



NATIONAL FEDERATION OF MUSIC CLUBS

# Junior Keynotes

Fall 2023 • Vol. 97, No. 1



Artwork by Addison Kearbey  
Portland, Oregon

# NFMC Junior Keynotes Directory

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# TABLE of CONTENTS

FALL 2023 Vol. 97, No. 1

2	Contact Information	32	NFMC Dance Awards
4	President's Message	34	Lana M. Bailey Piano Concerto Award
4	From the Editor	35	Martha Marcks Mack Junior Vocal Award
5	Junior Division Updates	37	Angie Greer Music in Poetry Award
6	Federation Festivals	37	NFMC Crossword
7	Federation Festival Statistics	38	Marilyn Caldwell Piano Solo Award
11	Vivace Updates	40	Michael R. Edwards Graduating Senior Performance Award
12	Federation Festivals Bulletin	41	Stillman Kelley/Thema Byrum Awards
12	Meet the Cover Artist	44	State News
13	Federation Cup Winners	49	NFMC Awards-at-a-Glance
25	Junior Composers Contest	51	Instructions for Award Applicants
30	National Music Week Essay Contest		
31	Composers Institute		

## ADVERTISERS' INDEX

3	The Frances Clark Center
4	American Music Posters
6	\$1.25 Contribution
34	Lana M. Bailey Award
35	Martha Marcks Mack Award
36	Attention!!! Bulletin Updates
38	NFMC Federation Festivals Bulletin
39	Music Teachers National Association
40	Michael R. Edwards Award
42	NFMC Student/Collegiate Handbook
43	NFMC Music in Poetry & Song
44	Junior Composers Contest

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## Message from the President

by Deborah T. Freeman

I hope all of you enjoyed a wonderful Summer vacation!

Do you dread beginning day-long classes after sleeping late and enjoying leisure days? If we just change our mindset from "I have to" to "I get to", it will make a huge difference!

Change *Obligation* to *Opportunity* and watch how the world opens up for you. The *opportunity* to study music is such a blessing. It can improve focus, raise morale and generally make you feel happier.

As teachers, we will be welcoming and encouraging to our returning students, as we discover new music and introduce new concepts. Choosing new Festival music is always a fun time in my studio!

I'm looking forward to another year of growth and *opportunity*, so come along with me! The best is yet to come...

Deborah T. Freeman

*Deborah T. Freeman*

NFMC President



**President's Theme:**  
"Celebrating our Musical Heritage"

**President's Song:**  
"God Bless America"

Irving Berlin



## From the Editor

by Jeanne Hryniewicki, Editor

Greetings NFMC teachers, students, and friends!

Welcome to the fall season-another year of interesting articles, news and awards highlighting the Junior members of the National Federation of Music Clubs.

We are looking forward to seeing many of our Juniors participating in the competitions and festivals of 2023-24. Be sure to check out the Awards-at-a-Glance chart at the back of this issue for entry information and deadlines.

Keep the articles, pictures and artwork coming. We are always interested in news and pictures from Junior Clubs in each of your states!

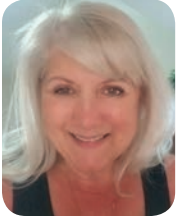
Jeanne Hryniewicki, Editor  
Junior Keynotes Magazine

## American Music

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## Junior Division Updates

by Laurie M. Marshall, *Junior Division Chair*

Dear Federation Friends, Colleagues, AND JUNIORS!

First, I hope you had a fabulous summer filled with much time to explore new music for the upcoming competition, Festival, and performance season.

I am writing to you from the shores of Sicily where I am attending the Sicily International Piano and Voice Competition and Festival. Two major age groups are represented including the “Rising Star” Young Artists, who are the most competitive group, and the “Aspiring Scholars” whose students are ages 8 to 18. Masterclasses, workshops, lessons, and private coaching occupy our daytime; however, it is a treat to experience up to two concert recitals daily.

I share this with you to congratulate University of Michigan Young Artist, Nhi Luong, winner of the “Rising Star” competition. Nhi was also the winner of the prestigious 2023 Michigan Federation of Music Club Rosamond P. Haeberle Award in May. We are thrilled to have such talent as members of our organization. BRAVO to Nhi’s teacher and Federation member, Professor Christopher Harding.

As you know, this is our last year with the current Festival Bulletin. We know you are excited to learn all about the next bulletin; however, I can only share it is exciting. In the piano solo event, more than 25,000 submissions were received. Additionally, many Festival Bulletin Advisors met with composers at the MTNA and NCKP conferences this year as we discovered more American composers representing more diverse ethnicity, genre, and geographic regions who have composed thousands of NEW compositions just since 2020. They are certainly the most prolific composers of recent years producing pedagogical literature that is easily sequenced to enhance our student’s music education and musical growth. As importantly, the music is beautiful!

Testing several compositions on our Juniors, they reported how exciting it is to work on the best of the best from the past, and the newest and best of today! We know your students will find many exciting compositions not only for Festival, but to enhance their lifetime repertoire.

The Junior Division has an outstanding team of leaders who collaborate on all things for you. First, we thank Dee Blaser, Lee Ann Cummings, and Linda Maurholf as they completed their work in our division. We also welcome a new group of talented teachers/musicians/composers to our team: Jason Sifford, Michael Zutis, Hollis Wittman, and Patti Dietlin - each brings knowledge, experience, and leadership skills to our team. You may find the entire Junior Division leaders on the NFMFC website Divisions page.


Please join me in celebrating the work of the NFMFC Festival *Vivace* Committee as they have onboarded most of the Festival Areas across the country! Those of you who have benefited from the *Vivace* software know

it has saved your Festival Area members hundreds of hours of Festival work including registration, composition verification, scheduling, reports, financials, and more. Student histories are easily accessible, which has proven to help those moving to new states or other Festival Areas.

Led by *Vivace* Chair, Sandra Preysz, tech support Grace Kopitske, and onboarding coordinator Sadie Cole, they provide the expertise to assist you and your Festival Area toward success! Do not fear! *Vivace* is easy to learn, and your Festival Area team will achieve mastery within their first Festival season.

Questions about Festival? Remember to contact your Festival Area Admin first. If additional information or support is needed, contact your state Festival chair. Many Federated states also have a state *Vivace* chair who also serves as a coach. Also, remember, NFMFC Festival Chair Lori Jessen and Festival Cup Chair Mary Jane Timmer may offer you advice with their knowledge and experience.

Finally, MEMBERSHIP! Remember to renew your Senior and Junior Club memberships! Membership benefits include access to competitions, Festivals, and all Federation activities, i.e., Junior Achievement Day, recitals and festivals, masterclasses, and more offered by your state and area Senior and Junior Clubs. Explore all we have to offer on the NFMFC and your state’s websites.

Please feel free to contact us at any time. YOU are Federation! We are here to serve you! 





## Federation Festivals

by Lori Jessen, *Chair*

Can you believe it? Another Festival year is completed! Whew! Now, it's time to analyze and reflect upon the event. What worked? What needs to be adjusted? What new things can we try? While you all have probably completed this at the area and state level, you will find the national statistics about Festival in the pages of this issue so that you can see the complete picture of what has happened.

Take a look at those statistics and think about how much hard work, concentration, joy, perseverance, (and often prayer!) went into each one of those performances. Think about how much beautiful music was created. And even for the times when the audition didn't go as hoped, our students learned resilience and how to handle difficult circumstances. We all know that music study itself brings a great deal of benefit to students, but our Festivals program is one of the best skill-building tools around to help build practical life skills and foster an appreciation for the arts in general.

So now we need to look forward to this Festival year. I know that many of you may have completed most of your Festival planning for the year by the time you read this. But just *consider* adding something new for your students this year. Just put that idea up on the whiteboard and see where it takes you.

### **Incorporate what you are already doing into new opportunities in Festival for your students.**

We have several events that can be entered utilizing pieces and elements that your students are already studying. Are your students learning scales and chord progressions? Why not consider the Improvisation Event? This event utilizes the practical application of those skills as well as fostering creativity.

Many of the lesson and performance books that we teachers utilize have patriotic and folk songs. They are perfect choice pieces for the American Patriotic & Folk Song Event. And if your students like to learn Christmas music, take a look at the Hymn Playing Event or the Sacred Music Piano Solo Event.

Duets, trios, duos, any kind of chamber music is the perfect avenue for musical "besties." Making music with other musicians brings so many learning opportunities in the music and helps cement relationships by teaching students to work together toward a common goal. When you've worked on a piece of music with someone, there's a bond that is strengthened. Our students need healthy relationships now more than ever! And do not forget about the theory test. Allow your students to see how much they really know about music by entering them in the theory test event.

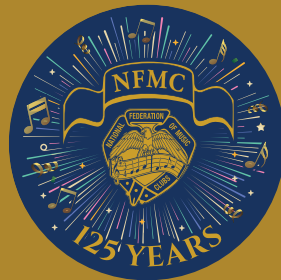
And how about our adult students? Festival is the perfect opportunity for them to challenge themselves. There are a few states that have no adult entrants. Why not make it a state goal to change that for next year? The Festivals experience is very rewarding for adults.... my squeaky violin and I can attest to that. Next year we may even have a 12-year Consecutive Superior awarded to an adult participant. How awesome is that?

It is always exciting to see the state and regional reports come in and start tallying the numbers. While total Festival entries are down this year, there are positive increases in some events that are encouraging. This year I noticed a couple of remarkable statistics that aren't in the summary report shared in this issue. They always catch my eye, and so I'd like to share them with you: California had 222 2-year Superiors and Florida had 444 4-year Superiors.

Many thanks go to the Area and State Festivals Chairs/Admins. You are the backbone of the process that makes Festival happen. Teachers, go and express your appreciation to your chair/admin, if you haven't already done so. They are amazing folks and this event wouldn't happen without them.

Finally, remember to take time for yourself: go to a concert, play thru some new music or an old familiar favorite. Take the time to nurture your own artistic nature. Sometimes in the busyness of life, we can forget to do this, but it's so important.

I wish you a Festival year filled with all the wonderful possibilities brought to fruition. **JK**



*In honor of our 125th  
Celebration, we are  
requesting every member  
(Junior, Student/  
Collegiate, Senior)  
to contribute \$1.25 online.*

**Funds will go toward the 125th celebration events,  
with the remainder to be donated to the Fund  
for the Advancement of Musical Arts (FAMA)**



# 2023 FESTIVAL STATISTICS

*by Region*

## Regional Totals

1 South East	24,968
2 Western	17,362
3 South Central	10,266
4 North Central	9,397
5 North East	8,382

State Totals		Junior	Adult	Groups	Total
SE	Florida	6,890	23	4	6,917
W	Utah	6,765	65		6,830
SE	Georgia	5,342	34		5,376
SC	Texas	4,848	50	6	4,904
SC	Missouri	3,932	10		3,942
SE	Virginia	3,802	39		3,841
NE	Ohio	3,480	15	1	3,496
SE	North Carolina	2,949	11		2,960
NC	Minnesota	2,836	20		2,856
NE	Michigan	2,799	25	0	2,824
W	Idaho	2,680	34		2,714
NC	Wisconsin	2,246	24		2,270
SE	Louisiana	1,956	8		1,964
W	Oregon	1,930	23		1,953
NC	North Dakota	1,374			1,374
W	Washington	1,350	23		1,373
NC	Iowa	1,352	11		1,363
W	California	1,215	8		1,223
SE	Tennessee	1,178	5		1,183
NE	Pennsylvania	1,027	2		1,029
NC	Illinois	1,003			1,003
SE	Alabama	989			989
W	Nevada	961	6		967
W	Wyoming	966	4		970
SE	South Carolina	882	4		886
SC	Arkansas	707	5		712
NE	New Jersey	703	1		704
W	Arizona	624	3		627
SC	Oklahoma	503	4	4	511
SE	Kentucky	494	3		497
W	Colorado	389	3		392
SE	Mississippi	355			355
NC	Nebraska	276	4		280
NC	South Dakota	248			248
NE	New York	226			226
SC	Kansas	193	4		197
W	Alaska	178	2		180
NE	NNE (NH, VT)	102			102
W	New Mexico	84	7		91
W	Montana	40	1		41

# 2023 FESTIVAL STATISTICS

## by Section

Piano Section	Junior	Adult	Total
Piano Solo	45,367	246	45,613
Lynn Freeman Olson	339	10	349
Piano Concerto	2,714	12	2,726
One Hand	1		1
Piano Accompaniment	9		9
Sacred Music Piano Solo	197	6	203
Piano Hymn	2,054	19	2,073
Piano Duet	2,074	16	2,090
Piano Trio	135		135
Piano Duo	38	4	42
Piano Quartet	100		100
<b>Total Piano Events</b>	<b>53,028</b>	<b>313</b>	<b>53,341</b>

Organ Section	Junior	Adult	Total
Organ Repertoire	17	1	18
Sacred Organ	6		6
Organ Hymn	48	1	49
<b>Total Organ Events</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>73</b>

Accordion Section	Junior	Adult	Total
Accordion Solo	3		3
Accordion Duet			
Accordion Orchestra			
<b>Total Accordion Events</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>

American Patriotic & Folk Songs Section	Junior	Adult	Total
All instruments	994	3	997
<b>Total APFS Events</b>	<b>994</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>997</b>

Sight Playing/Singing Section	Junior	Adult	Total
All media	622	1	623
<b>Total Sight Playing/Singing Events</b>	<b>622</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>623</b>

Voice Section	Junior	Adult	Total
Art Song Solo	695	13	708
Musical Theater Solo	1,438	25	1,463
Art Song Duet	18		18
Musical Theater Duet	33	3	36
<b>Total Voice Events</b>	<b>2,184</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>2,225</b>

Strings Section	Junior	Adult	Total
Violin Solo	3,056	38	3,094
Violin Concerto	827	5	832
Violin Duet	139	3	142
Three Violins	53		53
Four Violins	7	1	8
Viola Solo	254	3	257
Viola Concerto	48	1	49
Viola Duet	16		16
Viola Trio	3		3
Viola Quartet			
Cello Solo	718	9	727
Cello Concerto	92		92
Two Celli	28		28
String Bass Solo	7		7
Harp Solo	58	6	64
Harp Concerto	1		1
Harp Hymn Playing	1		1
Fiddling Solo	69	3	72
Fiddling Duet			
<b>Total Strings Events</b>	<b>5,377</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>5,446</b>

Chamber Music Section	Junior	Adult	Total
Violin-Viola Duet	36		36
Violin-Cello Duet	24		24
Viola-Cello Duet	2		2
String Trio	9		9
String Quartet	60		60
Piano/String Quartet	8		8
Piano Trio I (piano-violin-cello)	6		6
Piano Trio II (piano-flute-cello)			
Piano Trio III (piano-clarinet-violola)			
<b>Total Chamber Music Events</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>145</b>



# 2023 FESTIVAL STATISTICS

## by Section

Guitar Section	Junior	Adult	Total
Classical Guitar Solo	246	6	252
Classical Guitar Concerto	6		6
Classical Guitar Duet	4		4
Classical Guitar Ensemble	3		3
Pick Style Guitar Solo	78	1	79
Pick Style Guitar Duet			
Electric Bass Guitar Solo	3		3
Ukulele Solo	9		9
<b>Total Guitar Events</b>	<b>349</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>356</b>

Woodwinds Section	Junior	Adult	Total
Piccolo Solo	4		4
Piccolo Concerto	1		1
Flute Solo	238	5	243
Flute Concerto	21	3	24
Flute Duet	30	4	34
Flute Trio	12		12
Flute Quartet			
Oboe Solo	4		4
Oboe Concerto	3		3
Clarinet Solo	39	1	40
Clarinet Concerto	2		2
Clarinet Duet	6		6
Clarinet Trio	3		3
Bassoon Solo			
Alto Sax Solo	22	1	23
Alto Sax Duet			
Tenor Sax Solo	2		2
Bari Sax Solo			
Sax Quartet (2a-t-b)			
Sop Recorder Solo	6		6
Recorder Duet	4		4
Recorder Trio			
Recorder Quartet			
<b>Total Woodwinds Events</b>	<b>397</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>411</b>

Brass Section	Junior	Adult	Total
Trumpet Solo	15		15
Trumpet Concerto			
Trumpet Duet	4		4
French Horn Solo	7		7
French Horn Concerto			
Trombone/Euphonium Solo	11		11
Tuba Solo	2		2
<b>Total Brass Events</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>39</b>

Percussion Section	Junior	Adult	Total
Timpani Solo			
Snare Drum Solo	24	1	25
Keyboard Percussion Solo	9	1	10
Drum Set Solo	9		9
<b>Total Percussion Events</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>44</b>

Dance Section	Junior	Adult	Total
Ballet			
Theater Dance	68		68
Acrobatic			
Jazz Dance			
Modern Dance			
Tap			
<b>Total Dance Events</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>68</b>

Musicianship Section	Junior	Adult	Total
Improvisation	19		19
Theory	6,536	32	6,568
<b>Total Musicianship Events</b>	<b>6,555</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>6,587</b>

Ensembles	Junior	Adult	Total
Vocal Ensemble	12		12
School Orchestra			
String Orchestra	4		4
Flute Choir	1		1
<b>Total Ensembles</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>17</b>

<b>Total Events</b>	<b>69,891</b>	<b>484</b>	<b>70,375</b>
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# 2023 FESTIVAL STATISTICS

*continued*

## The Top 10 Events

1 Piano Solo	45,613
2 Theory	6,568
3 Violin Solo	3,094
4 Piano Concerto	2,726
5 Piano Duet	2,090
6 Piano Hymn	2,073
7 Musical Theater Solo	1,463
8 American Patriotic & Folk Song	997
9 Violin Concerto	832
10 Cello Solo	727

## Events with less than 10 entries

Piano Accompaniment	9
String Trio	9
Ukulele Solo	9
Drum Set Solo	9
Four Violins	8
Piano/String Quartet	8
String Bass Solo	7
French Horn Solo	7
Sacred Organ	6
Piano Trio I (piano-violin-cello)	6
Classical Guitar Concerto	6
Clarinet Duet	6
Sop Recorder Solo	6
Classical Guitar Duet	4
Piccolo Solo	4
Oboe Solo	4
Recorder Duet	4
Trumpet Duet	4
String Orchestra	4
Accordion Solo	3
Viola Trio	3
Classical Guitar Ensemble	3
Electric Bass Guitar Solo	3
Oboe Concerto	3
Clarinet Trio	3
Viola-Cello Duet	2
Clarinet Concerto	2
Tenor Sax Solo	2
Tuba Solo	2
One Hand	1
Harp Concerto	1
Harp Hymn Playing	1
Piccolo Concerto	1
Flute Choir	1

## Events with no entries

Accordion Duet
Accordion Orchestra
Viola Quartet
Fiddling Duet
Piano Trio II (piano-flute-cello)
Piano Trio III (piano-clarinet-violon)
Pick Style Guitar Duet
Flute Quartet
Bassoon Solo
Alto Sax Duet
Bari Sax Solo
Sax Quartet (2a-t-b)
Recorder Trio
Recorder Quartet
Trumpet Concerto
French Horn Concerto
Timpani Solo
Ballet
Acrobatic
Jazz Dance
Modern Dance
Tap
School Orchestra

## Historical Summary

Year	Total Events	Difference
2016	99,220	
2017	98,277	-943
2018	95,179	-3,098
2019	91,502	-3,677
2020	83,158	-8,344
2021	70,532	-12,626
2022	71,933	1,401
2023	70,375	-1,558





# Vivace Updates

by Sandra Preysz, NFMC **Vivace** Chair

The NFMC Vivace Team is excited to report 330 Festival Areas are fully onboarded and 33 Festival Areas are currently in the process of onboarding. The remaining 41 areas should be contacting Sadie Cole, Vivace onboarding Chair, to complete onboarding by June 30, 2023! Then our Vivace project will be fully implemented nationwide.

A comprehensive Vivace checklist was included in the Autumn 2022 *Junior Keynotes*, page 6. Another review of important items can be found in Spring 2023 *Junior Keynotes*, page 7. We highly recommend reviewing these again as you begin the new Festival year. Here are some additional items that need clarification.

## Student Name for Official Documents

Under MY STUDENTS, on the Student Management page, there is a field, "Name for Official Documents," for recording the name a student wishes to have appear on Rating Sheets. If a student wishes something different than their full legal name (Last, First, Middle), the teacher must enter the "Name for Official Documents" in that field. Ex. William Therian Baggaley would prefer Will Baggaley so type Will Baggaley. There will be a new report: Engraving list for Federation Cups. The default setting for Participation Certificates, Consecutive Superior Certificates and this new Engraving List will be student's First Last name (no middle). If a student wishes something different than First Last name, enter the complete name in the "Name for Official Documents" field. (Will instead of William Therian Baggaley: enter Will Baggaley)

## Cancelling or Updating Student Registrations

Teachers can delete or update student registrations up to the time the registration is approved. Changes to registrations are allowed up to the registration Close Date. If the Area Admin has approved the registration, then the change will need to be made by the Area Admin. Area Admins may choose to start the approval process immediately AFTER the closing date of registration so that teachers may make any changes up to the Close Date. After that time, there should be no cancellations. Instead, these should be recorded as a "No Rating". If the Vivace scheduling module is used, create a CANCELLATION room and place student cancellations there. Record the rating for cancellations as NR (no rating). Make a note in the text field as to the reason.

## Combining and Alternating

When approving Festival registrations, the reviewer should analyze everyone who has reached the minimum level for combining in their instrument and is in 9th grade or above. Go through registrations and make sure students registered for both Concerto and Solo, Musical Theater and Art Song, or Pick and Classical Guitar have checked the "combine" box. Verify with teachers if the box is not checked as some students may not wish to combine the events.

Events that allow combining are explained in the Bulletin, page 11. Combining means **in the same Festival year**. Alternating Events are defined throughout the Bulletin. These events are performed in **different [Festival] years**, NOT in the same year, and the points accrued are added together toward one Federation Cup.



## NEW!!! Individual Student History Report

There is a new report which can be accessed from your **MY STUDENTS** tab. The new icon can be found in the action column. Students (and parents) will love having this report run after Festival each year.

This report will also need to be sent as verification:

- when ordering 75- and 90-point Federation Cups along with the completed JR 4-5 "Federation Cup Grand & Presidents Cup Order Form"
- when requesting the 12+ Consecutive Superior certificates along with the completed JR 3-16 "Superior Ratings 12+ Application"

## Entering Ratings after Festival

This process is one of the most vital and tedious parts of Festivals. It is important all cancellations and "No Rating" performances are accurately recorded. Numerous corrections were requested this year by Area Admins because there was not an accurate record of cancellations and "no shows." To help with this process, there is a report in Vivace for areas which used the Vivace Scheduling module. It may be used on Festival Day: ROOM SCHEDULE (Monitor/Judge). There is a box on the right-hand side of the line for each participant where the final rating can be recorded by hand. A notation when a student does not perform should be made here. Keep track of all ratings at the festival and only enter the actual rating earned. Make sure no-shows are given "No Rating." No Ratings can also have a comment added to explain why no rating was given (not memorized, did not perform, incorrect music choice, etc.). It is important to enter ratings from this report. Students in the CANCELLATION room will be easy to record as NR. DO NOT take the shortcut of entering all of those who earned Excellent, Satisfactory, Fair, or Needs Improvement and then enter the rest as all superiors! The withdrawals, no shows and disqualified participants may be missed this way. JK



# Federation Festivals Bulletin

by Janice Flinte, *Chair*

FALL IS OFFICIALLY HERE! With the printer deadline of November 1 now past, your *Bulletin* editor is breathing a sigh of relief and enjoying nature's cool, crisp air, and a kaleidoscope of magnificent colors. The 2024-2028 *Bulletin* production timeline is now in the final phase and will be available to you beginning March 1, 2024!

