



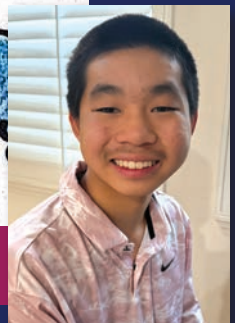
NATIONAL FEDERATION OF MUSIC CLUBS

Junior Keynotes

Winter 2026 • Vol. 99, No. 2



Artwork by Kai Sheen
Santa Clarita, California



NFMC Junior Keynotes Directory

National Federation of Music Clubs, Inc. • Chartered by the Congress of the United States (ISSN 0022-6629)

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Message from the President

by Deborah T. Freeman

Greetings!

I'm writing this in October to meet our November 1 winter issue deadline. Why does it take so long? Putting together a magazine is loads of work for our editor, expert proofing team, printing company, and mail distributor. We appreciate all who make our *Junior Keynotes Magazine* possible, and my hope is that you will share the many opportunities outlined in this magazine.

How will you make a difference in 2026?

- New Year, New Goals: Record your goals and check your progress!
- Tell one friend about NFMC.
- Visit a retirement center and share your music – invite a friend to participate.
- Gather some musician friends and make covers for this magazine!
- Study a living American composer each month and contact them.

I hope you will enjoy this *Junior Keynotes* issue and remember to share the good news!

Deborah 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

Greetings NFMC teachers, students, and friends!

Many of you are experiencing a winter season filled with cold weather and snow! The holidays are past and now it's time for our Junior members to concentrate on perfecting and memorizing their pieces for the 2026 district Federation Festivals.

Before you know it, spring will be here and it will be time to submit articles for the Spring 2026 issue of *Junior Keynotes*! Please keep in mind that the deadline for submission in the Spring issue is February 1, 2026. To keep publication on schedule, articles received after February 1 will not be included in the Spring issue.

Remember to keep the pictures and artwork coming, also. We are always looking for artwork from our very talented Juniors for the front cover. In addition, we hope to receive news and pictures from Junior Clubs in each of your states!

Jeanne Hryniewicki, Editor
Junior Keynotes Magazine



Happy New Year from the Junior Division!

by Lori Jessen, *Chair*

Happy New Year from the Junior Division!

We trust that your holiday season was filled with the making of many new happy memories. The new year brings a sense of having a fresh start. What will be different this year for you? Any new personal goals set for the next few months? Learning a new piece? Reading a new book? Taking a new adventure to somewhere you've never been? I hope that you are able to realize all the things that will bring blessing and satisfaction to your life. When we are happy and fulfilled, we are at *our* best to have the best possible influence on our Juniors.

As lessons begin after a holiday break, try to share with your students what new things you are undertaking in the new year. Our juniors are watching, and when they see us embarking on something different and new, we are setting a good example of being a life-long learner. What enhances us personally also makes us better teachers—it's a win-win!

As the new year on the calendar starts on January 1, it's actually more the middle of the year for NFMCC activities as we began our year on July 1. Now we are looking at the time when most of the award deadlines will pass soon and Festival season will also be in full swing. This is the time when we are focused on making sure all the things happen properly, and it's glorious. Stay on track and hang in there. It will be finished before you know it. Enjoy every moment. **JK**

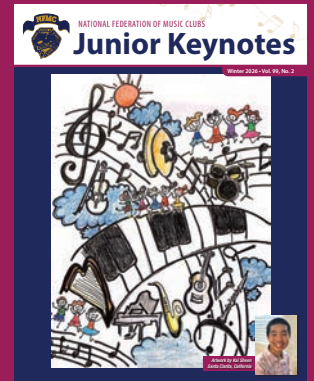
Lori Jessen
Junior Division Chair



Meet the Cover Artist

Kai Sheen | Santa Clarita, California

Kai Sheen Age 15. Kai is from Santa Clarita, California, and is currently in 9th grade. In addition to his passion for piano, Kai enjoys exploring his creativity through art and spending time on the golf course. He looks forward each year to National Music Week and the opportunity to connect with fellow students and share in their musical experiences.



