th and 10th Grade Division:

1st Place Ella Pei (B. H. Kim)

2nd Place Anlan Zhang (O. Kuperstein)

3rd Place Liv Xue (O. Kuperstein)

4th Place Tie Erica Li (O. Kuperstein) Grace Yan (B. H. Kim)

5th Place Christina Zhang (O. Kuperstein)

In the 11th and 12th Grade Division the 1st Place Winner receives HCMTA's annual MSMTA Scholarship for Performance Award:

1st Place Alex Wang (B. H. Kim)

2nd Place Elizabeth Liu (B. H. Kim)

3rd Place Tie Christopher Chow (B. H. Kim) Sophie Su (D. Kuperstein)

4th Place Ethan Huang (O. Kuperstein)

5th Place Hailey Wang (D. Kuperstein)

The judges were Ariel Dechosa and Matthew Palumbo.

Christopher Hall, Acting President



Montgomery
County MTA

It has been almost 20 years since I first served as president of MCMTA, and I am honored to return as interim president. We have welcomed new and returning board members: Lauren Di as Historian, Patrice Donnelly as Treasurer, Bonnie Kellert as Program Chair, and Cynthia Cathcart as Recording Secretary.

We are very fortunate to have such dedicated board members and event chairs, who will host four general membership meetings and more than 15 events throughout the school year.

We have also brought back Musical Camaraderie, an informal gathering where members can talk about anything and everything related to music and teaching. It began this summer and will continue throughout the year.

Our first general membership meeting was held on September 15, followed by an inspiring and informative presentation and performance by Brian Ganz titled "Pathos and Passion in Beethoven and Chopin." He performed Beethoven's Sonata Op. 27, No. 2 in C# minor and Chopin's Polonaise Op. 40, No. 2 in C minor. We look forward to another fruitful year.

Junko Takahashi, MCMTA Interim President

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Audition Dates

Please note physical applications may be due earlier, please check UMBC website.

Priority Consideration for Departmental and Linehan Scholarships

November 4, 2026 for vocalists

November 7, 2026 for instrumentalists

January 30, 2027 for instrumentalists

January 31, 2027 for vocalists

Regular Consideration

March 31, 2027 for vocalists

April 3, 2027 for instrumentalists

Late Applicants and Transfers Only

June 3, 2027