The *Bulletin* "symphony" is finally complete—thanks to our dedicated, detailed, and conscientious advisors! Yes, they have included "oldies but goodies" among the offerings in *every* section. However, advisors worked diligently to offer you new repertoire by your *favorite* composers as well as new repertoire by composers who have never had compositions in the *Bulletin* before. You can rest assured that the material consists of pedagogically "sound" repertoire in every section and class, and you will enjoy teaching it as you prepare students for Festivals. Will they enjoy learning the music? Most definitely! I love the movement names in one particular work: mvt. 1. *Sheet-fed Offset Printing Press*; mvt. 2. *Automatic-feed Collating Machine*; mvt. 3. *Rube Goldberg Contraption*.

I have been asked many questions regarding accuracy. If you have recently bought music or received publisher ads or booklets, you have seen that the music publishing industry has (and still is) experienced enormous changes. As copyrights are bought and sold, music originally published by Company "X" may now be distributed by Company "Y." Our Advisors are keenly aware of this and were asked to check "one last time" before information was submitted to the printer to be certain of the current source and the correct item number for every piece in the *Bulletin*. Please let me know if you run into any snag in the process of finding a piece you would like to

purchase. We have endeavored to produce an accurate-as-possible resource for your use.

Many first-time Festival teachers have asked how to use the *Bulletin*, or where to begin in this work of 500+ pages! And "How do I know I haven't missed an important rule?" This has prompted the inclusion of a special introductory page entitled "How to use this *Bulletin*." Veteran *Bulletin* users are already familiar with Federation Festivals and *Bulletin* use, but with a few simple key points at the very beginning, we trust the information will make the experience easy and intuitive as possible for new teachers. Speaking of new teachers, do you have colleagues who have never entered students in NFMC Festivals? This school year is a good "prep year" to show them the ease of using the *Bulletin*, choosing outstanding repertoire, and encouraging students to participate in our exceptional Festivals auditions next year!

In addition to the general rules, all other rules are systematized (in bold and in the same order) in *every* section of the *Bulletin*. This tried-and-true method of displaying repeated information systematically makes it easier for any teacher to find the facts immediately, and especially so for the teacher who enters students in more than one event. Other areas of confusion have been "combining," "alternating," and the number of repetitions allowed per class. New charts will provide a visual means for helping the teacher understand those rules.

Lastly, I hope your teaching is off to a wonderful start! Wishing you a very successful Festival experience for you and your students! **JK**

## Meet the Cover Artist



### Addison Kearbey | Portland, Oregon

My name is Addison Kearbey (11 years old) and I enjoy playing piano and violin. I take piano lessons from Wilma Hawkins and violin lessons from Ruth Sadilek. I play violin with the Portland Youth String Ensemble (PYSE), part of the Portland Youth Philharmonic. I also play soccer and like to draw in my free time.







# Federation Cup Winners

by Mary Jane Timmer, *Federation Cup Chair*

## PRESIDENTS CUP WINNERS

### FLORIDA



Spencer McKee

**Spencer McKee** recently graduated from Nassau County Florida Virtual School. Since beginning formal piano study at age 4 with his mother, Mary Watanabe McKee, Spencer has participated in the NFMF Festival every year. He completed his Federation Festival participation this year with 14 consecutive superior ratings in piano solo, a 90-point cup in piano solo, 45-point cups in concerto and theory, and a 30-point cup in piano duet.

His awards in 2023 include first place in the Palm Beach Atlantic Young Artists Piano Competition, and at the Florida State Junior Festival Convention, the Federation Cup Senior Concerto Award, and the Betty Najarian Award for American Patriotic and Folk Song Advanced Class. He recently received second prize in the Lana M. Bailey Piano Concerto Award.

Spencer enjoys playing for churches, care facilities and for social events. He has played benefit recitals, raising over \$2500 for the World Central Kitchen in support of Ukraine. This fall he will enter Vanderbilt University as a piano performance major.



Honza Melia

**Honza Melia** is a Junior at Sickles High School, Tampa, Florida. He started taking piano lessons when he was 3 years old with Kenji Sukanuma. For 14 years he has been participating in Festival events that include: Solo, Concerto, Piano Hymn, Duet, American Patriotic and Folk Song, Recorder and Theory. He earned the 90-point Festival President's Cup for Piano Solo & Concerto combined this year. He will continue to participate in Festival next year with MA1 solo and Senior concerto events. He then wants to further set his sights on earning the adult Silver Cups.

He has been in his high school band for the past 3 school years. He plays all saxophone ranges from alto to baritone, bass clarinet, contrabass clarinet, and double bass. He plans to continue participating in Marching Band, Wind Ensemble and Orchestra. He would like to further his studies into college by minoring in music and majoring in civil engineering.



Hannah Shen

**Hannah Shen** earned the prestigious NFMF President Cup in Piano Solo. She also earned a 13-year Consecutive Superior Certificate. She studies piano with Zalina Gurevich.



Isabelle Tseng

**Isabelle Tseng** (18) is a violinist from Gainesville, FL. She has played violin in numerous festivals including the BUTI Young Artists Orchestra, All-National Symphony Orchestra, and the Honor Orchestra of America. As concertmaster of the Florida Symphony Youth Orchestra, she enjoys chamber music as well as her soloist endeavors. She currently studies with Ms. Rimma Bergeron-Langlois. Previous mentors have included Dr. Lev Gurevich, Ms. Bing Wang, Dr. Klaudia Szlachta, and Ms. Melissa White.

Isabelle is also an accomplished composer. She draws inspiration from culture, language, and current events in her music, which she has been recognized for by organizations such as ASCAP and Luna Composition Lab. Her works have been performed by Imani Winds, International Contemporary Ensemble and in festivals hosted by the American Composers Orchestra, Boston University Tanglewood Institute, and Mannes School of Music, and others. Outside of music, Isabelle is an avid debater, biker and journalist. She will be attending Princeton University in the fall.

### MINNESOTA



Kyra Sego

**Kyra Sego** is a senior at Woodbury High School. She began her piano studies with Grace Kopitske in 2011. Participating in the East Suburban Music Club Festivals, Kyra has earned superiors each year, earning her 12th consecutive superior in piano solo in 2023. In high school, she performed four concerto events, also with four superiors. Additional piano performances include the Minnesota Music Teachers Association's comprehensive piano exams, theory exams, state contest and numerous recitals.

*continued on page 14*

PRESIDENTS CUP WINNERS *continued*

In school, Kyra has been involved in musicals, including two lead roles in “Chicago” and “Anything Goes”. She also participates in marching band and choir. She is on the school tennis team. Outside of school Kyra enjoys working out, spending time with friends and family and working at the local Dairy Queen. Next year she plans to study architecture at either Iowa State University or the University of Minnesota.



Vishnu Vundamati

**Vishnu Vundamati** is an East Ridge High School senior in Woodbury. He has been studying piano under the guidance of Grace Kopitske for the last twelve years. In 2023, he earned his 12th consecutive solo superior and 4th consecutive concerto superior. In addition to his NFMC accomplishments, Vishnu has qualified for the Minnesota Music Teachers Association's State Honors Concert nine times. Two of those Honors Concert performances were as a finalist in the Senior Young Artists Competition.

Outside of the musical world, Vishnu is a dedicated runner, snowboarder, and longboarder. This year, his cross country team qualified for the state meet and he ran the fourth fastest 5k time in school history. In school, Vishnu is the president of the National Honors Society and a board member of HOSA, the Health Occupations Students of America. He has also been learning Carnatic Music, a form of South Indian classical music, for the last nine years. Next fall, Vishnu plans on attending Nova Southeastern University in Davie, Florida and will be accepting an athletic scholarship to run NCAA Division II cross country and track for the next four years.

## NEBRASKA



Natalie McNamara

**Natalie McNamara** of Bellevue, Nebraska recently received the Presidents Cup as a student of Laura Petry in Music Masters Studio of Flute, Piano, and Vocal Studies. She started as a piano student at age 5 and has now completed 13 years of study in the studio. Her musical range has expanded greatly throughout the years, working as a collaborative pianist, performing as a member of her high school's jazz band, joining the indoor percussion group, playing at a local retirement home, and managing to pick up guitar

along the way. She was honored to have been selected as a Nebraska All-State jazz pianist three times. In addition to music, Natalie has participated in several other extracurricular activities. In high school, she was a 3x state qualifier in cross country and a 2x state qualifier in track as well as a state track medalist in 2023. She is past president of her school's chapter of Mu Alpha Theta Math National Honor Society and was an active member in Science National Honor Society. Natalie recently graduated with highest distinction from Bellevue West High School and hopes to major in both Mathematics and Keyboard Studies at the University of Nebraska-Omaha. She is grateful for all the instruction and dedication from her music teachers and hopes she can continue her piano journey well into the future.

## NEW JERSEY



Kaitlyn Vuong

**Kaitlyn Vuong**, who lives in Florham Park, NJ, received her President's Cup this past May. She has studied piano with NJFMC President Barbara Landi Hause since 2010, starting when she was five years old. She has participated in the Federation Festivals for thirteen years, performing Piano Solos, Concertos, Duets, Trios, and American Patriotic events. In addition to piano, she has played flute and piccolo in band, and performed as part of a piano trio in Carnegie Hall as a winner in the Golden Key competition. A graduate of the

Academy of Design at the Morris County School of Technology, Kaitlyn plans to major in Civil Engineering at the Cooper Union in New York City.

## OHIO



Andrew Huang

**Andrew Huang**, a piano student of Esther K. Chu, has been awarded NFMC's 90-point President's Cup. The achievement was years in the making. Like many students, he started piano lessons at age six, and entered the District I-A Federation Festival at the Pre-Primary level. Then the magic began. With Mrs. Chu's instruction, strong parental support, and a commitment to performing often with The Junior Fortnightly Musical Club of Cleveland, Andrew started to flourish. By the time he graduated from Westlake

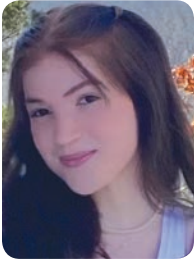
High School in spring of 2023, Andrew had reached Musically Advanced 2, earned 12 consecutive superiors, won several local and international competitions, and performed in American Protégé's Winner's Recital at Carnegie Hall.

A few of Andrew's FIRST PLACE prizes include The Stars of Summer International Piano Competition, Great Composers Masters of Concerto and Sonata, Best Mendelssohn, Best Beethoven and Best Chopin Performances, Outstanding Junior OFMC award, and National finalist in the Music Teachers National Association Piano Duet event. His senior year he won his school's music competition and performed Beethoven's Piano Concerto in C minor with his high school orchestra.

Of his teacher he says, “Mrs. Chu is very caring. Sometimes piano teacher terminology is hard to understand, but Mrs. Chu makes things very clear and helps you get to what something should sound like.” His teacher says “Andrew can interpret and express musical ideas in the most wonderful way. He is enthusiastic and patient and has a very high work ethic.”

In high school Andrew participated in Science Olympiad, sang in the choir, played the piano for musicals, and acted in the musical *Legally Blonde*. He was also president of the marching band.

Andrew says music has played an enormous role in his life and has helped him meet the friends he has now. He will be attending Case Western Reserve University in the fall, with a major in business or accounting.



Marta Insolia

**Marta Insolia** began piano studies with Cynthia Crotty at age five and earned her first NFMFC gold cup in third grade. It was then that her teacher inspired her to earn the President's Cup. Together, they carefully calculated the years and points Marta would need to reach 90 points. Further motivated by honors recitals and her sibling's success, Marta reached her goal in March 2023. Mrs. Crotty says "Marta is an extremely conscientious and dedicated student. She aimed for the President's Cup and never lost sight of it!"

Marta is a member of Piano by the Falls Junior Club in Ohio District I-A. She is very close to her piano teacher and formed a loving relationship over the past twelve years. She is grateful for all her help and encouragement to "stick with it!"

Besides playing piano, Marta also played cello in her school's orchestras for eight years and was co-captain of her high school women's varsity tennis team. Marta says she also learned the value of commitment and sticking to something from tennis, because she has played tennis just about as long as she has played the piano.

This spring, Marta received the Excellence in Arts Award from Chagrin Falls High School, graduated cum laude, and received the AP Capstone Diploma for passing all three Advanced Placement English classes. AP Research was one of those classes and her research was focused on analyzing a film through a psychological lens.

Marta Insolia will attend Skidmore College in the fall as a cultural anthropology major and a studio arts minor.



Ellie Sauser

**Ellie Sauser**, a 2023 graduate of Spring Valley Academy, started her keyboard studies at age three under Mrs. Judy Bede and organ education with Mrs. Rachel Spry Lammi through the Dayton Organ Academy. She has been a percussionist with the Kettering Praise Orchestra for the past five years, and has been featured several times on piano and organ, most recently, performing "Rhapsody in Blue," for an Americana concert in remembrance of 9/11. Music has provided Ellie with many opportunities. She played with

Spring Valley Academy bands and choir where she participated in music tours to Europe, New York, and Tennessee. For six consecutive years Ellie has auditioned for the Dayton Music Club and has received yearly scholarships. This year Ellie was a scholarship finalist in the SWAU Music Festival performing at the Meyerson Symphony Center in Dallas, played at Carnegie Hall in New York under Dr. Preston Hawes with the New England Symphonic Ensemble, and was a participant under Dr. Timothy Olson at the North Carolina School of the Arts organ competition. Ellie is currently the senior regional alternate for the Ohio Music Teachers Association Buckeye Auditions. After competing in the National Federation of Music Clubs for 14 years, Ellie just received her 90-point cup with 14 consecutive superiors. Ellie will be attending Andrews University in the fall, where she received the "Dare to Dream" Scholarship, studying organ under Dr. Kenneth Logan, double majoring in music and biomedical sciences.



Dev Sethi

**Dev Sethi** is the top honor student at Canfield High School. He has maintained a perfect 4.0 GPA and was inducted into the National Honor Society in his junior year, as well as served on the Junior Class Board. In the summer of 2022, Dev served as the youngest intern for the Mahoning County Commissioners Office. In his senior year, he was a 4-year letterman and Drumline Captain for the Cardinal Pride Marching Band, Symphonic Band Percussion Section First Chair, Band Manager as well as President of the Leo's Club Chapter of Canfield

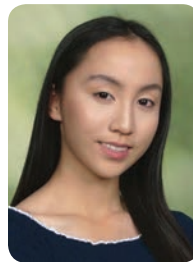
Lions Club. Over the past 3 years, Dev helped to create the Bariatric Program at The Surgical Hospital at Southwoods. For the past 14 years, Dev swam competitively for Penguin Swimming. He is 18 years old and started playing the piano at age 4 with Elizabeth Masternick at the Masternick Studio. He began participating in the Ohio Federation of Music Clubs District 1-B Junior Festival at age 5, competed in Masters Competitions and has been performing for the past 13 years. He has received countless Superior ratings in Piano Theory, Piano Solo & Piano Concerto. In his last year, Dev is eligible for the 90 Point Cup. He also participates in the Youngstown Musical Arts Festival Piano Competitions which he has won four years in a row, as well as received numerous Superior ratings at the Ohio Music Education Association Solo and Ensemble Competitions. After graduation, Dev plans to attend a top university where he will pursue a career in Biomedical Engineering and Public Health.



Gabriella Smallwood

**Gabriella Smallwood** has been playing piano for thirteen years. She started playing under Mrs. Fanny J Didomenico, and with her went on to earn First Place in the Elizabeth Gerber Competition in 2016 and Second Place in the Charlotte & W. Alfred Gray Competition in 2020. Gabriella now takes lessons from Mrs. Didomenico's daughter, Mrs. Diane Debiec, with whom she received Honorable Mention in the Charlotte & W. Alfred Gray Competition in 2021 and the Federation Grand Cup. With Mrs. Didomenico and Mrs. Debiec,

Gabriella has received National Guild Audition scores of 97% since 2010. Gabriella is also principal chair oboist and English horn in the Youngstown State University Youth Orchestra and the Canfield High School Symphonic Band. She is also ranked third chair in the All-State Band, and has received Superior scores in Solo and Ensemble on oboe, English horn, and piano since 2018. Gabriella plans to major in Biochemistry (Pre-medicine) at Kent State University in the Fall. Gabriella credits her musical career to her family and Mrs. Debiec, and in honor of Mrs. Didomenico.



Jocelyn Zhao

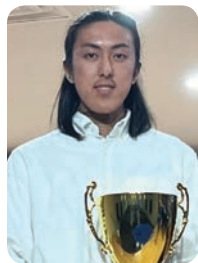
**Jocelyn Zhao** is a senior at Canfield High School. She has played piano for thirteen years, studying with Fanny Didomenico for ten years and Diane Debiec for three. Jocelyn started playing at age five, and has since participated in the National Federation of Music Clubs Festival, earning consecutive superior ratings for twelve years. She is also involved in various extracurriculars at school, such as National Honor Society, Speech and Debate, and golf. Jocelyn would like to thank Mrs. Debiec and Mrs. Didomenico for their persistent encouragement and support throughout her musical endeavors.

*continued on page 16*



PRESIDENTS CUP WINNERS *continued*

## TEXAS



David Ding

**David Ding** is a graduate of Michael E. DeBaakey High School for Health Professions in Houston. He has been playing the piano since he was five and has been participating in the NFMC festivals ever since. Under 13 years of guidance from his teacher, Mrs. Ann Chee, he achieved the Grand Cup award at the age of 16 and the coveted President's Cup at the age of 17. In addition, he completed all 8 grades of the International ABRSM Practical Piano Exams. For the National Guild, he won the Paderewski Medal in 2020 for completing 10 years

of National programs (10 memorized pieces each year) and received the National Guild High School Diploma in 2023, thus receiving the coveted NGPT \$200 Scholarship. For the Texas Music Teachers Association, he received gold medals in Theory and World of Music Tests. For the local Independent MTA, he participated annually in the Critics Corner event and master classes. Using his piano talent, David has earned community service points by performing yearly at the CASA Home Tour in Sugarland to raise funds for abused children of Fort Bend County. Outside of piano, David was an avid participant in the robotics club at his high school and graduated among the top students in his class. He also enjoys playing video games and watching anime to relax. David plans to major in engineering at the University of Michigan in the fall of 2023. Although he may not pursue piano as a career, he will continue to cherish it for the rest of his life.



Christine Tian

**Christine Tian** graduated in 2023 from the Liberal Arts and Science Academy High School in Texas. She started playing piano when she was 7, and has taken music classes with Ms. Zemfira Zade for the past 12 years. Christine passed all exams for Royal Music School of London (ABRSM) from Grade 1-7. In addition to obtaining Superior ratings at the music festival for 12 consecutive years, she was awarded All State Winner in Piano Duo at the 45th Texas Federation of Music Clubs (TFMC) All State Festival. Christine loves animals and enjoys

volunteering at the Austin Animal Center. Christine will be attending Harvard University in the fall to study computer science. She hopes to continue her pursuits in music and volunteering in college.

## UTAH



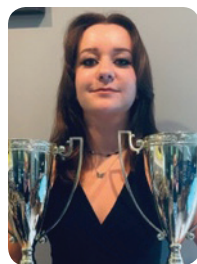
Soren Sears

**Soren Sears** started playing piano when he was four years old. He has studied piano with Karlyen Tan for 14 years. He participated in his first Federation of Music Clubs Festival at age five. He has earned 13 consecutive superior ratings in the solo festival and 11 consecutive superior ratings in the concerto festival, putting him on track to earn the capstone President's Cup this year. He has performed twice in the UPMC, Salt Lake Chapter Honors Recital at Assembly Hall on Temple Square, the first time as the youngest pianist at age 11. His

favorite piano pieces are Rachmaninoff's Prelude in C# Minor, Op. 3, No. 2, Scott Joplin's Maple Leaf Rag, and his most recent concerto, Grieg's Concerto in A Minor. Soren was the only pianist chosen, along with other instrumentalists, to perform with his high school orchestra for concerto night in March 2023. Soren is also the accompanist for his school choir and

has accompanied many songs for the Skyline High School choir program for the past four years. Soren's other artistic passion is making movies—which he expects to pursue this fall at the University of North Carolina School of The Arts Film Conservatory. Soren is very grateful to and for his piano teacher, Karlyen Tan, NCTM, and his parents and family.

## VIRGINIA



Katelynne Maitland

**Katelynne Maitland** is the recipient of two 90 point gold cups this year. She earned one in Piano Solo/ Piano Concerto and the other in Composition. Additionally, she has earned a 45 point cup in American Patriotic and Folk Songs and a 45 point cup in Hymn Playing. Katelynne began her music education at the Fredericksburg Yamaha Music School at the age of four. After graduating from the Yamaha Music Education system, she has studied privately with Nathalie Steinbach. The Yamaha Corporation Junior Original Concert

Committee chose Katelynne to perform her original compositions in twelve Fredericksburg Junior Original Concerts. She has won numerous monetary awards in the Virginia Federation of Music Clubs Junior Composers Contest. In addition to her piano studies, Katelynne plays the violin in her High School orchestra and has entered the Federation violin event for numerous years. She has been active in the Rappahannock Music Society's Jazz Festival since 2010 and the RMS Sonata/Sonatina Festival since 2011 receiving a superior rating in all of the events. Her activities also include the Junior ROTC program and Rifle Marksmanship. Katelynne plans to enter the military after high school graduation.

## WISCONSIN



William Brown

**William Brown** has studied piano with Kadie Johnson for the past 3 years. He has participated in NFMC piano solos for the past 12 years and 5 years of piano concertos, earning a superior each year! Through his determination, perseverance and hours of hard work, William earned his President's Cup in 2023. He has significantly grown in his interpretation and musicianship, both technically and proficiently. All the while, he has also been an active participant of Drum Major, marching band, jazz band, the Honors Jazz program with

the Wisconsin Conservatory, swim team, teaching swim lessons and life guarding. In addition to these activities William also was in the Cedarburg High School Pit Orchestra when they earned a Wisconsin State Jerry for the musical Mamma Mia. William is enrolled at university of Wisconsin Madison next year and plans to major in business.



Ethan Emanuelson

**Ethan Emanuelson** graduated this June from Shorewood High School, a Milwaukee suburb. A violin student of Carol Waldvogel for fourteen years as well as a student of Mike Giacobassi for the past four years, Ethan first started violin instruction at age four. Ethan has been a member of the Milwaukee Youth Symphony Orchestra, performing with the Senior Symphony and Chamber Orchestra the past three years. This fall, Ethan performed with two different orchestras



while studying abroad in Paraguay, where he also took lessons at the Conservatory of Luque.

Ethan received a "Superior Rating" for thirteen consecutive years from the Wisconsin Federation of Music Clubs and was the recipient of the ninety-point Solo and Concerto Trophy this spring. Ethan was selected for the Wisconsin School Music Association State Middle Level and High School Honors Orchestras, and received "Exemplary Performer" at the WSMA State Solo and Ensemble Festival in 2018 and 2023. Finally, Ethan received the Civic Music Award in recognition of outstanding senior musicianship from Shorewood High School earlier this spring.

Ethan is also a very serious chess player, placing in various tournaments around the country. He hopes to continue playing both violin and chess this fall when he attends Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology in Terre Haute, Indiana, where he will major in Mechanical Engineering.