Correction to the Fall 2025 Junior Keynotes Magazine:

In the fall issue, the cover artist, Irene Wang is from Tumwater, Oregon, not Washington State. Irene Wang will be a 7th grader, in the fall, at Tumwater Middle School in Tumwater, Oregon.





Festivals Participation for Distance Entrants

by Debbie Wiser, Chair

Kenai, Alaska's inaugural NFMF Festival almost ended 15 days before it even began. COVID had just started turning the world upside down. To protect Alaska's rural communities and hospitals, the governor shut the borders, requiring all residents to shelter in place—no mingling of households, indefinitely.

Much like Festival sites in the lower 48, Kenai's four quick-thinking teachers asked entrants to record their performances at home and send them in. Their virtual Festival was a success. What began as a necessity during the pandemic became an opportunity for lessons and performances to take place across distances that once posed a barrier. They host a live Festival now, but every year since, they have included virtual entrants from 700 miles away.

This is the tale of only one Festival. We have some Festival sites that have been exclusively-virtual for a few years now. Including rural, expatriate, and military entrants isn't new to NFMF Festivals, but now the Online Bulletin includes and invites "Distance Learners"

as entrants. As stated in the *2024–2028 NFMF Festivals Bulletin*, "An entrant must be permitted to perform in any event listed in the Festivals Bulletin, provided all requirements are met. The adjudication will be scheduled with the approval of the Area Festivals Chair/Admin and judged with the same criteria as an in-person performance." *General Rules/Entrants/Rural, Expatriate, Military, and Distance Learners*

OPTIONS FOR DISTANCE LEARNER ENTRANTS

- **Virtual Participation in the Teacher's Home Festival:** The entrant may register to perform in their teacher's home Area Festival. Performances can be submitted as unedited video recordings or presented live through an online platform.

- **Live Performance in a Host Festival near the Entrant's Residence:** Some entrants may prefer performing closer to home and in person. In these cases, the teacher will need to obtain membership in the host area's senior club and register the entrant through Vivace for that Festival.

Teachers—Talk with your Area Chair/Admin right away. Let them know of your interested distance learners. Be quick to help with the technology that may be needed. And if you are looking for a Host Festival site, give me a call. I'm happy to help you connect!

Area Chairs/Admin—Is this your first time including virtual performers in your Festival? No worries! It's easier than you may think. Reach out anytime—we have some wonderful "phone-a-friend" resources who are happy to answer your questions and explain the process: nfmcfestivalschair@gmail.com.

With creativity and technology, your Festivals site can welcome the distance learners of NFMF members. Through NFMF Festivals, every student—no matter where they live—can experience the joy and accomplishment of a Festival performance. **JK**

Carpenter - Diversions
(1923)
Edited by
Nicholas Susi
Noted Pianist & Educator
2015 NFMF
Young Artist Winner
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Vivace Updates

by Sandra Preysz, NFMV Vivace Chair

Vivace continues to improve with new reports and functionality. One feature we are excited to announce is the ability to see pieces previously performed by an entrant in an event. This new feature can be found at the time the registration is being approved. With one click using the spyglass icon by the word “Choice,” admins can see the complete list of pieces previously performed by the entrant. Enjoy!

Vivace calculations are changing so that they are now done in real time after the rating is entered. Because of this, the time needed to generate reports for large Festivals has been dramatically reduced.

The expanded report feature for teachers will soon be launched. Teachers will be able to go to reports and create:

- Registration Invoice
- Student Registration List
- Student Schedule
- Rating Sheets
- Federation Cups Earned
- Student History Report

Additional requests were received from Area Admins and the following reports now can be generated in Vivace:

- Schedule for accompanists
- Schedule by Date/Time (for sign in at the check in desk)
- List of Sight Playing/Sight Singing registrations.
- Area Federation Cup Report now includes the totals of Cups earned in each event
- Student History reports now include the total of Consecutive Superiors by year.