Zahni Gulbranson

**Zahni Gulbranson** has participated in WFMJ every year since he was six years old. Additionally, he has participated and placed in the state level of the Junior Composers competition three times with his most recent submission placing at the regional level. Apart from competitions, Zahni composes music for fun with his rock band, and was commissioned to write a piece for the Shorewood sixth grade band which was performed last spring. Throughout high school, Zahni played euphonium in the Shorewood High School wind

ensemble and performed in three plays as well as six musicals as part of the SHS drama department. Zahni will be attending School of the Art Institute of Chicago in the fall, studying film and photography, and intends both to continue practicing piano, as well as compose his own music for his future film projects.



Ellie Lin

**Ellie Lin** has just graduated from the University School of Milwaukee. She has been studying violin under Ludmila and Yuri Anisimov of Waukesha Country Conservatory of Music since the age of 5, and has now been awarded the NFMC President's Cup for Violin Solo. Ellie has also actively participated in several other musical organizations: she has served as a principal in the Milwaukee Youth Symphony Orchestra, as well as the concertmaster for University School of Milwaukee Chamber and Pit orchestras. In addition, Ellie

performed at the WSMA Solo and Ensemble Festivals at the district and state levels, earning the highest rating for each year of participation. Outside of violin, Ellie's passions include playing soccer, activism work and traveling abroad. While studying at University School of Milwaukee, she also held leadership positions in student government, activism clubs, and the student weekly newspaper. Ellie is now attending Stanford University.

## GRAND CUP WINNERS

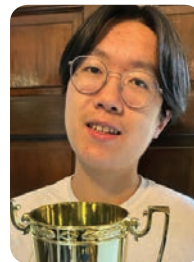
### FLORIDA



Samuel Wu

**Samuel Wu** is a sophomore at Sunlake High School, Land-O-Lakes, Florida. He started taking piano lessons at 3 years old with Kenji Suganuma and has been participating in numerous Festival events including Solo, Concerto, Piano Hymn, Duet, Duo, American Patriotic and Folk Song, Sight Play, Recorder, and Theory. This year, he earned the 75-point Festival Grand Cup for Piano Solo & Concerto combined as well as 12 consecutive solo superiors. He is also a member of Mu Alpha Theta, Future Business Leaders of America, and has served in student government. Samuel enjoys going camping and playing basketball. Currently, he is working toward the 90-point President Cup and hopes to study Computer Science at MIT.

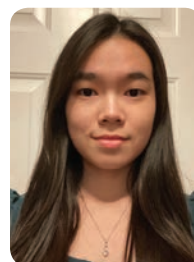
### GEORGIA



Steven Zhou

**Steven Xinzhe Zhou**, a student of Debra S. Hughes since 2013, had the honor of receiving the 75-point Grand Cup for Piano Solo. Steven is a Junior at Gwinnett County School of Mathematics, Science and Technology, the first ranked high school in Georgia and ninth in national rankings because of its advanced academic rigor. He has performed in the Gwinnett County West Senior Club for eleven years and has received superior every year in Piano Solo and combined Senior Concerto beginning in ninth grade. Steven has consistently won local awards at yearly Music Day competitions and the second-place scholarship for his performance with his Federation Festival music as a freshman. He has received high marks in GMTA's state music theory exams and their auditions. This year he performed Liszt's Sonata in B minor. Other than piano, Steven plays violin in his school's orchestra, is a member of the National Honor Society and participates in math competitions. Outside of school, he enjoys hanging out with friends, working out, playing video games and reading books. He is hopeful to earn the 90-point gold cup like his older brother. Beethoven is his favorite composer and he will again add another sonata to his repertoire for this coming year's competitions and NFMC Festival. Steven plans to pursue a degree in computer science after graduation.

### KENTUCKY



Christina Lin

**Christina Lin** will be a senior in the Math Science and Technology Center at Paul Laurence Dunbar High School in Lexington, KY. She has studied piano with May Man since the age of 5. Her first Festival experience was in 2012 and she has entered in both solo and concerto each year. She was very happy to be a 2023 recipient of the Grand Cup as it represents an accumulation of years of playing piano. Christina was selected to participate in the Governor's School for the Arts for piano performance in the summer of 2022. The

*continued on page 18*

GRAND CUP WINNERS *continued*

three-week residential program gave her an opportunity to be completely immersed in chamber music, playing with other accomplished high school instrumentalists from across the state. In larger ensembles, Christina has played with the Central Kentucky Youth Orchestra as the piano accompanist. Over the years, Christina also participated in the ABRSM piano exams and received a Distinction rating for her Grade 8 exam.

Besides piano, Christina enjoys participating in a variety of activities including the debate club, student council, the MSTC newsletter *The Element*, and the swim team.

## MICHIGAN

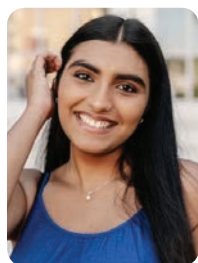


Nideesh Srivatsavan

**Nideesh Srivatsavan**, a junior at the International Academy East in Troy, MI, is the recipient of the 75-point Grand Cup. Nideesh has been playing piano since he was 5 years old and has been actively participating in National Federation events, playing both solos and concertos. Nideesh has participated in many piano events such as the American Guild of Music and Mac Open and won several awards at these competitions. Later he utilized his piano skills to volunteer at Henry Ford Hospital and at Troy Anthology Senior Living

where he played piano at these locations. This volunteering experience inspired Nideesh to establish a non-profit volunteering organization, Reboot Future whose goal is to inspire, encourage, and engage youth in multi-faceted volunteering endeavors. Nideesh dedicates his achievements and his accolades to his Piano teacher, Ms. Sarah DePalma. Nideesh has been learning to play Piano with Ms. DePalma since he was 7 years old and continues to do so. Nideesh has indicated that Ms. DePalma pushes him to greatness and without her he could not have accomplished all his accolades.

## MINNESOTA



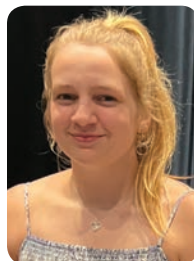
Sahana Bhatia

**Sahana Bhatia** is a senior at St. Croix Preparatory Academy. She began her piano journey with Grace Kopitske at the age of six. She has performed in the Piano Solo event at the East Suburban Federation Music Club festival for 12 years. Starting in ninth grade, she has earned 4 consecutive superiors for the Piano Concerto event. After graduation, Sahana plans to perform one last concerto in the fall to earn her President's Cup.

Sahana has participated in several Minnesota Music Teachers Association (MMTA) theory and comprehensive piano exams, earning a high distinction for each one. She has competed in the MMTA's State contest and has performed at the state Honors Concert for contest winners.

In addition to her piano studies, Sahana takes part in many non-school and school extracurriculars. She always has been fascinated with the arts and has been practicing the Indian classical dance, Bharatanatyam, since the age of 6 and completed her milestone Arangetram performance in 2021. She also volunteers at Regions Hospital every Saturday and works with doctors and patients in physical therapy. In school, she is in Math League, and has contributed to her school

by winning 2nd place for 3 years. She also founded her school's first ever diversity club, Discussions on Diversity, with the hopes of bringing awareness to the community and change to her school. In her spare time, Sahana loves being around her friends and family, loves adventures, and is always willing to try new things! In the future, she plans on pursuing a career in the Biomedical field.



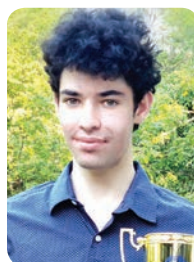
Maddie Boie

Hi! My name is **Maddie Boie**, and I have been playing piano for almost 13 years now. I graduated from Century High School in Rochester and plan to attend South Dakota State University this fall with a major in animal science/pre-vet. I enjoy swimming, hiking, fishing, cross country skiing, horseback riding, and trap shooting. I have really enjoyed developing my skills and passion for playing the piano and am very grateful to Mrs. Gutzmer for all she has taught me and my parents for all their support!



Katy Nguyen

**Katy Nguyen** has been a student of Diane Anderson for 16 years. She is pursuing a degree at Rochester Institute of Technology as a physician assistant student with minors in piano performance, psychology, and military sciences. In addition to her Grand Cup, Katy has had multiple superior ratings from the Minnesota State High School League Music Tournament in instrumental and chamber choir. Her goal is to continue pursuing piano with a focus on Romantic era pieces in tandem with her professional medical training.



Vladimir Tsiper

**Vladimir Tsiper** is a 10th grader at the Breck School in Minneapolis, Minnesota. He has been a student of Lucinda Marvin at MacPhail Center for Music since the age of five, and in the last three years he has also been taking lessons with Yulia Ziskel of the New York Philharmonic. In addition to violin, Vladimir is studying composition with Sarah Miller. He is a member of the Minnesota Youth Symphonies (MYS) Symphony Orchestra and the Artaria Chamber Music School.

Vladimir has won many prizes at venues such as Sherer International Competition (Goshen IN), and in the Minneapolis area from Schubert Club, MNSOTA Mary West Solo Competition, Thursday Musical, the MacPhail Concerto/Aria Competition, and Minnesota Sinfonia Young Artists Competition. In the last two years he has performed with the Bloomington (MN) Symphony Orchestra, Dakota Valley Symphony Orchestra, Civic Orchestra of Minneapolis, and the Minnetonka Symphony Orchestra.

The highlights of this season include Vladimir's appearance on the national radio show *From the Top*, winning the MYS Solo Competition and soloing with the MYS in the Minneapolis Orchestra Hall, receiving the Jacobson Prize at the Young People's Symphony Concert Association (YPSCA) finals, and becoming the West Central Division Winner of the Music Teachers National Association (MTNA) Senior String Competition.

Aside from music, Vladimir enjoys downhill skiing, theater, and traveling, especially visiting the tallest buildings in the world. He is a movie nerd and an active member of the film lovers' community.



Serena Zhu

**Serena Zhu** has studied piano under Dr. Jackie Lo for 12 years and is currently a junior at Woodbury High School. This year she earned her NFMF Grand Cup for Piano Solo. Serena also has studied violin with Dr. Lo since 2018, earning Superior ratings every year for six Violin Solos and three Violin Concerti.

Serena has participated in the Minnesota Music Teachers Association's comprehensive performance and theory exams for both piano and violin. She is the recipient of the MMTA Jeanette Benson Award, which recognizes the highest score in the state for the Piano Theory Exam. She has also competed in the MMTA piano and instrumental contests resulting in performances in the state Honors Concert and Instrumental Finalé Concert.

Aside from exams, contests and NFMF festivals, Serena plays violin in the top collegiate level Symphony Orchestra with the Minnesota Youth Symphonies orchestral training program and the MMEA All-State Orchestra. She also plays basketball for her school. Her hobbies include reading, listening to music, and hanging out with friends.

## NEW JERSEY



Jedrik Digao

**Jedrik Digao**, student of Lisa Villamaria Casia from New Jersey earned the NFMF Grand Cup in Musical Theater and Art Song. He has been studying with Mrs. Lisa for 12 years and has been an active participant in NJFMC's Federation Festivals since he was 5 years old. He has also been an active winner in NJFMC's local vocal competition for the past 4 years. He will be pursuing a degree in Computer Science at Rutgers University.



Alexander Howden

**Alexander Howden**, student of NJFMC President Barbara Landi Hause, was presented with his Grand Cup this past May. Alexander has studied piano with Ms. Hause in Florham Park, NJ, since 2011, and has participated in the Federation Festivals in Solo, Concerto, Duet, Trio, and American Patriotic events. In addition to his NJFMC activities, Alexander is an Eagle Scout with a strong interest in computer science. He is also an avid tennis player and works as a life guard.



Kaden Vuong

**Kaden Vuong** received his Grand Cup in Piano Solo this past May. A resident of Florham Park, NJ, he has studied piano with NJFMC President Barbara Landi Hause since 2011. He has participated in the NFMF Federation Festivals since 2012, performing piano solos, concertos, duets, trios, and American Patriotic events. In addition to piano, Kaden plays the French horn, mellophone, and trumpet, and is the brass captain in the marching band.

## OHIO



Timmy Domer

**Timmy Domer** is a 17-year-old junior at Canfield High School and a member of the Chamber Ensemble Choir. He is the son of Dr. Timothy and Noelle Domer. He has a younger brother, Carson. At just six years old, Timmy expressed an interest in music and began taking piano lessons with Mrs. Diane Debiec. Throughout his music education, he has continued to participate in several yearly festivals and competitions including the Ohio Federation of Music Clubs (OFMC) district festival at Youngstown State University (YSU) and the OFMC state competition in both piano solo and concerto. In addition to OFMC, Timmy participates in the National Guild of Piano Teachers annual auditions. In 2022, he earned the 60-point gold cup representing ten consecutive years of superior piano performance and was also recently awarded the prestigious Paderewski Medal from the American College of Musicians. During the past 11 years, Timmy has acquired an impressive repertoire of piano concertos including works written by Beethoven, Haydn, Mozart, and Schumann and dramatic solos by JS Bach, CPE Bach, Burgmüller, Moussorgsky, Muczynski, and the famed Prelude in C sharp minor by Rachmaninoff. As a member of the Canfield High School Chamber Ensemble Choir, under the direction of Mr. Tom Scurich, Timmy performed alongside members of the Youngstown Symphony Orchestra and had the opportunity to sing at Universal Studios Orlando.

Timmy has become the pianist he is today because of his love of music, his self-discipline, and the exceptional training and encouragement he receives from his teacher, Mrs. Diane Debiec. He has also received training from several esteemed professionals in the music industry including the late Mrs. Fannie DiDomenico and he recently attended a masterclass where he had the opportunity to play for and receive feedback from International Concert pianist and Professor of Piano at YSU, Dr. Caroline Oltmann. Timmy's most cherished memories involving piano is the celebration of Mrs. DiDomenico's 90th birthday in Pittsburgh in which he, his family, and Dr. and Mrs. Diane Debiec, attended a Lang Lang performance with the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra. When Timmy is not performing at the concert hall, practicing piano, or completing his homework, he works as a part-time sales associate at Orangetheory Fitness Youngstown, in which he enjoys sharing in the positivity with clients and his co-workers. During his free time, he enjoys skiing, fishing, boating, aviation, cooking with family and golfing. In addition to leisurely golf, Timmy has participated in several North East Ohio Junior Professional Golf Association (PGA) tournaments as well as the Greatest Golfer of the Valley tournaments.

*continued on page 20*



GRAND CUP WINNERS *continued*

Simon Kovass

**Simon Kovass** is the son of David and Sara Kovass of Canfield, Ohio. He is a junior at Canfield High School, where he serves as Vice-President of his class and carries a 3.94 GPA. He is also a PBIS Prime-time Officer, MOSAIC Member, and a Member of The National Honor Society. Simon is involved in other extracurricular activities as well. Among these activities are CHS Chambers Choir, where he is a Special Ensemble Member, Bass Section Leader, Soloist and Piano Accompanist. Simon also is a 3-year letter winner of the Canfield

High School Golf Team, where he earned All-Conference Honors. Since the age of five, Simon has been taking piano lessons with Debiec Studio where he has earned many awards including The Music Settlement Ohio Scholarship 2021, The Fanny DiDomenico Memorial Award for Piano Excellence Scholarship 2021, The Steinway Society of Western Pennsylvania-Young Artist Award 2021-22, 2022-23, and The American College of Musicians-Winner of the Prestigious Paderewski Medal-National Winner 2022. Simon has participated in The Dana School of Music, Youngstown State University Invitational Concert, and many Masterclass sessions with The Dana School of Music. Simon has earned the National Federation of Music Clubs 60-point Gold Cup Winner for Superior Piano Solo and Piano Concerto, and the 45-point Superior Gold Cup winner for Piano Theory. Simon wishes to thank Mrs. Diane Debiec for years of guidance, support, and a tireless commitment to his study of the piano.



Tanya Pai Dhungat

**Tanya Pai Dhungat** is a senior at Canfield High School and will be graduating summa cum laude. She has been playing piano since the age of 5, initially with Mrs Fanny DiDomenico and currently with her daughter, Mrs Diane Debiec for the past 3 years. She has been participating in the National Federation of Music Clubs Festival for the past 11 years. She has 10 consecutive superior ratings in Solo competition, 6 consecutive superior ratings in Concerto competition as well as numerous superiors in piano theory over these

past years. Over the last 11 years, Tanya has successfully participated in the National Guild Auditions and Musical Arts Festivals. She also plays saxophone for the Canfield High School Marching and Symphonic Bands. This year she is both 1st chair saxophone and section captain. She has previously participated in the OMEA Solo and Ensemble Competitions receiving superior rating in saxophone. Her activities outside of music include being a member of the National Honors Society, the President of the Student Council, a Senior Class officer, and a Peer Tutor. She has been a varsity player on the Canfield Girls High School Tennis Team for the past 4 years and is a Captain this year. Tanya would like to give thanks to Mrs. Debiec for all the encouragement and patience that she has given her. She is also very grateful to Mrs. DiDomenico who helped guide and mold her throughout those early years and we miss her dearly. Tanya's future plans are to attend college next year to pursue a career in Medicine.



Christina Taylor

**Christina Taylor** has participated in the Ohio Federation of Music Clubs Festivals for 12 years, receiving Superior ratings each year in both violin solo and violin concerto events. She currently serves as concertmaster in the Springfield Youth Symphony (SYS) and the Fairborn Regional Orchestra. She has also played in the SYS Livewire String Quartet and Springfield Arts Council's production of Les Misérables; her church orchestra; and the David L. Pierson Concerto Competition where she

received an honorable mention award. She has played piano for several years as well and performed at group recitals. Christina's other activities include YMCA team volleyball, church youth group, and art class. She attends homeschool cooperative events including Providential Extension Program in Dayton and collaborative science classes. She loves crocheting, art, caring for her cat, reading, writing stories, ice skating, and serving the community of Springfield with ensemble performances. She is thankful to her amazing, dedicated teachers—Mrs. Kathy Johnston and Mr. Tom Sobieski—who have encouraged her tremendously throughout her musical journey. Her current interests are to pursue a degree in marine biology, with an emphasis on marine mammals.



Morgan Way

**Morgan Way**, a senior at Rocky River High School in Rocky River, Ohio, recently won her Grand Gold Cup at the Ohio Federation of Music Club's Festival on March 11 at Baldwin Wallace University. This was her twelfth year participating in the NFMC festivals and she added the concerto category for all four of her high school years, in which she earned consecutive superior ratings. Morgan has been playing piano since she was four years old, and is a student of Coren Mino of Avon Lake. There is a deep respect that has

grown over the years between student and teacher. Morgan cherishes her thirteen years of study with Mino, and says that it is her teacher's deep understanding of music itself that teaches her to make music rather than just play the piano. As for her student, Mino says that Morgan was musically motivated from her very first piano lessons and attributes her strong work ethic, along with her ability to grasp musical concepts, to her success. Additionally, she adds, "It has been my very great joy to watch the musical growth that has taken place in her. And as an added bonus...she is one of the nicest people I know. I do not need to wish her good luck in college because she has everything in place to succeed admirably." Besides being accomplished at the piano, Morgan plays the flute and piccolo in her school's marching band and wind ensemble. She is also a member of the Cleveland Youth Wind Symphony. Her other activities include Science Olympiad, Model UN, Academic Challenge, and Environmental Club. Although not fully committed yet, Morgan will likely attend the University of Southern California to study aerospace engineering in the Fall.



## PENNSYLVANIA



Paityn Armstrong

**Paityn Armstrong** is 17 years old and will be a senior at Seneca Valley High School in Harmony, PA. She has been playing piano for 12 years and studies with Mrs. Linda Maurhoff. Paityn also plays clarinet in her school's Wind Ensemble, saxophone in the SV "Raider" Marching Band, and piano in Jazz Ensemble I. As a junior, she earned positions as a clarinetist in Honors Band, District Band, Region Band and All-State Band as a part of the PMEA band festival system. Additionally, she played piano in the PMEA District Jazz Festival as a member of the top ensemble for the past two years.

Academically, Miss Armstrong has achieved Highest Honor Roll and President's Education Awards during her freshman, sophomore, and junior years. Paityn is a member of National Honor Society and Tri-M Music Honor Society. She was also individually nominated by her 9th and 10th grade teachers for the R.I.S.E (Recognizing IHS Student Excellence) award and was recently chosen by her peers to be a member of the newly formed "Hope Squad" which supports suicide prevention.

In addition to her schoolwork and musical studies, Paityn teaches piano lessons to younger students, volunteers in the Children's Ministry at church, and helps with the SV Elementary Summer Band program. In her free time, she enjoys reading, baking, video production, and exploring music technology.



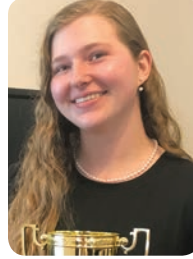
Shivani Umesh

**Shivani Umesh** has been playing the piano for twelve years, since she was in kindergarten and studies with Mrs. Linda Maurhoff. Over the years, she has grown fond of classical and romantic music, learning pieces amongst her favorite artists, such as Chopin. Participating in Federation Festivals has taught her how hard work and discipline can blossom into fruitful musical experiences, such as achieving 12 years of consecutive "Superior" ratings or being able to volunteer to play music to hospice patients.

Alongside learning the piano, she has been learning Indian Classical Music for twelve years to connect with her Indian culture.

In addition, Shivani is also very active in her community. Elected as a Presiding Officer earlier this year, she oversees the Pennsylvania YMCA Youth and Government program, consisting of over 500 high schoolers. She is also a member of her school's Academic Decathlon team, where she has won over 30 medals and has become a state champion. Finally, she is the founder of Una, a teen podcast exploring healthcare professionals and the interaction between medicine and pressing issues around the world.

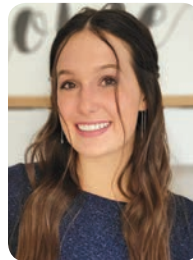
## UTAH



Elizabeth Allred

**Elizabeth Allred** began learning the piano at age five under the careful guidance of her teacher Lannette Nielson. She was so small at her first lesson that she had to sit on a book in order to reach the keys. When she began learning the piano, her piano at home was an old antique. To celebrate her sweet sixteenth birthday, she received a new piano from her parents. She was able to let her old piano finally rest, and upgraded to a newer one that could keep up with more aggressive and fast paced pieces. Currently, Elizabeth has completed three concertos, and is starting on her fourth, along with new solo pieces as well.

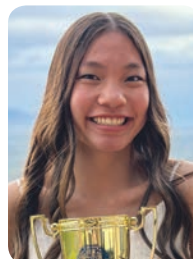
Elizabeth is starting to pursue business classes. Besides business, she also enjoys a plethora of class subjects like art, language, English, home economics, and math. Although she is not planning on majoring in music, she is planning on keeping music a centered focus in her life. Besides practicing the piano, she keeps herself busy by reading, writing, and drawing.



Halle Camblin

**Halle Camblin** is the daughter of Lee and Rebekah Camblin, and the oldest of four daughters. Halle started taking piano lessons from Monika Preysz when she was 5 years old. Like every child, it was hard at first for her to really love playing the piano, especially practicing. Although, as the years went by, her love for the piano grew and grew. It has become so important in her life, and something she feels she could not live without.

Halle has participated in the National Federation of Music Club Festivals ever since she began taking lessons! She started by participating in Solo events and later started participating in both Theory and Concerto events. She loves to put in hard work toward pieces and push herself to learn and perfect difficult songs. There is nothing like receiving a Superior after working on a song for several months! Recently, Halle received her 75-point gold cup this year, and is the first of Monika Preysz's students to receive this honor! Halle is very grateful for her teacher and for her parents who placed her in piano many years ago. Halle is graduating from Alta High School in Sandy, Utah this spring, and then plans to go on a mission for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints. Halle then will attend BYU in Provo, Utah and hopes to major in Music and/or Business.



Panasya Chirachanakul

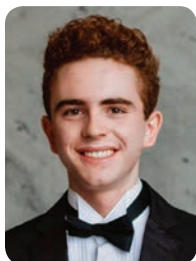
**Panasya (Ferne) Chirachanakul** has been playing piano since she was seven years old. Ever since she was little, she has always admired music and loved performing for her friends and family. Her favorite piano pieces she has ever played over the course of her musical career were "Agent X" by Melody Bober and "Traumerei" by Schumann, because she loves to play jazz and classical pieces. Her piano teacher, Karlyen Tan, NCTM, has influenced her to continue playing the piano throughout the rest of her life. Leading up to her senior year of high school, she has completed AIM (Achievement in Music) level 8 from the Utah Music Teachers Association, nine years in Federation solo festival,

*continued on page 22*

GRAND CUP WINNERS *continued*

and seven years in concerto festival. She received her 75 Point Grand Cup from the National Federation of Music Clubs in May 2023.

As of this year, Ferne has graduated from Corner Canyon High School receiving her Honors Diploma. She was a varsity swimmer who qualified for State and an avid figure skater all four years of high school. She also received the Heisman Scholarship Award due to her involvement in community service, high academic achievements, and sports. Starting this fall, she will be attending the University of Utah majoring in Neuroscience and Environmental Science. Her advice for future pianists is to never give up no matter how hard learning a piece is, because it teaches patience and perseverance.

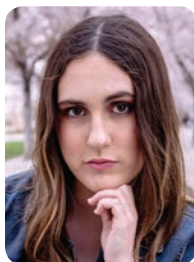


Andrew Taylor Jeppson

When **Andrew Jeppson** was five years old, his mother took him to the Intermountain Suzuki String Institute (ISSI), asking him to listen to the instruments throughout the week and decide if there was one he'd like to play. At the end of the week, he proclaimed, "I like the low notes!" So, cello it was! Andrew happily began cello lessons that fall with Brittany Platt Gardner, and he thrived under her expert instruction from kindergarten until age sixteen. Since 2021, he has studied with the Utah Symphony's acting principal

cellist Matthew Johnson, whose inspiring teaching has pushed him to new heights of musical expression. Andrew enjoyed many summers at ISSI, the camp where cello first captured his heart, and at chamber music camps with the Fry Street Quartet and Aeolus Quartet. In 2021, he was a finalist in the Brimhall Competition at the Dixie State University Cello Festival. He has had masterclasses/coaching with Daniel Rothmuller, Matthew Zalkind, Thomas Landschoot, Anne Francis Bayless, and Ka-Wai Yu.

Andrew has loved making music with his siblings and playing in various ensembles, including Jack Ashton's Young Artist Chamber Players (YACP). He toured Europe with YACP and Sotto Voce Strings last summer, playing for appreciative audiences in six countries and then participating in International Music Week in Barcelona. This year, Andrew performed in All-State Orchestra and in the Side-by-Side Concert with the Utah Symphony. Andrew has enjoyed playing in Skyline High School's Philharmonic for four years, and he had the honor of performing a movement of the Saint-Saëns Cello Concerto No 1 at his school's annual concerto night this spring. Andrew tutors and mentors several younger cello students. He has sung in Skyline's vocal ensembles: Troubadours, Concert Choir and Madrigals. Besides being a dedicated musician, Andrew is an athlete. He ran four years on his high school track and cross-country teams, serving as a varsity captain in 2022. He is a member of National Honor Society and an Eagle Scout. An avid outdoorsman, Andrew has hiked the full 110 miles of the Highline Trail in the Uinta Mountains. After high school graduation this June, he looks forward to serving a 2-year mission for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and then attending college.



Kylie Morris

**Kylie Morris** began taking piano at the age of 4 with Manette Allred. She began learning piano with the Suzuki Method and when she began participating in Federation Festival, she liked that she always had a classical piece ready to go, "Less to learn." Her mom, Carrie Morris began teaching her at the age of 8. She has willingly learned whatever has been put in front of her, but her true passion is making up her own songs. She also loves to sing and play soccer. Kylie is planning on attending Snow College in the fall where she will continue singing, and hopefully playing for fun now that she is not required to memorize any more music.

## VIRGINIA



Priyanka Saravana

**Priyanka Saravana** is the recipient of a 75 point gold cup in Composition. Additionally, she has earned a 45 point gold cup in Piano Solo/Piano Concerto and a 15 point gold cup in American Patriotic and Folk tunes. Priyanka began her music education at the Fredericksburg Yamaha Music School at the age of six. She wrote her first composition in 2014. Since then, she has been chosen by the Yamaha Junior Original Concert Committee to perform her original compositions in eight Fredericksburg Junior Original

Concerts. She has won monetary awards in the Virginia Federation of Music Clubs Junior Composers Contest. She has been active in the Rappahannock Music Society's Jazz Festival since 2015 and the RMS Sonata/Sonatina Festival since 2016 receiving a superior rating in all of the events. In addition to her musical activities, Priyanka plays tennis, belongs to her High School's Battle of the Books, Scholastic Bowl, and FCCLA. She volunteers at a retirement home each week. After graduation from the Yamaha Music Education System courses, Priyanka has studied piano privately at the Fredericksburg Yamaha Music School with Nathalie Steinbach.

## WASHINGTON STATE

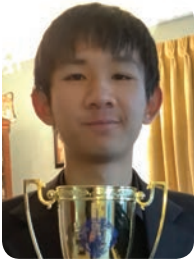


Anna Cheng

**Anna Cheng** has just graduated from Forest Ridge School of the Sacred Heart in Bellevue, WA this June, 2023. She has been learning piano for over 10 years with Mrs. Betty Mak and has participated in the NFMC Festivals since 2013.

Anna has participated in Piano Solos and Concertos, receiving consecutive Superior ratings in all of them. She has received the Grand Cup with Piano Solo and Senior Concerto this year.

Anna has always enjoyed playing piano as well as tennis and is looking forward to continuing both in college.



John Tu Hoang

**John Tu Hoang**, a piano student of John Van Lierop, Jr, earned his Grand Cup this past year, after participating in the Federation Festival held at Seattle Pacific University. He has been a piano student of Mr. Van Lierop for 12 years and started entering the Gold Cup Festival in first grade. In high school John did piano concertos by Beethoven, Mozart, and Schumann in addition to the piano solo events. He will be finishing his senior year at Hazen High School in Renton, Washington, doing the Running Start program.

John participates in his school band playing the saxophone. He also plays with the taiko (vietnamese) drumming group at his church, Our Lady of Lourdes Church in Seattle. John credits his years of piano studies in helping him play better in his school band and church drumming group.

## WISCONSIN

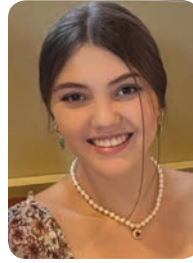


Nolan Boerner

**Nolan Boerner** is a recently graduated senior from the The Prairie School in Wind Point, Wisconsin. He has been playing the cello for eleven years. Nolan was a part of his school's symphonic orchestra, jazz band, and pit orchestra for musicals. Nolan often travels to Milwaukee, where he has been a part of the Milwaukee Youth Symphony Orchestra (MYSO) for 4 years and is currently the principal cellist in the Senior Symphony and a member of the MYSO's flagship quartet. Also in Milwaukee, Nolan is a leading member of the Cello Choir, I Cellisti.

Nolan has competed in the Wisconsin School Music Associations' (WSMA) State Solo and Ensemble competition every year since sixth grade, receiving exemplary recognition three times. He has also participated in the State WSMA Honors Orchestra for the last 5 years, being principal cellist for 3 of those years, most recently in 2022. Nolan was honored to be the winner of the Racine Symphony Orchestra Young Artists' Competition in 2021, the winner of the Turtle Creek Chamber Orchestra Young Artists' Competition in 2022, one of the winners of the Milwaukee Civic Concerto Competition in 2022, and one of the honorable mentions in the MSO Stars of Tomorrow Concerto Competition in 2023.

In his spare time, Nolan can be found busking in downtown Racine on the first Friday of each month playing for all the passersby as well as performing at hired gigs in the greater Racine area. When Nolan is not listening to or practicing the cello, he is often running and has been a State qualifier in Cross Country for the last three seasons and a State qualifier in Track for the 2022 season. In the Fall, Nolan will be attending Vanderbilt University to study Physics and Mathematics. However, music will remain a constant part of his life.



Rose Kachelski

**Rose Kachelski** is a senior at Divine Savior Holy Angels High School in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, and has been studying piano for 14 years. She has participated in the Federation Festival for 13 years, consistently earning superior ratings. Rose also participated in her school choir and handbell choir, further adding to her love of music.

In addition to piano, Rose has excelled in swimming, earning three school records in three years. She is a STEM scholar, a member of the National Honors Society, and writes for her school newspaper. While she plans to continue her academic and athletic success in college, she also hopes to continue pursuing music.



Mirannda Kepplinger

**Mirannda Kepplinger** began studying with Ludmila Anisimov in 2011 at the age of five. She has always had a calling for music and tries to learn as many instruments as she can. The violin, however, started it all. At a very young age, Mirannda started competing in Federation Festival, and has excelled every year since. Outside of the twelve years she has spent growing with Ludmila Anisimov, Mirannda has also been a part of Milwaukee Youth Symphony Orchestra, WSMA State Honors Orchestra (both Middle and High Levels), Tri-M Music Honors Society, Community and School Orchestras, and Pit Orchestra for Sunset Playhouse. She has also received an Exemplary Award for violin at the State Level of WSMA Solo and Ensemble. She also enjoys providing music for weddings, funerals, and other liturgical services. Mirannda is currently a senior Writing Focus at Kettle Moraine School for Arts and Performance, and she hopes to study English and Political Science post-high school.



Michael Kozicki

**Michael Kozicki** is a Senior at East De Pere High School. He has taken piano lessons with Mary Larsen since he was 5 years old. He started participating in the Federation Festival in the 1st grade and never looked back. He loves the variety of music choices and the incentive of these gorgeous trophies. He was born and raised in Green Bay, Wisconsin. He enjoys listening to music, traveling, and rebuilding & restoring his Subaru Impreza project car. His faith is important to him and he volunteers weekly in support of the ministry and his congregation. His attention to detail and creativity are pointing him toward a career in architecture. He will begin that journey as a senior in high school, through the Architectural Apprenticeship program in conjunction with starting his general education classes at NWTC while still in high school.

*continued on page 24*



GRAND CUP WINNERS *continued*

Zoe Li

My name is **Zoe Li**, and I am currently a junior at Brookfield Academy in Wisconsin. I have been playing piano since I was 5 years old, and it is such a big and important part of my life! Music brings me so much joy every day, whether I am practicing a new song or just listening to my favorite pop songs on my phone. I have been a winner in the Wisconsin Federation of Music Clubs State Festival Competition for many years. So being able to acquire the Grand Cup this year was so meaningful to me, and it would be amazing if I could achieve my dream of winning the President's Cup next year! I am so grateful for my piano teachers, Ms. Wendy Dembinski and Mr. Richard Saler, for guiding me through this entire process. I am also very appreciative of my family for always loving me and encouraging me to become the best version of myself. Without them I would not have been able to push myself to work so hard every day. I am also an active artistic swimming athlete as well as an animal lover. When I am not at the piano, you can find me practicing at the pool or volunteering at the humane society.



Strahinja Marinkovic

Madison Symphony Orchestra.

**Strahinja Marinkovic** from Racine Wisconsin has been playing the cello since he was 8 years old and recently graduated as Valedictorian from Case High School. He began taking lessons with Martha Veto at age nine. Strahinja has been participating in the NFMC festivals since 2014 and has received the Grand Cup this year for cello solo with cello concerto combined. He not only earned a Grand Cup, but also 3 Theory Cups. Now, he plans to attend UW Madison to study Electrical Engineering and intends to play in the UW

## WYOMING



Lauren Behar

a lovely warm playing style. She brings the most to every performance and touches the lives of those who listen to her playing.

Lauren recently graduated from Air Academy High School. She was on the Principal's Honor Roll, a National Merit Scholar, AP Scholar and a DECA world championship winner of second place.

Lauren will attend CSU Ft. Collins on a Green & Gold Scholarship where she will major in Bio-engineering.



Ashlee Black

**Ashlee Black** was born in Orem, Utah but has lived most of her life in Colorado Springs. She graduated from Discovery Canyon Campus High School and has made Honor Roll all four years of high school.

Ashlee began piano in the second grade with Jodie Jensen. She has participated in the NFMC Festivals program for eleven years. She has earned Distinction Marks in both piano and music theory. She has won second place in the Pueblo Keyboard Arts Festival and has used her music in her religious faith to bless the lives of others. She is a powerful player with an unbelievable memory and ability to play with speed and agility.

She loves swimming, hanging out with friends, watching TV and loves the contemporary genre of music.

She will attend Brigham Young University in Provo, Utah in the fall with the help of her parents and a SOAR scholarship.



Gabriele Hibbitts

**Gabriele Hibbitts**: I am a Colorado native, born right here in Colorado Springs. I began my piano life in the first grade with Mrs. Jodie Jensen. I have participated in NFMC Festival for the past 12 years playing both ensembles, solos, and concertos. I have received Distinction Marks from the ABRSM exam system and play the viola. I love peaceful, lyrical music. My grandparents love to hear me play and share music with them.

Aside from the piano, I enjoy painting, drawing, writing, running, and going to the gym. I have graduated from Thomas MacLaren School.

I will attend Colorado State University in the fall with the help of my parents and several merit scholarships.



Mason Marcy

**Mason Marcy**: I am a Colorado native, born in Denver. I have lived in Colorado Springs for most of my life. I will graduate from Air Academy High School. I started piano in the first grade with Jodie Jensen. I have participated in the Federation Festival for 12 years. I have played in ensembles and am an avid composer. I have entered the NFMC Junior Composer Competition and won at the state and regional levels. I have participated in the NFMC Festival Program for the past 12 years. I have taken Associated Board Royal Schools of Music exams and attended the Festival for Creative Pianists. I create film scores and have won both state and regional awards as a composer with MTNA as well.

Mason is a fabulous improviser who can play an original improvisation on the spot. He gives of his time and talents to others to ensure they can achieve their composition goals.

My hobbies are, of course playing the piano, working as a piano technician, creating through architecture, blowing things up and using radio-controlled aircraft. I will attend Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University this fall with the help of my parents and an \$84,000 Presidential Merit Scholarship. JK





# Junior Composers Contest

by Joanie Joy Pegram, Chair

With 486 entries, the 2023 NFMC Junior Composers Contest enjoyed a 162% increase compared to last year's 300 compositions. Our wonderful national judge, beloved composer Melody Bober, was impressed with the caliber of our junior composers' work. Kudos to all the teachers coming alongside their students as they seek to develop their compositional skills! Congratulations are also due to all our winners (and their teachers and parents) on the state, regional, and national levels of the contest. I know you will enjoy reading the brief profiles below that give us a glimpse into the interests and accomplishments of our national winners.

I am delighted to see how many juniors entered this year's contest. Since I first began serving as the South Carolina Chair in 2017, I have realized the importance of making people aware of this opportunity. Keep spreading the word that composers as young as five and as old as seniors in high school can enter one of our four divisions based on their age. We would love to see this contest continue to grow.

Other than the compositions, the new online registration system brought the most excitement this year. My deepest thanks go to Jennifer Griffin in NFMC Headquarters for helping us all navigate this new adventure. In addition, I could not have done this without our amazing regional chairs—Nannette Meyette (Northeastern), Shirley Erickson (North Central), Patty Hadley (Western), Skye Garcia (South Central), and Cheryl Poe (Southeastern) as well as all our state chairs who give tirelessly to help our juniors succeed.

**Beginning with the 2024 contest, all state contest deadlines will be February 1.** Please mark this change in any information your state sends out. As always, I am here to help however I am able. I look forward to another great year of seeing our junior composers take the next step in their creative development.

## CLASS 1



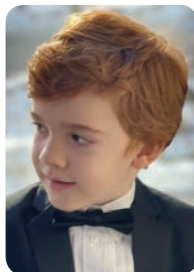
Trevin Ching

### **Trevin Ching** **FIRST PLACE** *California*

**Trevin Ching** is a 3rd grade student. He became very interested in composing his own music on the piano and ukulele when he was 5.

His passion for music continued to develop and at age 7, he started studying piano with Ms. Micah Yui, and at age 8 violin with Dr. Chan Ho Yun at the Colburn Community School. He was selected as a winner at the MTNA Bach Piano Festival branch level in 2022 and 2023. He also won first place in piano solo and duet at the Concours Online Junior Competition in 2022. Trevin started studying music theory with Dr. Keren Schweitzer and started music composition lessons at age 9 with Dr. David Brown. His winning piece, "Jog Night" was his first string quartet and he felt very honored that his piece was performed by the talented musicians from Delirium Musicum.

Along with music, Trevin also enjoys creating his own board games, metro systems, studying world geography, swimming, playing video games and chess. Trevin aspires to become a composer and a game designer.



Arthur Scott

### **Arthur Scott** **SECOND PLACE** *Minnesota*

**Arthur Scott** (7) studies composition with Sarah Miller, piano with Irina Elkina, violin with Lucinda Marvin, and percussion with Robert Adney at MacPhail Center

for Music. Arthur also participates in Minnesota Youth Symphonies and House of Hope Choir

School and studies bagpipe with Michael Breidenbach. In 2022 and 2023, Arthur was awarded the prestigious Gary Sipes piano merit scholarship at MacPhail. In 2022/2023 Arthur won several competitions including Mary West Solo Competition (violin), Carmel International Piano Competition, Minnesota Music Teachers Association Composition (1st prize), and NFMC Junior Composers National Competition (2nd prize). In addition to music, Arthur loves reading, making movies, and classic muscle cars.



Kalkin Ban

### **Kalkin Ban** **HONORABLE MENTION** *Ohio*

**Kalkin Ban**, who turned ten in June 2023, is set to enter sixth grade at EH Greene Intermediate School in Cincinnati, OH. He has been learning piano since 2019 from Dr.

Takako Frautschi at the University of Cincinnati College Conservatory of Music. Thanks to his wonderful teachers and mentors, he has introduced a culture of music appreciation to his decidedly non-musical parents. He enjoys composing music for the piano and is looking forward to composing more complex pieces for his school orchestra, where he plays the violin. Kalkin also enjoys sharing his love for Chinese music, having performed and introduced the guzheng, a plucked zither typical of traditional Chinese music, at more than thirty local performances across the Greater Cincinnati area. He has won multiple music theory and performance trophies from the Ohio Federation of Music Clubs. His other hobbies include playing tennis, sharing random trivia, following the FC Cincinnati soccer team, and reciting the first hundred digits of pi.

*continued on page 26*

# Junior Composers Contest *Continued*



Gloria Reitsema

## **Gloria Reitsema** **HONORABLE MENTION** *Minnesota*

**Gloria Reitsema** is 9 years old and lives in Minneapolis with her dad, mom and 3 siblings. She started playing piano at age 5 with Sharon Kaplan as her teacher.

She has performed in the Minnesota State Honors Concert in 2022 and 2023. She has passed the level 2 piano exam and level 1 theory exam. She especially enjoys fast-paced piano pieces with Spanish sounds.



Alex Gagne

## **Alex Gagne** **INCENTIVE AWARD** *Pennsylvania*

**Alex Gagne** started his piano lessons with Deborah Rodgers of West Chester, Pennsylvania when he was 4 years old. He loves to play around with chords and

improvise on the piano. "The Grand Battle" is the 3rd composition that he has submitted to the Jr. Composers Contest. This year he will enter the 4th grade. At school he is considering adding drum lessons to his piano studies. He hopes to continue learning how to create his own original music.



Yola Svoma

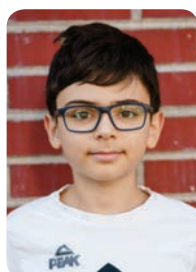
## **Yola Svoma** **INCENTIVE AWARD** *Arizona*

**Yola** has been taking music lessons with Richard Wall since the age of four, originally for piano and now for music theory. Apart from her interest in composing,

Yola found her passion for playing cello thanks to her first cello lessons with Dr. Panagiota Kalantzi. She plays cello for the Metropolitan Youth Symphony in Mesa, AZ and currently takes cello lessons with Thomas Landschoot. Recently she placed first in her division at the Cello Congress

Young Artist Competition in Tucson. Being from a non-musical family, Yola feels fortunate for the many musical performance and competition opportunities in Arizona. The song she composed for the Junior Composers Contest titled "After the Funeral," was created as a score for a zombie attack movie scene she imagined. Yola aspires to be a concert cellist when she grows up. When not working on music Yola also enjoys math, French class and reading.

## CLASS 2



Alejandro Belgique

## **Alejandro Belgique** **FIRST PLACE** *Oregon*

**Alejandro Belgique** is twelve years old, and is a 6th grader at ACCESS Academy. Besides composing, he plays oboe and piano. He has won 1st place in the 2020 OM/

NI competition and the Oregon Federation of Music Clubs' Junior Composers Contest, Class 2, of 2021 and 2023. He was also a winner of the National Federation of Music Clubs' Junior Composers Contest, Western Region. His composition teacher is Michael Johanson, and his piano teacher is Malou Johanson, although he started piano with Monica Ohuchi. His oboe teacher is Karen Wagner. He likes roller coasters, urban planning, Cities: Skylines, Minecraft, Mariokart, LEGO, and K'nex.



Ethan Kim

## **Ethan Kim** **SECOND PLACE** *Michigan*

My name is **Ethan Kim** and I am 11 years old. This was already my 3rd year composing, so I decided to make a piece that was spring like, because spring was

coming up. I wanted to make the beginning a minor, grumpy tone, and later switch it to major like a spring storm just happened. I want to thank my teacher, Mrs. Young, and my mom. I could not have won 2nd place at National without them.



Yagna Brihu

## **Yagna Brihu** **HONORABLE MENTION** *Texas*

**Yagna Brihu** has greatly enjoyed playing and listening to music throughout her whole life. Some of her main accomplishments include receiving two All State

Awards in the piano duet category and one in the violin trio category, getting gold medals in all her theory tests so far, and receiving many ribbons and trophies along the way. She has competed and won in the piano solo, piano duet, vocal solo, vocal duet, violin solo, and violin trio categories so far. Something she really enjoys doing in her free time is composing music and so far, she has composed 5 different songs. Her latest composition, "Dawn of Darkness" features a violin and piano part. She loved composing this piece and hopes to continue composing successfully for a while.



Yashi Brihu

## **Yashi Brihu** **HONORABLE MENTION** *Texas*

**Yashi Brihu** has been doing piano since she was 4 with her twin sister Yagna Brihu. She continues to participate in numerous piano duet and solo competitions.

She has done the TMTA Theory Test since second grade and has won 3 gold and 1 silver. She has participated in the All State Festival for piano solo, duet, vocal solo, violin solo, and violin trio, receiving 4 Outstanding awards and 6 all state awards. Additionally, she takes part in the Sonata Sonatina Baroque Festival, earning superior ratings. In the DMTA Jazz Pop Festival, she acquired the Judges Choice Award. After putting together, a Christmas medley with her sister for the TIMC Winter Holiday Contest, she got the Most Professional Musicians Award. She has composed three piano duets and a large ensemble so far, earning rewards at the national level. She is determined to pursue her passion of music and will continue to compose all her life!