Keep those requests coming!

With the expansion of the alternating option to include so many more events in the new 2024-2028 Bulletin, there has been a need to accommodate this with changes in procedure to the Registration process. It will now be necessary to check the COMBINE box for both the Solo and Concerto events that are to be combined in the same year. Similarly, if ALTERNATING is desired, the ALTERNATE box will need to be checked for the event in the prior year and the different alternating event in the current year. Because this is new, there will be some instances where the alternate box was not checked previously. When Student History reports are reviewed, if there is an instance where the combining or alternating is not being added to the total, Admins should send detailed information to a National Admin to make sure the previous year is checked. Then Vivace will again correctly calculate the Student History. Our team will respond quickly once a record is called to our attention.

Many thanks to Grace Kopitske for meticulously reviewing the records as much as possible and checking those needed boxes on existing records. As carefully as the thousands of records have been reviewed, there will be some boxes that still need to have the correct boxes checked.

Reviewing so many records has also revealed that teachers need a reminder about archiving students whom they no longer teach. This housekeeping task should be performed each fall so that students who change teachers can be found and “adopted” by the new teacher. Vivace has a safeguard to prevent students from being “adopted” by a new teacher if the student already has an existing relationship with another teacher.

Please be aware that when a state changes the fees for events or for Federation Cup, that needs to be updated in Vivace. Contact a Vivace national admin so that those fee changes can be entered. This is a necessary step to make sure that the JR 3-3 will be generated correctly and each Festival area will know the correct amount to pay the state. **JK**



Cover me, please!

Submit your original artwork for
Junior Keynotes front covers!

Juniors only, 8.5 x 11, pen and ink w/color drawings, collages and photography will be considered. Please email high resolution jpg, eps or pdf files of your work.

Email JRK@nfmv-music.org for more information.



Federation Festivals Bulletin

by Jennifer Key, *Chair*

We are very excited about the release of the Online *Bulletin* on October 11, 2025! Our goal was to have this resource available for the 2025-2026 Festival year, so if you haven't purchased the 2024-2028 *Bulletin*, go to www.nfmc-music.org and check it out. Vivace has been a tremendous help in the Festivals registration and reporting process. Now with the Online *Bulletin*, teachers will have more assistance by allowing them to have access to *Bulletin* repertoire online before registration. The Online *Bulletin* can be accessed anywhere that you have internet access; no need to remember to bring your printed bulletin to the music store, or worry about losing it in your pile of stuff at home.

The *Bulletin* Management System is the place where all Festivals rules and repertoire are in a single, accessible location. The developer carried over the familiar user-friendly navigation from Vivace, while the Festivals *Bulletin* Committee ensured the accurate entry of Festival rules and repertoire into the system. Thank you for your patience throughout the development, testing, and proofreading process. We hope this enhanced and streamlined resource will improve your Festival experience.

The Online *Bulletin* can be accessed by going to <https://bulletin.nfmc-music.org> and logging in with your Vivace username and password. If you need a Vivace login, contact Sandra Preysz.

Festivals rules are divided into three sections, Festivals General Rules, Federation Cup Plan, and Section Rules. Remember to start with Festivals General Rules first, then view the specific rules for your event. The Federation Cup Plan has information on alternating events and

combining points, a great way for your students to have more options in choosing repertoire, and for your students to earn more points toward a cup. Section Rules has rules that are specific to each event. The Required Repertoire section has the most up-to-date required lists for each event and class. Navigating through the Required Repertoire in the Online *Bulletin* is similar to navigating in Vivace. An added feature is that you can view repertoire in one class higher and one class lower than the class you selected.

The Resources section has Festivals Forms, *Bulletin* Updates, Sight Playing/Sight Singing Requirements, Improvisation Charts, Theory Charts, and Sample Theory Tests and Answers.