Hadley Ruby Alvarez

## Hadley Ruby Alvarez

**INCENTIVE AWARD**  
*South Carolina*

**Hadley Ruby Alvarez**, age 10, was born in Madison, Wisconsin, and attended preschool in Chicago, Illinois. Hadley is a rising fifth-grade student at

Ashley Hall in Charleston, SC. In addition to her academics, Hadley studies voice, violin, and piano. She has been studying piano for 2 years and music composition for 1 year with teacher Dan McCurry. Her first composition, a piano duet titled "Thunder Day," won the 2023 NPGT Award in the Piano Guild's Composition Contest and received runner-up in the 2023 South Carolina Music Teachers Association's Composition Competition. Additionally, her piece won the NFMC Junior Composers Contest "National Incentive Award" after winning both the Southeast regional and South Carolina state rounds of the contest. Outside of music Hadley enjoys after school sports and clubs, playing with friends, traveling, and family movie nights.



Ethan Vann

## Ethan Vann

**INCENTIVE AWARD**  
*Georgia*

**Ethan Vann**, age 11, is the son of Derek and Stephanie Vann. He has studied piano for the past seven years with his grandmother, Gayle Vann. His is very happy

and proud to have received an Incentive Award for his composition in 2023, "The Thrill of the Chase." Ethan enjoys composing, and entered the Junior Composers Contest for the first time in 2018 at the age of 6. His first composition won Second Place in the Jr. Composers Contest in Georgia, and he has won First or Second Place many times since then in Georgia's contest. Ethan has also participated in both the Solo Event and the Duet Event in Georgia Federation of Music Clubs Festivals, and has earned his 30-point Cup in both these events as well as in Composition. Besides playing the piano and composing, Ethan enjoys hiking and swimming, and camping out with his family and friends.

## CLASS 3



Vito Geraci

## Vito Geraci

**FIRST PLACE**  
*Florida*

**Vito Geraci** was born in Florida in 2007. Vito began playing piano and violin at five, and taught himself, through research, how to write for a full orchestra. He

composed his first piece, "The Tiger March," and received an Honorable Mention by the FPMC. He received this award two additional times for the compositions "Oslo Symphony No. 1" and, "Pearl Harbor". This year he won first place for State (FFMC), Southeast Region, and National (NFMC) for his composition, "Grand Central Station." Vito is a student at North Broward Preparatory School and has reached the highest level, performing as concert master in the advance orchestra and first string in Chamber. The Nord Anglia Schools awarded him in 2019 through 2023 The Outstanding Artistic Achievement and Excellence Awards along with first place, Virtual Young Musician of the Year. In 2021 he won the Eagle Composition with, "Discere, Ducere, Spirare, Amare," and globally a composition titled "Overture No. 5." This year, the Florida Youth Orchestra performed Vito's composition. It is the first time they have performed a Junior Composers composition in 34 years.



Elaina Stuppler

## Elaina Stuppler

**SECOND PLACE**  
*Oregon*

**Elaina Stuppler** is a multi-instrumentalist, vocalist, and composer who performed at the Hollywood Bowl with the LA Philharmonic and Carnegie Hall.

She studied classical piano through the Royal Schools of Music and was in the Jazz Ensemble and Brass Band at the Colburn School. Elaina was selected for the California All-State Honor Band, All-Northwest Honor Band, and is Principal Trombonist of the Portland Youth Conservatory Orchestra. She is also a member

of the Young Composers Project. Her award-winning pieces were played by the Oregon Symphony, Portland Youth Philharmonic, The Metropolitan Youth Symphony, and was chosen by the Seattle Symphony's Dear Humanity Youth Art Festival about climate change. Elaina is a Luna Composition Lab Fellow, created by Pulitzer Prize-Winning composer, Ellen Reid, and Grammy-Nominated Missy Mazzoli where her work will premiere in New York City at Mannes School of Music. Elaina received the U.S. Presidential Award for Outstanding Academic Excellence, works at All Classical Portland/ICAN Radio Station as a youth reporter where she interviewed Itzhak Perlman, Jennifer Higdon, and "Weird Al" Yankovic.



Skye Neal

## Skye Neal

**THIRD PLACE**  
**(PIERSON AWARD)**  
*Oregon*

**Skye Neal** is a 13-year-old composer and musician from Portland, Oregon. She has studied composition with Mátti Kovler since

2017 and participated in Fear No Music's Young Composers Project for the past five years. She also plays violin, piano, and sings with the Pacific Youth Choir. Her pieces have won recognition by Music Teachers National Association, Oregon Music Education Association, National Federation of Music Clubs, and Tribeca New Music contests.

In 2020, she was a guest on All Classical Portland's radio broadcast "On Deck With Young Musicians" and was the youngest composer to be featured on the program. Her pieces have been performed by Fear No Music, Portland Youth String Ensemble, Metropolitan Youth Symphony, Tualatin High School string orchestra, Lake Oswego Middle School string orchestra, and Pacific Youth Choir's middle school girlchoir. Outside of music Skye enjoys birding, rowing, and fencing.

*continued on page 28*

# Junior Composers Contest *Continued*



James Liang

## **James Liang** **HONORABLE MENTION** *Texas*

**James Liang** is from McNeil high school and is in 9th grade. He started studying piano at the age of four and drum set at the age of seven. From 2015 to 2019, James received All State Winner awards for drum set and snare drum and in 2017, he won the All State Winner on piano for the Texas Federation of Music Clubs' festivals. In 2022, James won 2nd place in the Texas Music Teachers Association (TMTA) Original Composition contest. In the same year, he won NFMC national Junior Composers Contest Class 3 incentive award. He is also the only winner in the Junior category in MTNA Texas composition competition and advanced to the south division competition in 2022. In 2023, He is NFMC Junior Composers Contest Class 3 Texas winner and South-Central Region winner.

At Pearson Ranch middle school, James had consistently placed as the first chair in the percussion section of the Wind Ensemble. In 2021, James was a Round Rock Band Classic Champion and received Outstanding Soloist at the solo contest. James was also the first chair in percussion section in the Region Band in 2021.



Caleb Carothers

## **Caleb Carothers** **INCENTIVE AWARD** *Michigan*

Hi! I'm **Caleb Carothers**, a fifteen-year-old high school sophomore from near Detroit, Michigan. I have taken piano lessons for eight years and have participated in both NFMC piano competitions and MMTA SAT piano testing. This past spring I graduated from Level 12, the highest tier of the SAT program. I took AP Music Theory this year and greatly enjoyed that as well.

I began composing music six years ago at the suggestion of my piano teacher, and instantly fell in love with the subject. Originally writing

only piano solos, I have since used DAWs and notation software to expand my orchestrations beyond the keyboard. For the past three years, I have also taken composition lessons, which have increased both the quality of my music and the regularity with which I compose.

This is the first composition competition I have entered, and I am very grateful to my teachers Janice Derian and David Rega for their help and support. I cannot wait to participate in more similar events in the future!



William Feng

## **William Feng** **INCENTIVE AWARD** *Minnesota*

**William Feng** is a fourteen-year-old rising ninth grader at Wayzata High School. He has studied piano for 8 years, viola for 6 years, and composition for 4 years. As a pianist, William just had his solo piano concert debut in July. He has participated in the MacPhail Concerto & Aria Competition three times, a winner in 2022 and 2020, and a finalist in 2019. He was a finalist in the Bruce P. Carlson Student Scholarship Schubert Club Competition in 2023. William is an active composer. He was awarded the Minnesota Sinfonia Young Composer Award in 2020. He is a three-time winner in the National Federation of Music Clubs Junior Composers State Contest, and in the North Central Region Junior Composers Contest. His piece "Symphony no.1 in A-flat Major I. Andante Pastorale" received an incentive award in the national competition in 2023. William previously won 2nd place in the national competition in 2022. He is also a four-time winner in the MMTA Junior composers contest (2020 ~ 2023).



Albert Wen

## **Albert Wen** **INCENTIVE AWARD** *Pennsylvania*

**Albert Wen**, 15, started piano lessons with a neighborhood teacher around 2014. Since 2018, he has been studying piano with a gifted teacher

Darlene Ziegler. Mrs. Ziegler composes music occasionally and has helped with his theory and composition. In her studio, she regularly holds group lessons where several kids critique each other's performances. She has all her students participate in music festivals and many types of annual events such as piano guild audition. Albert has participated in AAA, Federation Festival, Dorothy Sutton, and studio recitals all year long. He is also an active member of the Allentown Music Club's Young Musician Club and participates in regular club activities.

At school, he actively participates in orchestras playing violin for many years. He enjoys video game music and electronic music. He loves discussing musical ideas with his composer sister Sophie (A past winner of NFMC Junior Composers Contest), on a daily basis. Albert has been arranging and composing music since 2016. Recently he has won PMEA Composition Competition in 2020, PFMC Junior Composers Contest in 2023, and PFMC Easton PA Regional Jr. Piano Solo Competition in 2023. He has arranged pieces for celebrating the Chinese moon festival and other occasions, or just for fun.

## CLASS 4



Zachary Davies

## **Zachary Davies** **FIRST PLACE** *Idaho*

**Zachary Davies** is from Eagle, Idaho. He began piano lessons at five years old and instantly fell in love with it. He currently takes from Juli Draney. Zach has always been fascinated with writing music and finished his first composition in 2021, winning the state-level MTNA Composition Senior Division. He won the same competition the next year with an eight-part choral piece and received an honorable mention at the regional level. Zach also enjoys hiking, biking, and ultimate frisbee. He will be attending BYU Provo as a Music Composition major this fall.





**Stephen Elsinger**  
**SECOND PLACE**  
Minnesota

**Stephen Elsinger** is an 18-year-old musician and composer from Lakeville, Minnesota. For the last six years, Stephen has studied composition at *MacPhail Center for Music* under Dr.

Sarah Miller, however following his graduation from the *Academy of Holy Angels* in Richfield, he is now transitioning to studying composition at the *University of Michigan Ann Arbor*. In Stephen's free time, he produces electronic music (in addition to notated music) and is often out with friends. Stephen has made it his goal to become a versatile artist, creating music of all styles and techniques as he prepares for a successful career in music creation.



**Robert Einhorn**  
**WILSON OUTSTANDING PIANO COMPOSITION**  
Ohio

My name is **Robert Einhorn**, and I am 16 years old. I began piano lessons when I was 9, and started composing when I was 10. On the

side, I play violin in the Oakwood High School Symphony Orchestra. When I first started composing it was mostly me just fiddling around on the piano until I found something I liked. I would play certain motifs over and over again while improvising other passages in-between. It wasn't for a couple of years that I started actually writing music down, and even then, it was mostly just memorizing things I improvised on the piano. I used both pen-and-paper to write, as well as a notation software called "*Noteflight*", although now I use a software called "*Musescore*". I am a perfectionist, so I haven't completed and written down very many pieces, but I have started writing countless pieces, ranging from solo piano to small orchestral works. My favorite kinds of pieces to write are polyphonic works emphasizing the development of small motivic phrases (like Bach or Brahms). Ironically, the piece I wrote for this

competition is not very emblematic of this writing style; I actually wrote it because I didn't have time to finish another piece I was working on for the contest.



William Zhang

**William Zhang**  
**OUTSTANDING STRINGS AWARD**  
California

My name is **William Zhang** and I am from the San Francisco Bay Area in California. I have been composing for a few years and enjoy it as an expressive outlet for both my ideas and emotions. I also play the Clarinet in my school's orchestra, and I enjoy math, science, and playing soccer with friends outside of music.



Vaughn Hale

**Vaughn Hale**  
**HONORABLE MENTION**  
Texas

**Vaughn Hale**, 16, is a violinist, pianist, composer, and conductor from Booker T. Washington High School for the Performing and Visual Arts in

Dallas, TX. He fell in love with composition at Booker T. Washington while studying with Mr. Christian Parkess. Vaughn has explored various forms, instrumentations, and genres, including music for violin, piano, voice, chamber ensemble, and orchestra, as well as film and video game music. He recently had the opportunity to conduct Mozart's 40th symphony with the varsity orchestra at his school under the mentorship of Dr. Michael Jacko. He studies violin with Eun-Song Koh and piano with Patrice Koenig. Vaughn is a proud member of the top Greater Dallas Youth Orchestra ensemble and has enjoyed spending this summer studying at the Meadowmount School of Music with Ivan Zenaty.



Harrison Kessler-Stein

**Harrison Kessler-Stein**  
**INCENTIVE AWARD**  
New Jersey

**Harrison Kessler-Stein** started studying piano at the age of six. He participated in the NFMF Federation Festival Auditions for

several years, earning Superior ratings. Harrison won 1st place in the Eric Steiner Original Composition Competition, and won a College Music Scholarship from MEA-NJ. Discovering the vast repertoire of video game music sparked a keen interest in transcribing orchestral recordings into complex piano arrangements. He recently graduated from the DCL Stem Academy, majoring in Computer Science. *The Attack of Grimfall*, which won the Incentive Award for NFMF National level, is the theme music for the evil villain in Harrison's own video game "*Brownie's Quest*." Harrison is attending Stevens Institute of Technology this fall. He will be entering the Music and Technology program where he can intertwine his skills of composing, playing piano and coding to create video games and musical soundtracks for them.



Rachel Lane

**Rachel Lane**  
**INCENTIVE AWARD**  
South Carolina

**Rachel Lane**, age 17, lives in Hanahan, South Carolina. She has been studying piano for 10 years under the direction of Dan McCurry. From the moment her family

got their first piano, a mid-century Wurlitzer spinet, she was improvising her own tunes. At age 13, Rachel completed her first composition, "*Kitchen Waltz*," a piano and violin duet that portrays a grandma and grandpa dancing in the kitchen to the radio in the 1940's. In 2020, 2021, and 2022 she composed Sonata-styled solo piano compositions, "*Rush Hour Swing*," "*When Monsters Hunt*," and "*CaféAmericano*," winning the Charleston Sonata Festival's Composition Competition all three years. "*CaféAmericano*" also awarded Rachel scholarship money from

*continued on page 30*

## Junior Composers Contest *Continued*

Charleston Music Club (Music Innovation Scholarship), NFMJ Junior Composers Competition (National Incentive Winner), and Brevard Merit Scholarship, which has helped her attend the 2023 Brevard Summer Music Institute for composition. Rachel is a very active composer who has seen her compositions receive recognition in additional competitions such as the MTNA Composition Competition (South Carolina Junior Composition Winner in 2019 and 2020), Piano Explorer Magazine Contest (3rd place for 11 & Older Division in 2021), and SCMTA Composition Competition (2022 Senior Solo Winner and Duet-Quartet Runner-up, and 2023 Senior Duet-Quartet Winner and Solo Runner-up). She has even composed a theme song for her friend's computer avatar. Rachel also participates in piano competitions, masterclasses, and summer camps including the South Carolina Governor's School Academy Summer Program under the direction of Dr. Stephen Taylor, the Gaillard Jazz Camp under the direction of Grammy Award-winning musician Charlton Singleton, and summer jazz sessions with Joe Clark. When Rachel is not playing piano or composing, she is either drawing or learning to cook and bake.



Ivan Post

### Ivan Post INCENTIVE AWARD *Utah*

Ivan Post is a cellist who has been composing and arranging music since he was 9 years old, winning his school's music

composition contest in the 4th and 6th grades.

For the last 2 years, he has played the cello in the Utah Youth Symphony Orchestra and has been part of the Utah Youth Orchestra and Ensembles (UYO&E) Young Composers Program under the direction of composer Devin Maxwell. Ivan's winning piece, "Danza Demente" was performed at the Utah Arts Festival last June, and his latest orchestral piece "The Chase" was recently performed by members of the UYO&E at a concert in May 2023. His arrangement of Joe Hisaishi's "Merry-Go-Round of Life" for piano and string orchestra was also performed by the Waterford Upper School Orchestra earlier this year. Ivan plans on continuing to write music in the Young Composers Project this upcoming school year.



Ryan Qiu

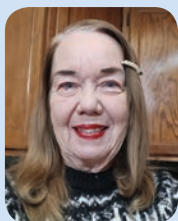
### Ryan Qiu INCENTIVE AWARD *Texas*

Ryan W. Qiu is a rising senior attending William P. Clements High School in Sugar Land, Texas.

With ten years of piano and six years of violin training, he is currently a

member of the Houston Youth Symphony's top orchestra and his school's varsity orchestra.

Introduced to jazz by his piano teacher Ms. Helen Tan during his middle school years, Ryan developed a passion for creating music. After winning First Place at the Houston Forum Jazz Piano Festival in 2022, he began recording his improvisations and performing them for various occasions. He taught himself harmony, counterpoint, and scoring techniques employed by studying scores from renowned composers like Ravel and Prokofiev. He had an original piece premiered by his school orchestra. He also received competitive merit scholarships for summer programs at Interlochen and the Brevard Music Institute for composition. In his spare time, he enjoys sleeping. In the future, he plans to continue composing alongside his studies in college. **JK**



## NATIONAL MUSIC WEEK ESSAY CONTEST

By Gloria Lien, *Chair*

For students in grades 7-12, give some time and thought to writing an essay on  
***"Music. . .is yours, mine, and ours"***

The deadline is **January 10th** and should be 500 words maximum. It needs to be typed, with entrant's name and current year's theme typed at the top of the first page.

The award is \$75 and goes to a student from each state. We need your jpg photo with the application form. One needs to upload to the NFMJ website: **[www.nfmc-music.org](http://www.nfmc-music.org)**

The form online is AR 13-1, which has details about writing with continuity of thought, completeness of application, and where to send it.

*We'd love to hear/see/read your thoughts.*





# Composers Institute

by Pat Steege,  
*Composers Institute Board of Directors*

## "THIS CAMP IS WHERE I FELL IN LOVE WITH MUSIC"

**WHAT:** Junior Composers Institute and Junior Composers Studio residential programs

**WHEN:** July 9-22, 2023

**WHERE:** University of Wisconsin-River Falls  
(Music and Dorm Facilities)

**WHO:** 14 music composition students ages 14-20

This article will be a bit different from what I usually submit. I want you to appreciate what I noticed this summer more than any other...the return of students into faculty and administrative positions. Let's hear what three young staff members said about this experience.

**Becca Baker Farmer** (JC Studio administrator) In July '23 I went to JCI for the fifth year in a row, second time as an administrator. I am so grateful to be surrounded by fantastic young composers and I always leave feeling inspired and rejuvenated.

**Mary Kate Hines** (Chief Administrator, counselor and herder of cats) I first started attending JCI in 2011. Over the years I not only grew in my compositional skills, but also my analytical, literacy, and time management skills while making lifelong friendships along the way. Now, as I return each year as a staff member, I love watching today's campers develop their skills--musically and personally--just as I did. This camp is where I fell in love with music, and I am so fortunate that I get to help develop these students in the same way. These kids make me believe in a brighter future.

**Jacob Beranek** (JCI composer-in-residence) JCI was a foundational place in my musical development. For four summers (ages 13-16), I learned how to write efficiently under pressure, communicate with my fellow musicians, push the envelope, rehearse effectively with just barely enough time...and live in a college dorm! Now to return as the guest composer in 2023 was absolutely surreal. If I had told my fourteen-year-old self that in ten years I'd be coming back to teach, I couldn't have imagined it! It was the greatest pleasure to teach alongside the faculty that helped mold me as a composer and to work with the next generation of bright, eager composers, giving back to them what I learned when I was in their shoes not too long ago. I am so very grateful for the opportunity.

Pat says: As an older Board member who has experienced Composers Institute from many angles since 2007, I am delighted that the future of American music is in youthful and skillful hands. I extend many heartfelt thanks to all who have given generously to these students. **JK**



Swim party  
July 15, 2023



JCI Final Salon  
July 15, 2023



Left: Happy student with Riverside Winds during reading of his work  
July 16, 2023

Right: Riverside Winds  
(3 in Center holding instruments)  
With Dr. Sarah Miller  
and composer students  
after professional  
readings of their new  
compositions  
July 16, 2023



Left: Students' #1 favorite activity: composing  
July 15, 2023

Right: Students' 2nd favorite activity:  
spending time with like-minded friends  
July 16, 2023



Left: Students' 3rd favorite activity:  
performing compositions together.  
Randall Davidson with students at  
JCI Final Salon.  
July 15, 2023







# NPMC DANCE AWARDS

by Nicholas Bradley Gray, *Chair*

The NPMC Dance Awards are designed to promote the art of dance in America by giving students the opportunity to win scholarship prizes to further their dance training in various genres and disciplines. There are two levels of competition:

- Junior I: 11-14 years of age
- Junior II: 15-18 years of age

Awards from the Agnes Fowler Endowment are:

- Junior I: Ballet I: First Place - \$200
- Junior I: Ballet I: Second Place - \$100
- Junior I: Theater Dance I: First Place - \$200
- Junior I: Theater Dance I: Second Place - \$100
- Junior II: Ballet II: First Place - \$400
- Junior II: Ballet II: Second Place - \$200
- Junior II: Theater Dance II: First Place - \$400
- Junior II: Theater Dance II: Second Place - \$200

## Junior I: Theater Dance I Winners



### 1st Place Cosette Alomia, 11

*Student of Mrs. Nicole Carpenito,  
Winter Garden, FL*

**Cosette Alomia** lived in Lehi, Utah where she had the opportunity to train at MOVE studio under the direction of Chere Emery from 3 until 6 years of age. She joined her first competitive dance team at the age of 4 and immediately fell in love with being on the stage and learning at conventions. She earned her

first scholarship at a Break the Floor Productions convention at the age of 4 and from that point on wanted to attend every convention she could because she loved the idea of learning from so many different teachers and instructors. Cosette moved to Winter Garden, FL at the age of 8 and from there continued her training at Central Florida Dance Center under the direction of Nicole Carpenito where she is still currently training. She fell in love with ballet as she studied with Aretuza Garner and Sonia Jean and has participated in many ballet intensives to help further her technique and progression. Although Cosette loves all types of dance, her favorite style is Contemporary and she loves the emotion and intensity that this style pushes her to bring out on stage. Cosette has been recognized for her efforts in dance by receiving Outstanding Dancer at NYCDA where she has the opportunity to attend the Outstanding Dancer Experience in New York City and she is looking forward to all the knowledge she will gain from these experiences. Her goal is to one day share her love and passion for dance with the world through her

own choreography and through teaching other dancers. Cosette believes that when the dance community has positive mentors and role models, it encourages and uplifts others to accomplish skills that they might otherwise not see in themselves.



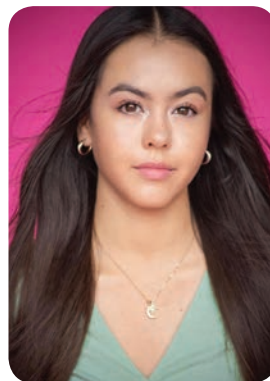
### 2nd Place Lilliana Stewart, 12

*Student of Hayley Stewart, Lakeland FL*

**Lilliana Stewart** is a student of Highland School of Dance in Lakeland, FL. Born October 22, 2010, Lilly has been dancing since she was 2 years old. Her dance training includes ballet, tap, jazz, modern, acrobatics, hip hop, and musical theater. She has attended many workshops and conventions including FDM, MODAS, Orlando Ballet School, Cecchetti Council

of America, and Broadway Beginnings. She has attended the STEPS Youth Intensive for the past two summers in New York City. She is also an equestrian student at Mainstone Riding Academy. She has won many awards and scholarships including the title of Florida Dance Masters' Mini Miss Dance (2018) and Junior Miss Dance (2022).

## Junior II: Theater Dance II Winners



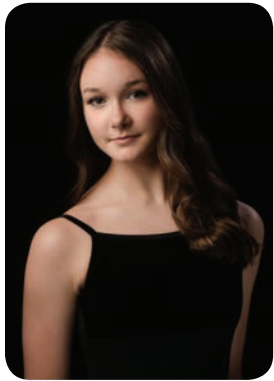
### 1st Place Isabelle Alomia, 17

*Student of Mrs. Nicole Carpenito, Winter Garden, FL*

**Isabelle's** love of dance began at the age of 4 when she stepped into her first dance class. She immediately loved the feel of training in a classroom and being able to perform on stage. As much as she loved it, her mother took her out when she was 5 years old because she did not want her to feel like she was forced to do something if it was not her choice. That whole year she

begged to go back and when her mom signed her up at her new studio, that is when her passion exploded. Isabelle lived in Lehi, Utah for the first 13 years where she trained at various studios including MOVE Dance Studio, The Dance Club, and several dance intensives at the world-renowned Center Stage Performing Arts. She moved to Winter Garden, FL during the middle of her 8th grade year where she immediately started training at Central Florida Dance Center and is still currently training there under the direction of Nicole Carpenito. During her almost 5 years at Central Florida Dance Center, she has had the opportunity to work and train from instructors and award-winning choreographers from all over

the nation including: Justin Pham, Kyle Molter, Chase Hudson, Shauna Zambelli and many more. Isabelle's senior year has not been without challenges and she has let her passion for dance and her connection to music help her rise above so many of the challenges and disappointments she has faced. She will be attending Brigham Young University starting this Fall 2023 where she will major in Business and soon after she hopes to be able to open up her own dance studio so that she can help dancers of all capabilities grow and develop a passion for dance in their lives and realize their own potential.



## 2nd Place Rhys Johnson, 15

*Student of Vlada Kysselova, Piedmont, SC*

**Rhys Johnson** is a rising junior at Johnson Academy in Piedmont, SC. With straight A's, a weighted GPA of 5.25, and 47 Dual Enrollment credits so far, she has earned enough to graduate early, and has been accepted to 12 colleges – including Dance BFA/BAs at Dean College, University of Utah, and the University of South Carolina Honors College. She has also been

accepted to prestigious programs at Baylor, Butler, Excelsior, Fordham, Furman, Indiana University Bloomington, Liberty, Southern Methodist University, and Texas Christian University. Not yet ready to leave home, she has decided to defer those offers in order to continue training at her local studio. She could easily graduate from HS simultaneously with a BS degree in Psychology. She began dancing at International Ballet Academy in Greenville, SC in 2012 at the age of 5 under the tutelage of Lena Forster, followed by Juliana Jordan, Liz Blackwood, and Joshua Williams. Now in her 11th year, she enjoys training in Level 4B with Vlada Kysselova, Victoria Yanchuck, Irina Ushakova, Uriah Boyd, and Carissa Kubitz. She was invited to become an IB Trainee in 2020 and a Company member in 2021, and has been cast in 9 consecutive seasons of The Nutcracker – with roles including “Baby Mouse”, “Angel”, “Soldier”, “Polichinelle”, “Party Girl”, “Cupid” (en pointe), “Big Mouse”, “Waltz”, “Snow” (from age 14), and her dream role of “Arabian Divertissement” (from age 15). She has also performed in Passport to Dance: Swan Lake “Fiancées”; La Sylphide: “Wedding Guest” and “Sylph”; Greenwood Performing Arts Center's Nutcracker Tea: “Waltz”; Greenville Symphony Orchestra's Holiday at Peace: “Waltz”; IB's Nutcracker Tea: “Waltz”; From Ballet to Broadway: La Fille Mal Gardée-Act 1 “Basket dance”, “Snowstorm Waltz”, and “Enter the Golden Age”; Giselle 2022: “Waltz”, “Peasant”, and “Wilis”; L'Automn “Tarantella”, La Bayadere's “Drum Dance”, and Tracy Vogt's “Mind on the Wind”; Colors of Spring: La Fille “Basket Dance” and The Day the Crayons Quit: “Peach Crayon”; a professional film called The Day the Crayons Quit: “Peach Crayon” (for public distribution to Greenville County Library System's Storytime Ballet during COVID); and L'Automne: Coppelia “Waltz of the Hours”. She was previously cast in IBA Studio Performance Group's Giselle 2020; Stravinsky's Pulcinella; Don Quixote; Peter & the Wolf; Coppelia “Floppy Doll”; Swan Lake “Little Swan”; Sleeping Beauty; and Giselle 2015. In addition, she has appeared in IB's End of the Year Demos for Ballet Technique/Pointe, Variations, and Contemporary showcases since April 2013. She will also perform as a special guest artist at IB's Pre-Ballet Demo: Talisman Variation Rhys currently serves as Treasurer of the National Honor Society of Dance Arts (NHSDA). She earned enough points for original induction into the Junior Chapter in May 2020 and Secondary Chapter in 2022. They have completed outreach projects within IB as well as fundraising for the after-

school program at Pleasant Valley Connection community center. She participated in MindLeaps, a virtual discussion/demonstration with Tracy Vogt's students in Mauritania in 2021. Later that year, she appeared in a Vita Vibe Barre video shoot. Rhys also served as an IBA Summer Camp volunteer, helping with younger children as she performed in Sleeping Beauty 2018 and Snow White (“Evil Queen Grimhilde”) in 2017. She also spends multiple weeks every year training at summer intensives around the country: Oklahoma City Ballet (Oklahoma City, OK) with a year-round offer, and Next Generation Ballet (Tampa, FL) with a Trainee offer in 2022; Orlando Ballet (Orlando, FL) with a year-round offer in 2021; Chautauqua School of Dance (Chautauqua, NY) in 2019 and virtually in 2020; and International Ballet (Greenville, SC) from 2017-2020. This coming June-July, she will attend the Tiler Peck summer intensive at California Dance Theatre (Ventura County, CA) and Sacramento Ballet (Sacramento, CA) on a Merit scholarship. She has also been named a Top scholarship recipient from the Dancing Angels Foundation in both 2022 and 2023. In addition to 20+ hours/week in the studio, Rhys is an avid reader and an advanced piano student, taking lessons and performing with Gary Mudre since 2015. She is also a founding member of the French Club at Kepler, and enjoys learning that foreign language along with an interest in Egyptology. As part of their homeschool curriculum, she and her family also travel extensively – to 45 states, 22 countries, and 4 continents so far. She hopes to meet her goal of exploring all 50 states before graduation.

## Adjudicator: Claudia Rhett

**Claudia Rhett** is from Nashville, Tennessee and attended summer intensives on scholarship at the School of American Ballet, Pacific Northwest Ballet and The Chautauqua Institution. As an Apprentice at Chautauqua, she performed with Nashville Ballet and Charlotte Ballet and was coached by Patricia McBride for the role of the Dark Angel in Balanchine's Serenade. Claudia attended Indiana University Ballet Theatre on scholarship where she trained under Christian Claessens, Sasha Janes, Carla Körbes, Kyra Nichols, Michael Vernon, and Sarah Wroth. She graduated in 2020 with Distinction, earning a Bachelor of Science in Ballet with an Outside Field in Business Studies. She was also a member of IU's Hutton Honors College and a teacher for the IU Pre-College Ballet Program. Her most notable performances while at IU were soloist and principal roles in George Balanchine's “Walpurgisnacht”, Martha Graham's “Diversion of Angels”, Mark Morris's “Sandpaper Ballet”, Antony Tudor's “Dark Elegies”, and Twyla Tharp's “Deuce Coupe”, as well as new works by Sasha Janes. Claudia joined Grand Rapids Ballet as an Apprentice in 2020 and has since performed in the corps de ballet as well as ‘Coffee’ in “The Nutcracker”, and the Dark Angel in George Balanchine's “Serenade.” She was recently promoted to Company Dancer for the 21-22 season. JK



**Visit [nfmcmusic.org](https://nfmcmusic.org)**  
for all the latest NPMC news,  
events and awards.



## Lana M. Bailey Piano Concerto Award

by Dee Blaser, Chair

The Lana M. Bailey Piano Concerto Award honors past NFMF President Lana Bailey 2007-2011. It is for High School graduating Seniors who have been accepted to a Music School or Conservatory to continue their study of music.

The 2023 winner of \$1,000 is Ian Cannon of Texas. Ian's winning performance was Mozart's "Concerto No. 20, K466 in d minor."

Second place of \$500 was awarded to Spencer McKee of Florida playing Rachmaninoff "Concerto Opus 18 in c minor."

Please enjoy pictures and bios of these winners.



**Ian Cannon**  
**First Place**  
Texas

Ian Cannon graduated from Dulles High School in Sugar Land, TX and has been passionate about music in varying forms since he was young. Ian has explored playing many instruments including the flute, guitar, euphonium, voice, and bass guitar; however, he predominantly focuses on percussion instruments and, most notably, piano. Ian played percussion,

celeste, and piano with the Houston Youth Symphony and served as principal timpanist on Beethoven's "Die Geshopfe des Prometheus, Op. 43" with the River Oaks Chamber Orchestra. In 2023 he was also selected as a Texas All-State Percussionist and performed with the percussion ensemble at the All-State Festival in San Antonio.

Ian has studied piano performance since the age of 8 and is planning to study in Italy for music. He has been increasingly active in competitions

and judged performances, at both state and national levels. He has won 1st place at the Annual Texas Federation of Music Clubs Competition in San Marcos, TX six times since 2015. In 2022 Ian was selected as a finalist in the Claudette Sorel Piano Competition and performed in Fredonia, NY where he earned the Audience Choice Award.

Ian served as a piano instructor at a summer workshop for the Faith2Form Music Foundation, a non-profit performing arts organization founded by recording artist and professional Hammond organist Vel Lewis.



**Spencer McKee**  
**Second Place**  
Florida

Spencer McKee recently graduated from Nassau County Florida Virtual School. Since beginning formal piano study at age 4 with his mother, Mary Watanabe McKee, Spencer has participated in the NFMF Federation Festival every year. He completed his Federation Festival participation this year with 14 consecutive superior ratings in piano solo, a 90-point cup in piano solo, 45-point cups in concerto and theory, and a 30-point cup in piano duet.

His awards in 2023 include first place in the Palm Beach Atlantic Young Artists Piano Competition, and at the Florida State Junior Festival Convention, the Federation Cup Senior Concerto Award and the Betty Najarian Award for American Patriotic and Folk Song Advanced Class.

Spencer enjoys playing for churches, care facilities and for social events. He has played benefit recitals, raising over \$2,500 for the World Central Kitchen in support of Ukraine. He will be attending the Blair School of Music at Vanderbilt University in the fall. JK

## Lana M. Bailey Piano Concerto Award

**Are you a high school senior who will be majoring in music next year at a college, university or conservatory?** Check out the Lana M. Bailey Piano Concerto Award forms JR 20-1 and JR 20-2 to find the rules and application for this \$1,500 annual award (\$500 2nd Place). The competition has a deadline date of **May 1** so polish your performance and upload your video recording!

**First or last movement from one of the Senior Class Piano Concertos in the 2020-24 Federation Festivals Bulletin.**



Lana Bailey





## Martha Marcks Mack Junior Vocal Award

by Kristin Ivers, Chair

The Martha Marcks Mack Junior Vocal Award was established in 2013 to honor Martha Marcks Mack of Kuhnsville, PA. The award is given each year to a deserving and talented singer in High School grades 10, 11, & 12 for the purpose of further musical study. The goal of this award is to encourage young singers toward a musical career.

We had 10 applicants this year from Texas, Minnesota, North Carolina, Ohio, Tennessee, New Jersey, Georgia, Pennsylvania, and 2 from Missouri.

**1st place: Ella Vaughn**, graduating senior, student of Karl Resnik, Cincinnati, OH

**2nd place: Lydia Hall**, graduating senior, student of Bonnie Hall, Williamsport, PA

**3rd place: Charles Speake**, graduating senior, student of Jane Munson-Berg, Nixa, MO

Judges for the event were Leah Ann Anderson, Lindsborg, KS. and Dr. Mark Johnson, Oklahoma City, OK.

Leah Ann is a life-long music educator, choral director, and soprano soloist. She mentored and influenced high school and college vocalists and choral groups for 35+ years.

Dr. Johnson maintains a vocal studio and is a regular performer in both opera and musical theatre, as well as singing tenor in the professional choral group Tactus.



**Ella Vaughn**

**First Place**

Ohio

**Ella Vaughn** is 18 years old and a Senior at Walnut Hills High School in Cincinnati, Ohio. She is a student of Karl Resnik. She began her singing journey when she was 9, thanks to serendipity or tragedy depending on how you look at it. Ella badly broke her wrist in a unicycle accident at circus camp which prevented her from piano and guitar lessons for close to a year, so she started voice lessons

and has not looked back. Singing is a major part of Ella's life—she regularly performs at her school in musical theater productions and at community events, she attends vocal institutes/camps in the summer, she is in multiple choirs, participates in vocal competitions several times a year, and has been studying opera for three years in a high school opera training program.

*continued on page 36*

## Martha Marcks Mack JUNIOR VOCAL AWARD



1<sup>st</sup> Place \$1500, 2<sup>nd</sup> Place \$1000, 3<sup>rd</sup> Place \$500

This is an annual award, given to a deserving and talented singer in High School grades 10, 11, & 12, for the purpose of further musical study. The goal of this award is to encourage young singers toward a musical career. Check out [nfmc-music.org](http://nfmc-music.org), Competitions and Awards, Jr. Division, forms JR 21-1 & JR 21-2. This competition has a **March 1st, 2024** deadline so put those finishing touches on your performance and prepare your videos! Contact Kristin Ivers, National Chair. [kivers210@gmail.com](mailto:kivers210@gmail.com)

## Martha Marcks Mack Junior Vocal Award *continued*



**Lydia Hall**  
**Second Place**  
*Pennsylvania*

**Lydia Hall** is a 2023 graduate of Williamsport Area High School in Williamsport, Pennsylvania. She is a student of Bonnie Hall. Lydia has been involved in performing arts her entire life, participating in choir, band, theater, and film. Her love for performance began in musical theatre, participating in “Into the Woods” as the Witch, “Mary Poppins” as Mary Poppins and “Beauty and the Beast” as Belle. She has been

studying classical voice, under the tutelage of Bonnie Hall, for four years and loves it! She is a two-time PMEA All-State vocal participant, as well as a member of Williamsport Chamber Choir and Orchestra. In addition to singing, Lydia is a folk music composer, and is proficient on the clarinet, guitar, mandolin, Appalachian dulcimer, and the lyre harp. Lydia spends her free time doing conservation work, hiking, backpacking, camping, hunting, and fishing.

This summer Lydia will be attending the Brevard Music Institute and, after a music-filled gap year, plans to pursue a double major in Vocal performance and Environmental Studies.



**Charles Speake**  
**Third Place**  
*Missouri*

**Charles Speake** is a Senior at Nixa High School, Nixa, Missouri. He has studied voice under Jane Munson-Berg, Springfield, MO for the last four years and is under the direction of Daniel Gutierrez. He competed in the local FMC four years with Superior ratings each year. He plans to compete at the Missouri State FMC in May of this year representing his local chapter. He advanced to the semi-finals of the Regional NATS Central

Division competition in 2022 and 2023. In 2022 he was awarded the top Male Vocalist at the Missouri State University Invitational Honor Festival. Charles has been a member of the Nixa Chamber Choir for three years. He has been a member of the Missouri All District Choir four years, and the Missouri All State Choir two years. He has received gold ratings all four years at District Solo/Ensemble contest for solos and ensembles, as well as gold ratings three years at State Solo/Ensemble contest. This year's State Solo/Ensemble contest has yet to take place. Charles has also studied piano for twelve years, and plays the tuba, euphonium, and trombone. He is an active member of the Nixa Thespian Troupe and received a Superior rating for Vocal Solo at the Missouri State Thespian Conference this year. Charles' career aspirations are to perform opera and specifically perform with the Metropolitan Opera. He has committed to attend Drake University this Fall and is the recipient of one of the largest Fine Arts Scholarships ever granted by Drake University and the recipient of the Sally B. Bartlett Scholarship for Piano Study. **JK**

## ATTENTION!!! BULLETIN UPDATES

Be sure to check the NFMC website for the most recent updates to the NFMC Federation Festivals Bulletin July 2020-June 2024. You will find the updates on the NFMC website ([nfmc-music.org](https://nfmc-music.org)). Click the **FESTIVALS** tab in the top banner; click Bulletin Updates.



# Angie Greer Music in Poetry

by Debra S. Hughes, Chair

*Calling all Juniors to the ANGIE GREER POETRY CONTEST!*

*Take some careful thought and send in your best.*

*Try your hand at this popular and easy writing task.*

*"Must it be something about music?" you ask.*

*"Yes, yes! Any poetic words with or without rhyme,  
you can submit from eight to thirty lines.*

*Free verse or story form will also do,*

*as long as it is unpublished and originally of you.*

*So don't delay - for February 1st it is due.*

*Remember there is a 5 dollar entry fee too.*

*The JR 12-2 application form must be complete*

*but don't text, call, Instagram or tweet.*

*Submit black text on white as a PDF file.*

*Plus, this will surely make you smile:*

*Each Region winner will a money prize receive!*

*Take a few minutes now so that you'll not regretfully grieve.*

*Be careful to not add on your creation any personal information:  
no teacher name, club or where you are from in the nation.*

*Go to NPMC-music.org. Click Competitions & Awards then Junior  
Division-*

*scroll to the bottom for Angie Greer. You won't regret your decision."*

*Please send it as soon as you can.*

*It can't be too early.*

*Be it humorous, autobiographical, funny or surly,*

*Acrostic, ballad, imaginative prose or sonnet - all will do.*

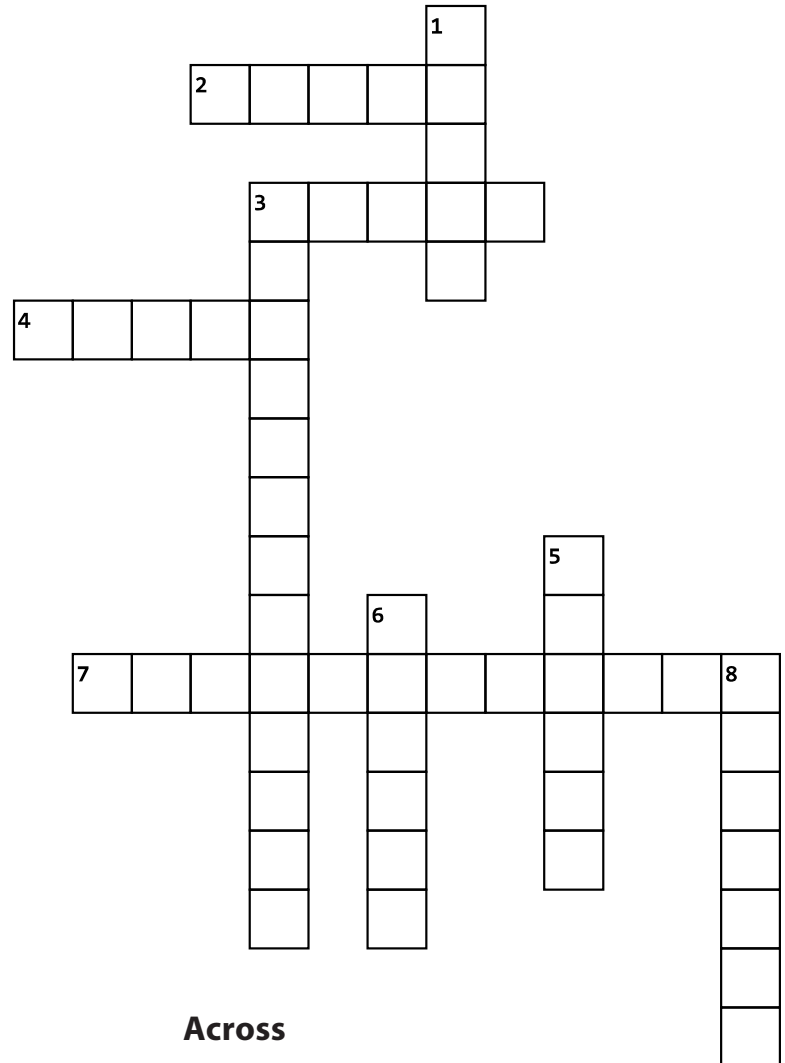
*Please have fun writing.*

*This event challenge is designed for YOU!*

*Best of luck as you enter the NPMC poem competition.*

*We look forward to your 'Music in Poetry' submission.*

## NPMC Junior Awards



### Across

**2.** Martha Marcks Mack Award

**3.** Marilyn Caldwell Award

**4.** Wendell Irish Award

**7.** Joyce Walsh Awards

### Down

**1.** Benzinger/Valentin Award

**3.** Lana Bailey Award

**5.** Angie Greer Award

**6.** Thelma Robinson Award

**8.** Mary Alice Cox Award

*Answers on page 39*





## MARILYN CALDWELL PIANO SOLO AWARD

by Linda Lind, *Chair*

### IS IT TIME?

Yes indeed, it is time to prepare for the 2024 NFMC Marilyn Caldwell Piano Solo Award. 2024. That seems so far away but remember how quickly 2023 came?

- This award is for talented Junior pianists who are in the 10th, 11th or 12th grade in high school and have not reached their 19th birthday as of March 1 in the year of the audition.
- Entrants must be American citizens.
- Membership in the NFMC is also a requirement either through a Junior Club or Junior Associate affiliation or as an Individual Junior Member.
- This award is offered annually. First place award is \$1000 and second place is \$500.
- The deadline for entering is March 1, 2024.

All the information can be found on the NFMC website: [nfm-music.org](http://nfm-music.org)>Publications>Junior Division. Forms JR19-1. There is even a **suggested** repertoire list.

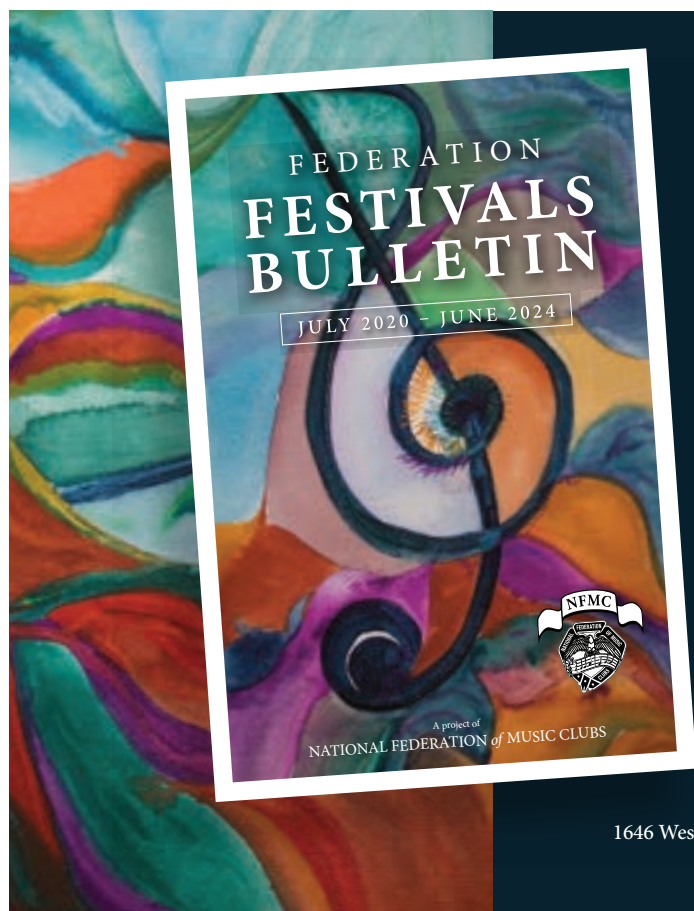
*Start now while there is lots of time. Don't let the time slip away.*



**Cory Wu**  
**First Place**  
*Ohio*

Cory Wu is a 17-year-old pianist and a senior at Columbus Academy. He has studied piano with Kathleen Sadoff since 2012 and with Nina Polonsky since 2020. He has won first place at numerous piano

competitions and festivals, most notably the 2020 PianoStar International Piano Competition and the 2019 Carmel Klavier International Concerto Competition. In 2019, Cory made his debut with the New Albany Symphony Orchestra playing Saint-Saëns's second piano concerto after winning the NASO Student Concerto Competition. In addition, he has participated in various other music events such as the Southeastern Piano



## FEDERATION FESTIVALS BULLETIN

JULY 2020 - JUNE 2024

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[nfm-music.org](http://nfm-music.org)

Festival, Arthur Fraser International Piano Competition, MTNA National Finals, Ronald Sachs International Music Competition, and David D. Dubois International Piano Competition. In 2021 and 2022, he received NFMC's Thelma Byrum award and the Chopin Foundation Scholarship and recognition in the National YoungArts Competition. In 2023, he placed second at the David D. Dubois International Piano Competition.