The benefits of the Online *Bulletin* are that it contains the most current information, it can be found on the internet, and repertoire can be viewed before registration.

The idea of having an Online *Bulletin* started several years ago. Many volunteers worked countless hours entering data, designing web pages, and researching rules. I want to thank all those that worked many years before I became the *Bulletin* Editor: Lori Jessen, Sandra Preysz, Debbie Wiser, Grace Kopitske, Laurie Marshall, and Janice Flint.

As the new *Bulletin* Editor, I welcome all feedback and suggestions. Collaboration is essential in making the *Bulletin* a valuable resource for all teachers, and every perspective is important. Please feel free to share any ideas, concerns, and complaints regarding the *Bulletin*. **JK**

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Federation Cup Winner

by Dawn Steggerda, *Federation Cup Chair*


GRAND CUP WINNER - FLORIDA



Joseph Savoie

Joseph Savoie, age 17, has been awarded the NFMC 75-point Grand Cup in Piano Solo combined with Piano Concerto this year. Born and raised in Santa Rosa Beach, Florida, Joseph has played the piano for 12 years and performed piano solos in Festival for 11 consecutive years, receiving Superiors for all his performances. Beginning his piano studies at the young age of 5, Joseph has been mentored by Loretta Hake in her studio in Niceville, Florida.

Along with playing in Festival, Joseph has been a yearly participant in the National Guild of Piano Teachers Auditions for 11 years, receiving the Paderewski Gold Medal in 2023 for performing at least a 10-piece program for 10 years. Joseph has also performed a Sonatina or Sonata in the Choctaw Bay Music Club's Sonatina Spectacular for 11 years, as well as playing in multiple club student showcases.

Joseph is an outstanding pianist and an accomplished scholar. He is currently homeschooled, attending Northwest Florida State College as a dual-enrolled student. He will graduate next spring. Joseph plans to continue his piano studies when he graduates, whether it be as a minor or as a hobby. 



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#MTNA2026



Junior Achievement – Inspiring a Community Through Song

by Virginia Feitelson, Chair

Voice teacher **Amanda Beagle** and her *Junior Club* students from Warren, Ohio, are proving that the most powerful notes aren't just sung—they're shared. Through library sing-alongs, charity fundraisers, and community collaborations, Amanda and her students use music to connect, inspire, and make a difference. In this interview, Amanda shares how these experiences nurture not only musical skill but also confidence, leadership, and the importance of giving back.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO INCLUDE COMMUNITY OUTREACH PERFORMANCES IN YOUR STUDIO?

"It's important to instill a sense of altruism behind using our voices. We live in a culture that values instant gratification, but the arts are process-driven. Singing in the studio is valuable, but *sharing our voices with the world is the ultimate gift*. It's my job as a voice teacher to foster bravery through building community and collaboration, creating an environment where students feel empowered to use their voices."

HOW HAS BROADENING THE DEFINITION OF PERFORMANCE HELPED YOUR STUDENTS GROW?

"My students are eager to perform, and many participate in theater, choir, and drama at school. Having goals keeps them motivated, but I also want them to perform in different settings. While we do an annual recital, community-based performances—like at libraries or nursing homes—add meaningful, low-cost opportunities. Not only do students get to perform, but we can instill core values of *using our voices for a purpose*."

HOW DO YOU CONVEY THE VALUE OF COMMUNITY AND COLLABORATION?

"Community is an important core value that I believe in fostering whenever possible. Private lessons can feel isolated, and *public events help to bridge the gap between private and group study and foster a sense of camaraderie and teamwork as students work together toward common goals*. I believe people crave connection. So, when we provide the opportunity for community, people thrive - parents and students included."



Amanda Beagle Vocal Studio at the Historic Packard Hall Family Christmas Spectacular.