Outside of Piano, he plays soccer and tennis and enjoys cooking.

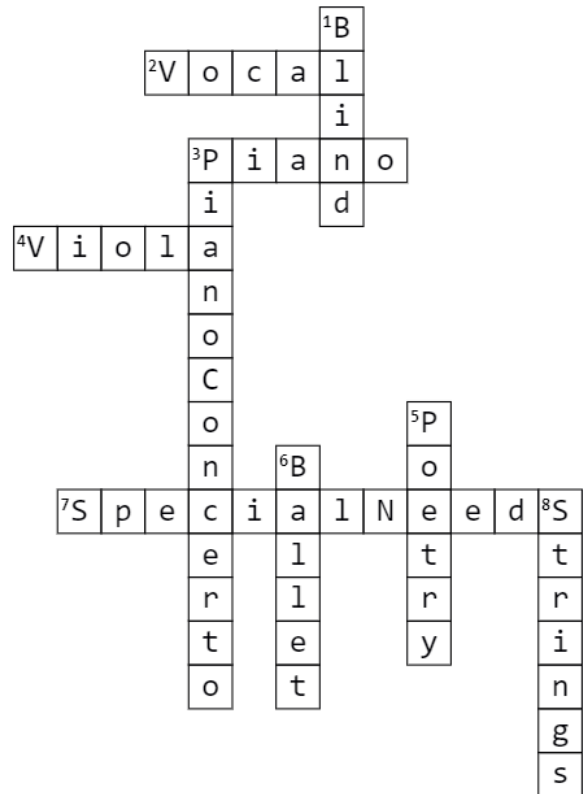


**Aaron Wang**  
**2nd Place**  
*Michigan*

Aaron Wang, pianist, 16 years old, studies with Catherine Rollin. In 2023, he won the Thelma Byrum Piano Award and the Steinway Young Artists Piano Competition. He also placed 2nd nationally in the Stillman Kelley and Marilyn Caldwell competitions. Aaron has won all three divisions of MMTA state finals. In 2021, he was an MTNA national finalist and won first prizes in both the solo and concerto MMTA competitions.

Additionally, he was a finalist in the International Kaufman Piano Competition in 2017. As a composer, Aaron was a three-time national finalist in the MTNA composition competition, placing 2nd nationally in 2018. Aaron also received the prestigious Slotkin Music Scholarship for Cranbrook Schools in 2021 and is the founder of the Slotkin Trio. **JK**

Page 37 Crossword Answers:



**MTNA**

**Music Teachers  
National Association**



Whether you are a seasoned professional or new teacher, membership in Music Teachers National Association is an essential part of your professional life.

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## Michael R. Edwards

### GRADUATING SENIOR PERFORMANCE AWARD

by Michael R. Edwards, *Chair*



The recipient of the 2023 Michael R. Edwards Senior Performance Award is **Carson Ling-Efird**.

Eighteen-year-old Seattle native Carson Ling-Efird began playing cello at age four. This fall, she will begin her first year at the Curtis Institute of Music studying with Gary Hoffman and Peter Wiley. Previously, she has studied with Nathan Chan, Zlatomir Fung, and collaborative pianist Dr. Li-Tan Hsu.

Carson made her solo debut with the Seattle Symphony in 2018 at the age of 12 after being selected as a Seattle Symphony Young Artist. In 2019 she was a KING FM Young Artist Award grand prize winner and received the Seattle Chamber Music Society Monika Meyer Clowes Memorial Award. She made her international solo debut with the Taipei Symphony Orchestra Youth in January 2020. She also appeared on NPR's From the Top as a fellow in Show #391.

In addition to cello, Carson studies piano and composition. She began studying piano at age six while spending a year with her family in Kunming, China. Carson started composition in the summer of 2017 and has performed her own compositions. For the past four years, she was a selected participant in the Seattle Symphony Merriman Family Young Composers Workshop program, during which Seattle Symphony musicians premiered her compositions. Her latest composition is titled *Return*, which is scored for chamber orchestra.

In her spare time, Carson enjoys dancing, Chinese martial arts, hiking, and walks in the park with her family.

*Carson plays on a Matthias Neuner cello, Mittenwald, 1807, generously loaned to her by the Carlsen Cello Foundation. JK*

**Carson Ling-Efird**

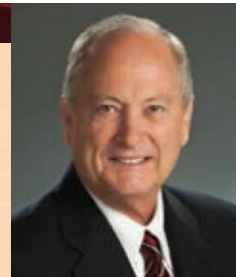
*Washington State*

## MICHAEL R. EDWARDS

NFMC President 2015-2019

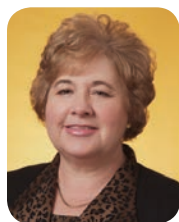
### Graduating Senior Performance Award

This award will be given to a graduating high school senior pursuing a music performance degree on any instrument or voice who will be attending an accredited music school. Graduating seniors must have earned at least one NMFC Federation cup. For rules (JR22-1) and application (JR22-2) and more information please visit [nfmc-music.org](http://nfmc-music.org)



**Deadline: May 1st**  
**Award Amount: \$5000**  
**Chair: Michael R. Edwards**  
**Email: [micedwards@aol.com](mailto:micedwards@aol.com)**





# STILLMAN KELLEY/THELMA BYRUM AWARDS

by Linda Maurhoff, *Chair*

The Stillman Kelley Competition was established in 1938 for the continued musical education of exceptionally talented junior members of the National Federation of Music Clubs. To honor the eminent music educator, composer and leader who had done so much for music in this country, the competition was named the "Edgar Stillman Kelley Scholarship." Later, in recognition of his wife's accomplishments as the eleventh president of the National Federation of Music Clubs (1925-1929) and her continuing interest in the musical youth of our nation through the many years until her death in 1949, the award was changed to honor both members of the NFMC's distinguished husband-wife team. The Thelma Byrum Piano Award was added in 1980.

The Stillman Kelley Competition is open to **ALL INSTRUMENTS** and awards include first, second, third place, and five NFMC Regional awards. The Thelma Byrum Piano Award goes to the top scorer in piano, unless that is the Stillman Kelley winner; in that case, the Byrum Award goes to the next-highest scorer in piano.

There were 24 applications this year, literally double the number from 2022. How encouraging to have NFMC Juniors willing to prepare an audition and participate in this competition. It was a privilege to hear so many talented young musicians. It certainly gives hope for the future of music in our country!

Dr Hee-Kyung Juhn and David Allen Wehr once again served as judges. Both are collaborative artists holding many distinguished honors and have performed in numerous venues worldwide. A note of interest: David Allen Wehr was the 1983 NFMC Young Artist in Piano. Both Dr. Juhn and Mr. Wehr gave each applicant detailed and encouraging remarks and both expressed how grateful and honored they were to serve as a judge.

I am grateful for the opportunity to have served as Chair for this NFMC Junior level competition. It has been a very enlightening experience! My message to our NFMC Juniors:

*May your dedication to music help you achieve  
life-goals in the years to come.  
Best Wishes for many future successes!*



Nathaniel Yue

## Nathaniel Yue 1ST PLACE STILLMAN KELLEY

California

Nathaniel Yue began playing cello when he was five years old and is currently a student of Vardan Gasparyan and Ronald Leonard. He also studies chamber music in the Colburn Ed and Mari Edelman Honors Chamber program, and recently joined the American Youth Symphony as the Anne Warsaw Cello Chair in 2022. He has performed on NPR's *From the Top*, Meadowmount School of Music Student Recital Series, Los Angeles County Museum of Art Sunday's Live and Colburn School's Honors Recitals. Nathaniel's recent performances have awarded him First-prize wins in numerous competitions including MTNA Competition California and Southwest Division, the Gustav Mahler Prize Cello Competition, and Pasadena Showcase House Instrument Competition, as well as 2023 YoungArts Merit Award Winner. He is grateful for the generous scholarships awarded by the National Federation of Music Clubs, Colburn School of Performing Arts, and Pasadena Showcase. He has also played in masterclasses for esteemed artists and teachers such as Gautier Capuçon, Johannes Moser, Clive Greensmith, Ralph Kirschbaum, Jessie Montgomery, and Jean-Yves Thibaudet. Nathaniel is currently attending San Marino High School and the Colburn Community School of Performing Arts. He plays a 1790 Thomas Dodd cello generously on loan from Georg Eittinger of Hans Weisshaar Violin Makers and Restorers in San Marino, California. He is a co-regional director of The Back to Bach Project: Greater Pasadena/San Gabriel Valley and president of the Tuesday Musicale Juniors. He also enjoys playing with the worship team at First Baptist Church of Pasadena.



Aaron Wang

## Aaron Wang 2ND PLACE STILLMAN KELLEY AND THELMA BYRUM

Michigan

Aaron Wang, pianist, 16 years old, studies with Catherine Rollin. In 2023, he won the Thelma Byrum Piano Award and the Steinway Young Artists Piano Competition. He also placed 2nd nationally in the Stillman Kelley and Marilyn Caldwell competitions. Aaron has won all three divisions of MMTA state finals. In 2021, he was an MTNA national finalist and won first prizes in both the solo and concerto MMTA competitions. Additionally, he was a finalist in the International Kaufman Piano Competition in 2017. As a composer, Aaron was a three-time national finalist in the MTNA composition competition, placing 2nd nationally in 2018. Aaron also received the prestigious Slotkin Music Scholarship for Cranbrook Schools in 2021 and is the founder of the Slotkin Trio.

*continued on page 42*

STILLMAN KELLEY/THELMA BYRUM AWARDS *continued*

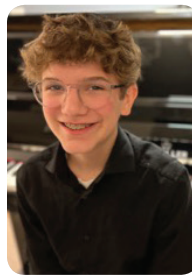
Carson Ling-Efird

**Carson Ling-Efird**  
**3RD PLACE**  
**STILLMAN KELLEY**  
*Washington State*

Seattle native Carson Ling-Efird (b. 2005) began playing cello at age four and currently studies with Nathan Chan, Zlatomir Fung, and collaborative pianist Dr. Li-Tan Hsu. She will be starting at the Curtis Institute of Music in fall of 2023. Carson made her solo debut with the

Seattle Symphony in 2018 at the age of 12 after being selected as a Seattle Symphony Young Artist. In 2019 she was a KING FM Young Artist Award grand prize winner and received the Seattle Chamber Music Society Monika Meyer Clowes Memorial Award. She made her international solo debut with the Taipei Symphony Orchestra Youth in January 2020. She also appeared on NPR's From the Top as a fellow in Show #391. In addition to cello, Carson studies piano and composition. She began studying piano at age six while spending a year with her family in Kunming, China. Carson started composition in the summer of 2017 and has performed her own compositions. For the past four years, she was a selected participant in the

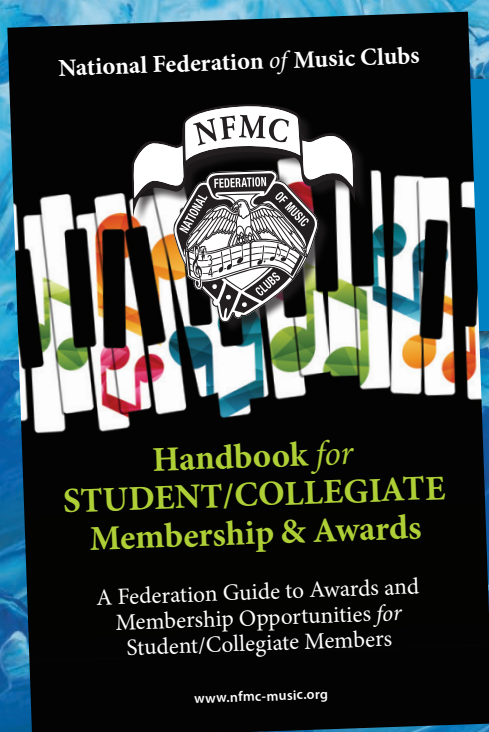
Seattle Symphony Merriman Family Young Composers Workshop program, during which Seattle Symphony musicians premiered her compositions. Her latest composition, a score for full orchestra titled "Return of Spring," will be premiered by the Seattle Symphony in May of 2023. In her spare time, Carson enjoys dancing, Chinese martial arts, hiking, and walks in the park with her family. Carson plays on a Matthias Neuner cello, Mittenwald, 1807, generously loaned to her by the Carlsen Cello Foundation.



Craig Charlie Plante

**Craig Charlie Plante**  
**NORTH CENTRAL REGIONAL AWARD**  
*Wisconsin*

Charlie Plante is 14 years old and lives in Cedarburg, Wisconsin. His passion is performing on piano, and he enjoys music from the late romantic and 20th century eras. He enjoys marching with the drumline at his high school as well. Charlie is also a composer and has won national level competitions for his work. He loves to listen to music and spend time with his family and friends in his free time.



# NFMC STUDENT/COLLEGIATE HANDBOOK

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**Cory Wu**  
**NORTHEASTERN REGIONAL AWARD**  
*Ohio*

Cory Wu is a 17-year-old pianist and a senior at Columbus Academy. He has studied piano with Kathleen Sadoff since 2012 and with Nina Polonsky since 2020. He has won first place at numerous piano competitions and festivals, most notably the 2020 PianoStar International Piano Competition and the 2019 Carmel Klavier

International Concerto Competition. In 2019, Cory made his debut with the New Albany Symphony Orchestra playing Saint-Saëns's second piano concerto after winning the NASO Student Concerto Competition. In addition, he has participated in various other music events such as the Southeastern Piano Festival, Arthur Fraser International Piano Competition, MTNA National Finals, Ronald Sachs International Music Competition, and David D. Dubois International Piano Competition. In 2021 and 2022, he received NFMCC's Thelma Byrum award and the Chopin Foundation Scholarship and recognition in the National YoungArts Competition. In 2023, he placed second at the David D. Dubois International Piano Competition. Outside of Piano, he plays soccer and tennis and enjoys cooking.



**Harrison Benford**  
**SOUTHEASTERN REGIONAL AWARD**  
*Maryland*

Harrison Jude Benford studies with Nancy O'Neill Breth in Washington, DC and credits his seven years under her guidance with transforming his development as a musician and a human being. Harrison recently won first prize at the inaugural Rubato International Piano Competition, the Opus Music Competition and has advanced to MTNA's

National Division competition for Senior Piano Duet. After winning the senior division of AAMS' International Piano Competition, he was invited to perform at Kennedy Center's Millennium stage in late January 2023.


In 2022, Harrison also won first prize at the Lichtenberg, Gottlieb, and Hungarian Music Piano Competitions and, with duet partner Nathan Shan, won the prestigious Misbin Award at the Misbin Family Memorial Chamber Music Competition. Pianist Brian Ganz called him "a true artist" with "an enormous imagination and constant alertness for nuance." Enrique Graf has lauded his "very mature playing with deep understanding and feeling – every piece is played in style and convincingly."

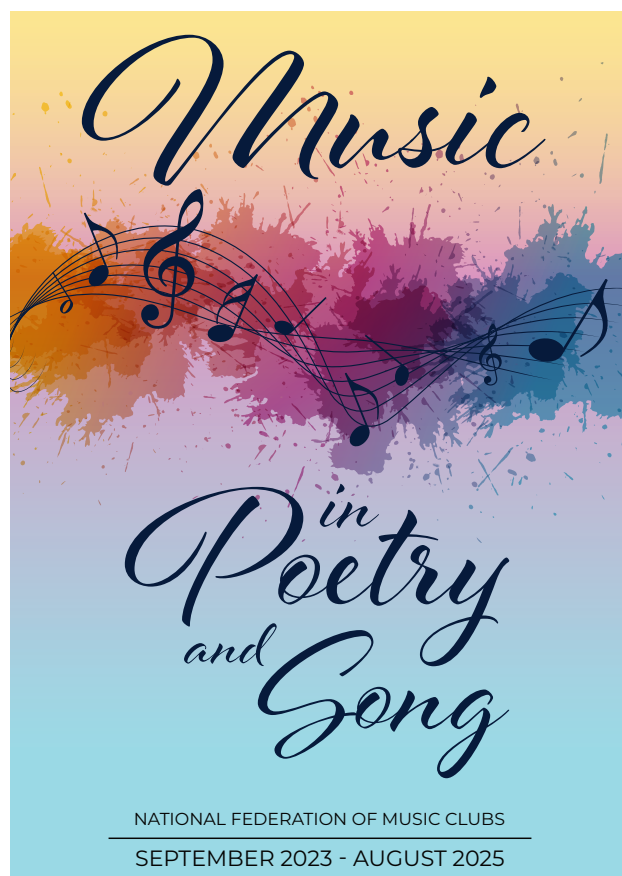
As a high school senior, the biggest joy in Harrison's life to date has been working collaboratively with other musicians at summer music intensives including Tanglewood, Indiana University's Piano Academy, Point CounterPoint, Greenwood, and Interlochen. He also has a special interest in community outreach and has brought live music to civic and senior centers throughout the DC metropolitan area. Outside of music, Harrison is finishing his sixth year of Mandarin study and is nationally ranked in both QuizBowl and tournament Scrabble, being named one of the top ten youth players in North America in 2022.



**Ashlyn Bendorf**  
**WESTERN REGIONAL AWARD**  
*Idaho*

Ashlyn Bendorf has loved music her entire life. She started playing piano as soon as she could reach the keys, taking formal lessons with her mom and dad starting at age four. In her elementary years she began clarinet lessons and was soon accepted into the College of the Canyons Orchestra (age 10) and the Novae Symphony where she held the principal clarinet

position. Ashlyn also gave her first solo piano recital at age 10, performing the entire collection Two- Part Inventions of J.S. Bach, as well as pieces by Beethoven, Brahms, and Bartok. Ashlyn has always enjoyed performing and playing in competitions; she won top prize in the Los Angeles district CAPMT Romantic Competition in 2019. She was also a prize winner in the the CAPMT State Honors Competition, the Southern California Junior Bach Festival, and the Young Artist Division of the Sonatina Festival, held at Boise State University. In January of 2022 she was a first-place medalist in the Idaho J.S. Bach Festival & Competition. In 2020 and 2021 she was a featured soloist with the Los Angeles Youth Philharmonic Orchestra. Her performances in the virtual concert series included Mozart and Max Bruch concertos. Upon moving to Idaho, she recently began studying with Steinway Artist Dr. Del Parkinson at Boise State University and performed as a guest soloist for the Exceptional Young Musician's Showcase sponsored by the Boise City Arts Council. When she is not practicing Ashlyn enjoys going on hikes, swimming, baking, crocheting, and Irish Dancing. 





# State Buzz

## ARIZONA

In addition to the other festival events already offered in festivals throughout the state, Arizona held its first ever organ festival this year. Students entered 1, 2 or 3 of the organ events in the Festival Bulletin: organ repertoire, sacred organ, and hymn playing. We are excited to be encouraging these budding young organists.

The AZFMC also held a summer organ camp for piano students interested in learning about the organ. Through a variety of engaging hands-on activities, crafts, games and private instruction, the students were excited to learn about the instrument. The culminating activity was a tour of a pipe organ and the chance to perform in a recital on that organ. They then visited Organ Stop Pizza and heard the Mighty Wurlitzer theater organ in action.

The highlight of the event, however, was the chance to build a functioning 2 rank, 2 octave Orgelkids organ, recently acquired through an NFMC FAMA grant. We are excited to take this amazing instrument to schools and events in the community. For more information about the kit or the summer music camp, visit <https://AZFMC-music.org>.



**JUNIOR COMPOSERS CONTEST**

[nfmc-music.org](https://nfmc-music.org)

Visit the Competitions & Awards page for more information.

## FLORIDA

### Orlando Music Club NFMC Founders' Day: 125 Years

The Orlando Music Club celebrated NFMC Founders' Day: 125 Years. The celebration was held at the First Baptist Sweetwater Church in Longwood, FL on January 14, 2023. Claudia Brill, our FFMC state president, was our guest speaker. Claudia spoke on the highlights of NFMC and FFMC. We presented the student performers with keepsake certificates.



*Enjoying refreshments on the Portico.*

*On right: Claudia Brill, FFMC President (guest speaker)*

*Cheryl Poe, former FFMC President, led us in the Collect. pictured left*

*The student on right is Colin Kerr. Colin Kerr studies piano and Violin with Robert Kerr*

*Vashti Weber on the left. Vashti studies violin with Christina Gant*



### Grace Notes Junior Club, Florida

#### NFMC Dance Award

\$200 1st place for Cosette Alomia Junior I

\$400 1st place for Isabelle Alomia Junior II

**Cosette Alomia** has been dancing since she was 3 years old. She earned her first scholarship at a Break the Floor Productions convention at the age of 4 and from that point on wanted to attend every convention she could because she loved the idea of learning from so many different teachers and instructors. Cosette fell in love with ballet as she studied with Aretuza Garner and Sonia Jean and has participated in many ballet intensives to help further her technique and progression. Cosette has been recognized for her efforts in dance by receiving Outstanding Dancer at NYCDA where she can attend the Outstanding Dancer Experience in New York City. Her goal is to one day share her love and passion for dance with the world through her own choreography and through teaching other dancers. Cosette believes that when the dance community has positive mentors and role models, it encourages and uplifts others to accomplish skills that they might otherwise not see in themselves.

**Isabelle Alomia's** love of dance began at the age of 3 when she stepped into her first dance class. She immediately loved the feel of training in a classroom and being able to perform on stage. During her 15 years of dancing, she has had the opportunity to work and train from instructors



Cosette Alomia &amp; Isabelle Alomia

## FLORIDA CONTINUED

and award-winning choreographers from all over the nation including: Justin Pham, Kyle Molter, Chase Hudson, Shauna Zambelli and many more. Isabelle's senior year has not been without challenges and she has let her passion for dance and her connection to music help her rise above so many of the challenges and disappointments she has faced. She will be attending Brigham Young University starting this Fall 2023 where she will major in Business and soon after she hopes to be able to open her own dance studio so that she can help dancers of all capabilities grow and develop a passion for dance in their lives and realize their own potential.