Amanda Beagle and her Junior Club participating in a community event at the Howland branch of the Warren Trumbull County Public Library.

YOUR LIBRARY PERFORMANCES SOUND MAGICAL. HOW DID THOSE BEGIN?

"*It is important to me to build relationships in the community*. Through collaboration with the Friends of the Warren Trumbull County Public Library, we were able to provide an interactive holiday program for children in our community. I have always felt the library is a magical place, so bringing music to this space is a valuable way to get back."

DO YOUR JUNIOR CLUB STUDENTS HELP PLAN THESE EVENTS?

"The students take on leadership roles by helping to choose the songs and leading the children in song. They know how to adapt depending on the reaction from the kids. *If someone needs support or help staying focused, the students take them under their wing and help get them back on track*."



Amanda Beagle Vocal Studio students participating in Rock 4 Reason.

WHAT OTHER COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS ARE YOU INVOLVED IN?

"This year, we're performing a Valentine's program at the *Cortland Collaborative*—a maker's market and café. It's a fun, casual venue that helps students adapt to new settings.

This winter, we'll collaborate with the W.D. Packard Concert Band for their *Family Christmas Spectacular* at historic Packard Music Hall. The event includes free school performances and a public show, and we especially love performing for the children who sing along and share in the magic of Christmas."

TELL US ABOUT ROCK 4 REASON.

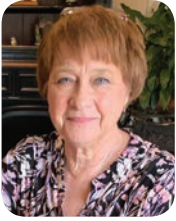
"We participate annually in Rock 4 Reason, which raises funds for families facing terminal illness. Students sing popular music they love while supporting a meaningful cause. I like this because *I want my students to sing music they like and to take ownership of making stylistic choices that fit their personality and interests*."

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE OTHER TEACHERS HOPING TO START COMMUNITY PROJECTS?

"My greatest advice is to be active in your community. Reach out to local institutions—they're often eager to collaborate. I believe building relationships is the key. Then word of mouth takes over. I do very little to no advertising and I have a waiting list."

A former Miss Ohio and Miss America talent winner, Amanda has toured the world singing for Holland America Cruise Lines. She is certified in Estill Voice Training® and The Singing Athlete®.

Catch Amanda performing with the Youngstown Symphony Orchestra this December. Learn more about her at www.amandabeagle.com and on Instagram at [@amandabeaglevocalstudio](https://www.instagram.com/amandabeaglevocalstudio) and Facebook [@amandabeaglestudio](https://www.facebook.com/amandabeaglestudio). JK



National Music Week

by Kathie White, *Chair*

Hello Juniors!

This is a reminder to not forget to celebrate **National Music Week on May 3 – 10**. If you or your Junior Club have not planned anything for this special week, now is the time! Remember the theme is “Music is...our constant companion.” This is a great theme to explore with your musical friends, school, and church music groups (choir, band), and even your family. The aim of this week is to involve people in our communities in celebrating all kinds of music and how important it is to our lives.

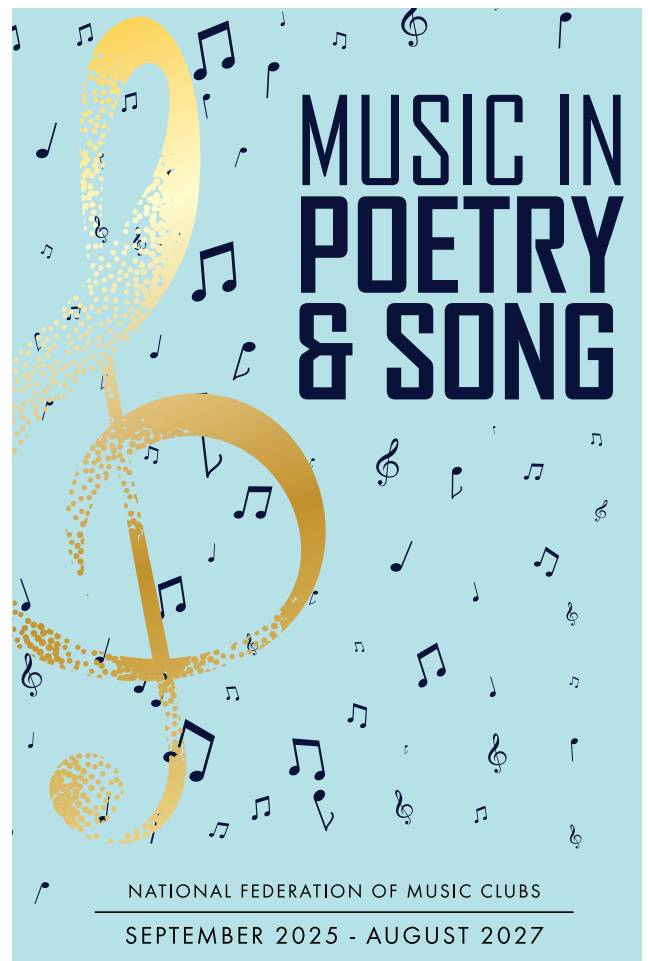
Here are a few ideas to get you started thinking, but I know you are much more creative than me.

1. Download the poster coloring page from the NFMC website (AR 12-8) to have a poster coloring contest in your class or grade level. The website is nfm-music.org.
2. Ask your music teacher if a short concert could be given by classmates during lunch or a break during the day.
3. Create your own poster for National Music Week to display at school, church, or a local coffee shop.
4. Make a collage of your favorite musicians to display at school or in the school library. Ask a couple of friends to join you in making collages or creating something unique to represent the theme.
5. Invite a musician to speak at your Junior Club or school on “The Value of Music in the Community.”

What are your ideas? Share them with me at whiteka23@yahoo.com. I look forward to reading and sharing them with our Senior Clubs! **JK**



<p>Deadline Mar 1</p> <p>\$100 November Parade of American Music</p>	<p>Deadline April 1</p> <p>\$25 Ethnic Performance \$25 Celebrate Strings</p>
<p>Deadline May 1</p> <p>\$25 Just Jazz! \$100 Folk Music Programs \$100 American Women Composers \$250 Yearlong American Music</p>	



Young Musicians in Full Swing for the Fall Season

Young Annasemble Orchestra • Fall 2025 Update

The joyful sound of progress fills the rehearsal hall this fall as the Young Annasemble Orchestra musicians prepare for their upcoming holiday concerts. Thanks to the generous support of the National Federation of Music Clubs Fund for the Advancement of Musical Arts (FAMA), students now rehearse confidently with instruments that sing as clearly as their own enthusiasm.

The grant of \$5,533 awarded earlier this year provided for essential maintenance and repairs of our loaned and shared instruments. Violins, cellos, clarinets, and flutes that once showed signs of wear have been carefully restored, giving young players renewed tools for artistic growth.

This season, those instruments are back in the hands of eager students, helping them reach new levels of expression and ensemble performance. Each rehearsal is a testament to what community investment in the arts can achieve—a harmony of opportunity, dedication, and hope.

As we look ahead to our holiday community concerts, we celebrate not only the music being made, but also the lasting impact of generosity that ensures every young musician has the chance to play, learn, and belong.



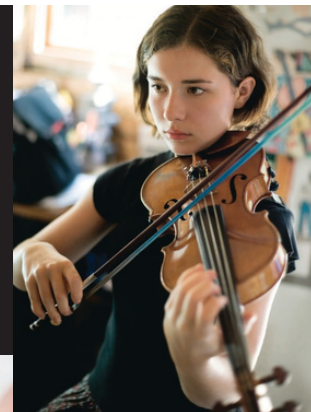
FAMA

FUND FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF MUSICAL ARTS

(FAMA) grants are designed to support a specific music education/outreach project. They are non-renewable and are not intended to support ongoing projects. New grant applicants will receive priority over previous grant recipients, and preference will be given to community projects that strengthen music education/music appreciation in the United States. All decisions of the committee are final.