## ILLINOIS

### AWARDS HAND DELIVERED

President Mike Barnard decided to personally deliver certificates and monetary awards to Illinois' State Competition winners. Students winning first, second or third place in the State Piano Solo, Concerto and Instrumental Contests were hand delivered their awards. He started this practice in April of 2022, because some of the 2021 awards that were mailed were damaged in shipment.

### 2023 State Music Contest Winners

Piano Solo	Student	Teacher	District
First Place	Yoonseo Jung	Reiko Schoen	Carbondale
Second Place	Bill Xu	Reiko Schoen	Carbondale
Third Place (tied)	Grace Kang	Dr. Maria Horvath	Springfield
*Third Place (tied)	Abby Rieke	Nancy Liley	Chicago
<b>Concerto</b>			
First Place	Bill Xu	Reiko Schoen	Carbondale
Second Place	Francis Bu	Reiko Schoen	Carbondale
Third Place (tied)	Tanya Arun	Kara Benyas	Carbondale
Third Place (tied)	John Reeter	Lisa Brittingham	Bloomington/Normal
<b>Instrumental</b>			
First Place	Annette Yoonji Kang	Ken Wollberg	Carbondale
Second Place	Paige Flatley	Beth Anderson	Springfield

*\*This student's award and check were mailed USPS due to the distance.*

Students used the **WeTransfer** program to submit needed information and video that were downloaded and forwarded to the judges. This process has worked very well and allows students from all over Illinois to participate without travel or the need for overnight lodging.

First place winners received \$500, second place winners received \$350, and third place winners received \$200.

In May the Hall of Fame winners are chosen from applications submitted by teachers from the five (5) Illinois Districts. This year's female winner is Elva Chang, recommended by her teacher Claudia Sewell, Springfield District. This year's male winner is Joseph Leffers, recommended by his teacher Lana Piercy, Bloomington/Normal District. The winning students check for \$250 and a plaque with their picture were hand delivered.

Mike is proud of all the hard working teachers and students in Illinois.

*continued on page 46*

## State Buzz *continued*

### KANSAS



Introducing Kansas FMC and NFM new Cradle Roll Member:

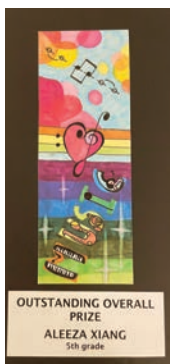
**Irie Anita Studer**

Born June 25, 2021

Parents: Cole and Siel Studer  
(Siel was a Cradle Roll Member, herself)  
Lawrence, Kansas

Gift of Great-Grandparents Dr. Rodney  
and Gay Dill, NFM Life Members

### KENTUCKY



**Lexington Federated Music Club  
Honoring the 100th anniversary of  
National Music Week, May 7-14, 2023  
*Music.....is a Worldwide Adventure***

Lexington Federated Music Club decided that a fun way to celebrate the 100th anniversary of National Music Week would be to have a bookmark competition. Willis Music Company agreed to sponsor prizes for the elementary, middle school, and high school divisions. Practice forms were

emailed to all member teachers so our young artists could try out their designs in bookmark dimensions. In March hard copies of final cardstock bookmarks along with separate entry forms (so student's work would be judged anonymously) were provided to the students. A local professional artist agreed to serve as our judge. An April 15th deadline was set so all judging would be completed before the Music Week celebration. To our surprise there were no high school entries, but oh what fun it was to see the talents and artistry from the youngest student to the middle school artist-musicians! The overall winner was a 5th grader!



We were able to offer five first and second prizes in the form of gift cards to Willis Music Company. All placed and Honorable Mention winners received special certificates to acknowledge their accomplishments. Willis Music store associates were amazed at the quality of the submissions. Perhaps the most fun of all came when we laminated ALL entries before returning students their original bookmarks. The laminated artworks looked even more vibrant and truly awesome. So now, each student has

a permanent and beautiful reminder of their participation in this special event - the 100th anniversary of the National Music Week in 2023!!

### MINNESOTA

**Minnesota Federation of Music Clubs**

*Liz Raihala, MFMC Biennial State Student Auditions Chair*

The Minnesota Federation of Music Clubs Biennial State Student Auditions competition occurs in odd years only for Juniors and Seniors in high school with three \$600.00 awards available. This year's winners are Elizabeth Blilie, Cecilia Buzzeo and David Lafferty.

Specific performance repertoire is required with a January deadline and the applicant's teacher must be a member of the Minnesota Federation of Music Clubs. Additional details are available on the MFMC website at [mfmc.net](http://mfmc.net).



Elizabeth Blilie

**Elizabeth Blilie**

*Minnesota*

**Elizabeth Blilie**, a Lakeville South High School senior, has a talent for making music as a pianist, percussionist, and composer. Her love of music started at a young age, and she began taking piano lessons at the age of five. Currently, she enjoys studying piano with her teacher, Mary Wescott. Elizabeth performs at numerous festival piano competitions and in her community.

Elizabeth is a percussionist in her high school marching band, winter drumline, and a piano player in the jazz band. Her marching band has performed in Hawaii twice and has won two Minnesota marching band state championships. Her winter drumline also won a state championship in 2022. She has also composed and performed original works for the marimba.

Aside from music, Elizabeth is also a member of the National Honor Society and the captain of her school's math league team. She enjoys reading, solving puzzles and spending time with her friends and family (especially her dog Niko). Elizabeth plans to study astronautical engineering in college but hopes to continue playing percussion and piano throughout college and beyond.



Cecilia Buzzeo

**Cecilia Buzzeo**

*Minnesota*

**Cecilia Buzzeo** is a senior at Willmar Senior High School and is the daughter of Christopher and Carla Buzzeo. For the past 6 years, Cecilia has been a vocal student of Cheryl Schmidt. She was a member of the 2022 and 2023 Minnesota All-State Choir. Cecilia received numerous Best of Site awards at the Solo Ensemble contest in 2022 and in 2023, earning the honor for both duets and solo pieces. Cecilia is Willmar Sr. High Schools' Class of 2023 Class President, Student Council President, and a Captain of the Speech team. In addition to her passion for music, Cecilia also enjoys musical



theater, speech, and orchestra. Cecilia will attend Concordia College in Moorhead, MN this fall and is a proud recipient of Concordia College's Christiansen Award.



**David Lafferty**

*Minnesota*

My name is **David Lafferty** and I am currently a senior at Lakeville South High School. I have been a piano student for 9 years and a band student for 7. In my years of band, I have participated in my high school's marching band as a part of the drumline for 4 years, been a member of the Lakeville Area Percussion Winter Drumline for 2 years, and have done concert band percussion for all 7. In the fall, I will be attending the College of Biological Sciences at the University of Minnesota with the goal of obtaining a Bachelor of Science Degree and eventually attending graduate school.

## NORTH CAROLINA



King, Ricky Aron, Queen, Luna Chen; Prince, Siwat Phonchaoensri, Princess, Iris Wang Lord, Frank Lu, Lady, Jacqueline Liu; Page Boy, Ziquian Liu, Page Girl, Angela Hong Over \$1100 in prize awards were presented.



North Carolina Scholarship winners. Pictured in no particular order. Apsara Koneswaran, Sydney Stevenson, Sam Caplan, Cindy Wan, Alexander MacDowell, Katarina Dobrosky, Aidan Collins, Andrew Chung, Olivia Rareshide, Brandon Luo, Yuanduo Li, Brandon Lauren, Airui Zhao, Bella Yuan, Avery Chang, Saloni Bhure, Carter Forbes, Leonard Zhu, Justin Guo, Benjamin Luo. Over \$10,000 was awarded in the competition.

## TENNESSEE

### Tennessee Junior Club News

Tennessee celebrated the 125th Anniversary of NFMC with Festivals across the state. Some were in person Festivals, and many were still virtual. We had six new Junior Clubs. We are especially excited to renew Junior Clubs from four renewing Senior Club members.

The Memphis area has been able to restart a Senior Club with four members. They have 4 Junior Clubs and hosted a Festival this spring.

A Community Club project was started by the Obbligato Senior Club in Nashville and meets at a local music store. This provides an opportunity for Juniors to meet and learn to conduct meetings and hold leadership positions. Several Junior Clubs celebrated the 100th Anniversary of NFMC National Music Week. Tennessee recognized Leah Taylor's club, Taylor Keys of Nashville, for their outstanding activities during National Music Week. They celebrated by Coloring Pictures, Playing Musical Games, Learning about Composers, and hosting a Recital.



**Naomi Winn**

*Tennessee*

**Naomi Winn** is the recipient of 12 consecutive "Superior" ratings in the Federation Festival and winner of a Gold Cup. She is an 18-year-old senior and has been playing piano since she was 5 years old. She enjoys playing and singing on Sundays and on Wednesday nights at church in a band. Naomi is the second of 3 siblings who play piano and has excelled in classical piano instruction with her long-time teacher, Meiling Martin, of Knoxville, Tennessee. The flute is the second musical instrument that she has learned to play.

In her free time, she enjoys voracious reading, volunteering through organizations like Key Club, and participating in the student government association. She enjoys mentoring those younger than her, whether it be helping incoming freshmen and other students or the 8th grade girls at church.

Overall, she gratefully credits her instructor and her many years of piano study for teaching her a work ethic and passion for music. Naomi plans to take the lessons learned into her academic career, as she goes to the university this fall.

*continued on page 48*

## State Buzz *continued*

### WASHINGTON

#### Washington State Federation Festivals

Our WSFMC Juniors had a very successful Festival season. We had 81 Junior Clubs participating and a total of 1,350 total individual events. 169 first Festival Cups were awarded this year! 316 Festival Cups in total were awarded to our fabulous Juniors! We're so proud of all of our students and their wonderful, hard-working teachers.



**John Tu Hoang**  
*Washington State*

John Tu Hoang, piano student of John Van Lierop, earned his Grand Cup this spring. John belongs to the Westside Dizzy Fingers Junior Music Studio with the Greater Seattle Federated Music Club. He has been a student of Mr. Van Lierop for 12 years, starting his Festival Cup quest in first grade. He is a senior at Hazen High School in Renton, WA and will be participating in the Running Start Program this year. John also plays saxophone

in his school band and is a member of the taiko drumming group at his church. Congratulations John!

### WISCONSIN

#### Collaboration-- Sharing in Community

*Submitted by Heidi O. Hong*  
*Barron Federated Music Club Member*  
*1st VP, NFMC*

The Barron Federated Music Club was featured in the Barron Public Library "Storytime in the Park" as part of the club's summer outreach. The book *Wild Symphony* by Dan Brown was read. The book is a great way to introduce orchestra sounds and instruments, along with learning about some animals.

Children began storytime by making jingle sticks. Later they gathered around the book reader (this happened to be me) and kept rhythm with the music recordings of the book. They ended the morning dancing and jingling their way through *Footloose* by Kenny Loggins!

I encourage music clubs to reach out to their community civic groups and public libraries, in order to share in the challenges of reaching others: young and old, home confined, in schools, or hospitals, or VA centers, in order to dispel loneliness and isolation through music. Sharing and caring in our home towns reminds others that music heals, and brings joy to life. Music clubs are part of a collaboration to enhance music appreciation and education where we live. Our clubs need to be

more than groups organized for Federation Festivals and recitals. We, as members, need to actively recruit and retain members with varied music interests by being a presence in our communities.

Good luck as you plan your program year. I hope you incorporate music outreach participation as well as education, as part of your mission to bring our musical heritage to everyday living, wherever you may be, and whatever walk of life you are in.

Go Juniors! Make a difference in your life as well as the lives of others.



*Above & Left:*  
*Storytime in the Park*

*Right: Jingle Stick*





# 2023-24 NFMC AWARDS-AT-A-GLANCE



## NATIONAL FEDERATION OF MUSIC CLUBS

President: Deborah Freeman

## 2023-2024 COMPETITIONS AND AWARDS CHART

Chair: Competitions and Awards Board & Division

Lucinda Lear, 432 Vermont St, Waterloo IA 50701; [lmlear@mchsi.com](mailto:lmlear@mchsi.com)

Application form numbers listed can be found on the NFMC website: [www.nfmc-music.org](http://www.nfmc-music.org)

### BIENNIAL JUNIOR AWARDS

Junior age: Must not have reached the 19th birthday by March 1.

Name	Category	Age Limit	Entry Fee	Amount of Award	Deadline for Application	NFMC Chair
NFMC Claire Ulrich Whitehurst (Flanagan) Piano Awards	PIANO SOLO	High School: Grades 10-11-12 Must not have reached 18th birthday by application deadline	\$10	\$500 1st Place (for further study) \$250 2nd Place	March 1, even Numbered years	Marcia Chaplin 1807 Batten Hollow Road Vienna VA 22182 <a href="mailto:Marciachaplin2@gmail.com">Marciachaplin2@gmail.com</a>
NFMC Lynn Freeman Olson Composition Awards	COMPOSITION	Intermediate: Grades 7-8-9 High School: Grades 10-11-12	Paid by private donor	\$500 (Intermediate) \$1,000 (High School)	March 1, odd numbered years	Lisa Smith 3774 Barbazon Circle S Jacksonville FL 32257 <a href="mailto:lcspiano@hotmail.com">lcspiano@hotmail.com</a>
NFMC Thelma A. Robinson Award in Ballet honoring a Past National President	BALLET	12 -14	\$20	\$2,500	February 1, odd numbered years	Justin Gray 1904 Eastern Ave SE Grand Rapids MI 49507 <a href="mailto:pianistprogress@gmail.com">pianistprogress@gmail.com</a>

### ANNUAL JUNIOR AWARDS

Members of the Junior Division should also check NFMC Summer Scholarships, as various age levels are included in Summer Music Center opportunities.

Name	Category	Age Limit	Entry Fee	Amount of Award	Deadline for Application	NFMC Chair
NFMC Herman and Mary Neumann Award to Interlochen Arts Academy	PIANO, VOICE, ORCHESTRAL INSTRUMENTS	Must be in High School	NONE	\$1,000	February 1	Interlochen Arts Academy Interlochen MI 49643
NFMC Martha Marcks Mack Junior Vocal Award	VOCAL	High School Grades: 10 – 11 – 12 Must not have reached the 19th birthday by application deadline	\$10	\$1,500 - 1st Place \$1,000 - 2nd Place \$500 – 3rd Place	March 1	Kristin Ivers 1419 Keller Ave Williamsport, PA 17701 <a href="mailto:Kivers210@gmail.com">Kivers210@gmail.com</a>
NFMC Lana M. Bailey Piano Concerto Awards Honoring a Past National President	PIANO CONCERTO	High School Senior who has not reached the 19th birthday by May 1	\$10	\$1,500 – 1st Place \$500 – 2nd Place	May 1	Lana Bailey 3686 Russell Rd Woodbridge VA 22192 <a href="mailto:zblb@verizon.net">zblb@verizon.net</a>
NFMC Joyce Walsh Junior Awards for Individuals with Special Needs	INSTRUMENTAL and VOCAL	Must have reached the 12th but not the 19th birthday by application deadline	\$10	\$2,500—1st Place \$2,000—2nd Place 1 - \$1,000 award in each of the five regions.	March 1	Hollis Wittman 703 Village St Kalamazoo MI 49008 <a href="mailto:Hilli.wittman@gmail.com">Hilli.wittman@gmail.com</a>
NFMC Stillman Kelley National Instrumental Awards	INSTRUMENTAL	Must not have reached the 19th birthday by March 1	\$10	\$2,000 – 1st Place (for further study) \$1,000 – 2nd Place \$750 – 3rd Place 5 regional awards @ \$500 each	March 1	Jason Sifford 330 Park Rd Iowa City IA 52246 <a href="mailto:jason@siffordmusic.com">jason@siffordmusic.com</a>
NFMC Thelma Byrum Piano Award in Stillman Kelley Auditions. (Kelley & Byrum awards cannot be applied for separately)	PIANO			\$750 for further study	March 1	



## ANNUAL JUNIOR AWARDS (continued...)

Junior age: Must not have reached the 19th birthday by March 1.

Name	Category	Age Limit	Entry Fee	Amount of Award	Deadline for Application	NFMC Chair
NFMC Benzinger/Valentin Junior Music for the Blind Performance Awards	INSTRUMENTAL and VOCAL	Must have reached the 10th birthday but not the 19th birthday by application deadline	\$10	\$1,000 – 1st Place \$500 – 2nd Place 1 - \$250 award in each of the five NFMC Regions	March 1	Patty Dietlin 11317 Sutter Rd Kewadin MI 49648 Dietlin5@gmail.com
NFMC Dance Awards (Jazz, Lyrical or Tap)	BALLET and THEATER DANCE	Must have reached the 11th but not the 19th birthday by application deadline	\$10	Age 11-14: Ballet and/or Theater Dance (Jazz, Lyrical or Tap) \$200 – 1st Place \$100 – 2nd Place Age 15-18: Ballet and/or Theater Dance (Jazz, Lyrical or Tap) \$400 – 1st Place \$200 – 2nd Place	May 1	Nicholas Gray 1904 Eastern Ave SE Grand Rapids MI 49507 nfmcdance@gmail.com
NFMC Mary Alice Cox Awards	CELLO OR DOUBLE BASS	Must not have reached the 19th birthday as of application deadline	\$20	\$2,500 – 1st Place \$1,500 – 2nd Place \$1,000 - 3rd Place	March 1	Matt Miller 13819 W. National Ave New Berlin, WI 53151 mattmillerbass@aol.com
NFMC Agnes Fowler Junior Blind Composition Award	COMPOSITION	Must have reached the 10th but not the 19th birthday by application deadline	\$10	\$1,000	March 1	Patty Dietlin 11317 Sutter Rd Kewadin MI 49648 Dietlin5@gmail.com
NFMC Angie Greer Music in Poetry Awards	POETRY	Must not have reached the 19th birthday by February 15	\$5	\$100 in each of the five NFMC Regions	February 1	Debra Hughes 2937 Moorings Parkway Snellville GA 30039 bndhughes@comcast.net
NFMC National Music Week Essay Contest	ESSAY	Must be in grades 7 through 12	NONE	\$75 in each of the 50 states	January 10 (to regional chair)	Gloria Lien 6738 W Kimberly Way Glendale AZ 85308 Gloria.hope.lien@gmail.com
NFMC Wendell Irish Viola Awards	VIOLA	Must have reached the 12th but not the 19th birthday by application deadline	\$10	\$2,000 – 1st Place \$1,000 – 2nd Place 1 - \$500 Award in each of the 5 NFMC Regions	March 1	Dr. George Keck 2112 Hinson Rd. #23 Little Rock, AR 72212 keckg@att.net
Marilyn Caldwell Piano Awards	PIANO SOLO	High School Grades 10-11-12	\$10	\$1,250 – 1st Place \$750 – 2nd Place	March 1	Linda Lind 4420 Miller Pkwy Manhattan KS 66503 lindalindva@gmail.com
NFMC Michael R. Edwards Graduating Senior Performance Award honoring a Past National President	Scholarship for Music Major	Graduating HS Senior year of the award	\$20	\$5,000	May 1	Michael R. Edwards 3900 Galt Ocean Dr #317 Fort Lauderdale FL 33308 micedwards@aol.com

## JUNIOR COMPOSERS

Chair: Joanie Pegram, 101 Thompson Road, Taylors, SC 29687; jpeggram@bobjonesacademy.net

Name	Age Limit	Entry Fee	Amount of Award	Deadline for Application
Class I	9 and under	\$5 per entry plus state entry fee	\$150-1st Place, \$125-2nd Place, and 2 incentive awards at \$100 each	February 1 to National Chair; contact chair for state deadline
Class II	10-12	\$5 per entry plus state entry fee	\$175-1st Place, \$125-2nd Place, and 2 incentive awards at \$100 each	See Above
Class III	13-15	\$5 per entry plus state entry fee	\$225-1st Place, \$175-2nd Place, and \$150-3rd-Place John and Margaret Pierson award; 3 Incentive Awards \$125 each	See Above
Class IV	16-18	\$5 per entry plus state entry fee	\$300-1st Place, \$200-2nd Place, \$150-3rd Place Olga Klein Nelson Award, and 4 Incentive Awards of \$150. \$250—Outstanding string composition. \$150—Outstanding piano composition, Laura K. Wilson Memorial Award honoring Dorothy Dann Bullock.	See Above
NFMC Oscar Valentin Regional Awards		Included in fee above; Not to be applied for separately	Class I: 2 at \$100 in the five Regions Class II: 2 at \$100 in the five Regions Class III: 3 awards at \$100 in the five Regions Class IV: 3 awards at \$100 in the five Regions	

See Instructions for Award Applicants on the following page ➡



# Instructions for Award Applicants

## COMPETITION AND AWARDS (C&A) CHART

The C&A Chart may be downloaded from [nfmf-music.org](http://nfmf-music.org) or ordered from NFMF Headquarters, [info@nfmf-music.org](mailto:info@nfmf-music.org). The Chart includes only endowed NFMF Awards. Check Individual State Federation websites for possible additional awards.

## APPLICATION, INFORMATION AND SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Award requirements are available on the NFMF website, [nfmf-music.org](http://nfmf-music.org), or contact the Chair of the specific award. All NFMF award applications must be submitted online on the NFMF website.

## U.S. CITIZENSHIP REQUIREMENT

Applicants for individual awards must be native-born/naturalized U.S. citizens. (Exceptions: Lynn Freeman Olson Composition, Lynn Freeman Olson Piano Pedagogy Award, Ruth Morse Wilson Handbell Award and International Music Camp – at least 50% of IMC award recipients must be U.S. citizens.)

## NFMF MEMBERSHIP

Applicants must be NFMF members either by individual, organizational or associate group affiliation before applications are accepted. (Exceptions: Young Artist Awards, Ellis Piano Duo Awards, National Music Week Essay, Ruth Morse Wilson Handbell Award, Centennial Chamber Music Commendation, Summer Music Center Awards, and the three Armed Forces Awards.) Application forms include specific membership information.

*Note: In competitions requiring NFMF membership, applicants must hold membership in the division in which the competition is listed (e.g. Junior entrants must be members of the Junior Division; Student entrants of the Student/Collegiate Division, etc.*

## FIRST PLACE WINNER LIMITATIONS

- No individual may enter, in the same year, competitions in multiple divisions even if they hold membership in more than one division.
- No first place winner of an individual NFMF award listed in the C&A Chart is eligible to compete again for the same award. (Exceptions: NFMF Veterans Awards where entrants may win first place awards multiple times but not consecutively, and the Jr. Composers competition in which first place winners may compete in a different category but not the same category.)
- First place winners of Arts and American Music Division monetary awards may win first place multiple times, but not consecutively. (Exception: National Music Week Essay Contest)

## THE NFMF

The NFMF, a not-for-profit organization, is dedicated to MUSIC EDUCATION and promotion of CREATIVE and PERFORMING ARTS in AMERICA.

Since its founding in 1898, the NATIONAL FEDERATION OF MUSIC CLUBS has grown into one of the world's largest music organizations with Junior, Student and Adult clubs and individual members. The NFMF is chartered by the Congress of the United States and is a member of the United Nations. Dedicated to finding and fostering young musical talent, the NFMF offers more than three quarters of a million dollars annually in state and national competitions.

Anyone wishing to become a NFMF member, subscribe to magazines, receive literature or make a tax-exempt contribution may contact the National Headquarters. For more information about the Federation, visit the website listed below.

## National Federation of Music Clubs

1646 West Smith Valley Road, Greenwood, IN 46142  
Telephone: (317) 882-4003 • [info@nfmf-music.org](mailto:info@nfmf-music.org)

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