Dr. Ouida Keck, Chair
keckouida@gmail.com

Deadline: May 1



For more detailed grant information visit The National Federation of Music Clubs at www.nfmc-music.org





Angie Greer Music in Poetry Award

by Debra Hughes, Chair



Angie Greer passed away at her home peacefully with family on August 3, 2025. Angela Ruth Hitchcock was born 1942 in Dunedin, Florida, and graduated from Florida State University with a nursing degree. She then moved to Atlanta, her mother's hometown, to earn her Masters at Emory University, where her father

had attended seminary. Angie worked many years as a nurse and eventually taught nursing at Emory. There she met the love of her life, Charles Greer, who was a medical resident at Emory. They married in 1970 in Atlanta and permanently relocated to Cordele, the small South Georgia town from which Charles hailed. Angie was very active in church in many leadership roles and was a Sunday school teacher for decades. She twice made medical mission trips to Africa, embodying her commitment to the Christian commandment to love and serve others. Angie loved to travel and visited five continents. She loved to visit her son, Carlton, in Paris, France, and in New York City. Music always played a role in these visits, and Angie enjoyed many performances with him at opera houses and concert halls in Paris, London, Vienna, and New York.

Angie was constantly contributing her time and energy to various organizations and causes. The most important of these was the National Federation of Music Clubs, where she served as President of the Georgia Federation and National Chairperson for the NFMC Festivals. Angie loved music, and she became keenly involved in NFMC Festivals. She went from the local level to the state level then to chairing the program nationwide for many years. She was committed to promoting American artists and composers and enjoyed traveling throughout the country hearing wonderful music with Georgia Federation Music Club friends and colleagues. Angie Greer began the Music in Poetry Award for Juniors to encourage young writers to express themselves poetically about the music in which they are involved.

We are delighted that many students entered this year's competition and congratulate everyone who participated. NFMC is pleased to announce the following regional winners:

NORTH CENTRAL:
James Montplaisir, Waterloo, IA
Teacher Chandar Boyle

NORTHEASTERN:
Kate Shiflett, West Orange, NJ
Teacher Rebecca Eng

SOUTH CENTRAL:
Esther Hann, Russellville, AR
Teacher Sarah Hann

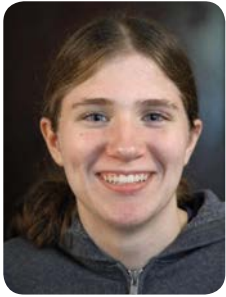
SOUTHEASTERN:
Luci O'Leslie, Groveland, FL
Teacher Amy Duncan

WESTERN:
Alexander Hu, Redondo Beach, CA
Teacher Soo Choi

Please enjoy the winning entries on the next few pages.



Angie Greer Music in Poetry Award Winners ...continued



SOUTH CENTRAL REGION

Esther Hann

Arkansas

Esther Hann is 13 years old and loves to write. She hopes to be an author someday. She enjoys playing music. She plays the violin, piano and clarinet. She has been studying violin for four years. It was her love of music and the violin that inspired

her to write, "Inheritance of Song". In addition to music and writing, Esther loves animals, especially her cat.

"Inheritance of Song"

by **Esther Hann, AR**

The old violin,
A bit battered, but loved.
A dusty bow,
Missing some hairs.

Old hands tune pegs,
Lift the violin to a shoulder.
A bow settles on the string,
And is drawn across them.

The note comes out,
An ugly shriek.
Twist the pegs more,
Trying each note with care.

The hands start a tune,
The melody is sad, longing.
Second song is jaunty,
Little hands clap with glee.

Old man and granddaughter,
From old to new.
Passing a violin of longing
And joy, from one to the next.



SOUTHEASTERN REGION

Luci O'Leslie

Florida

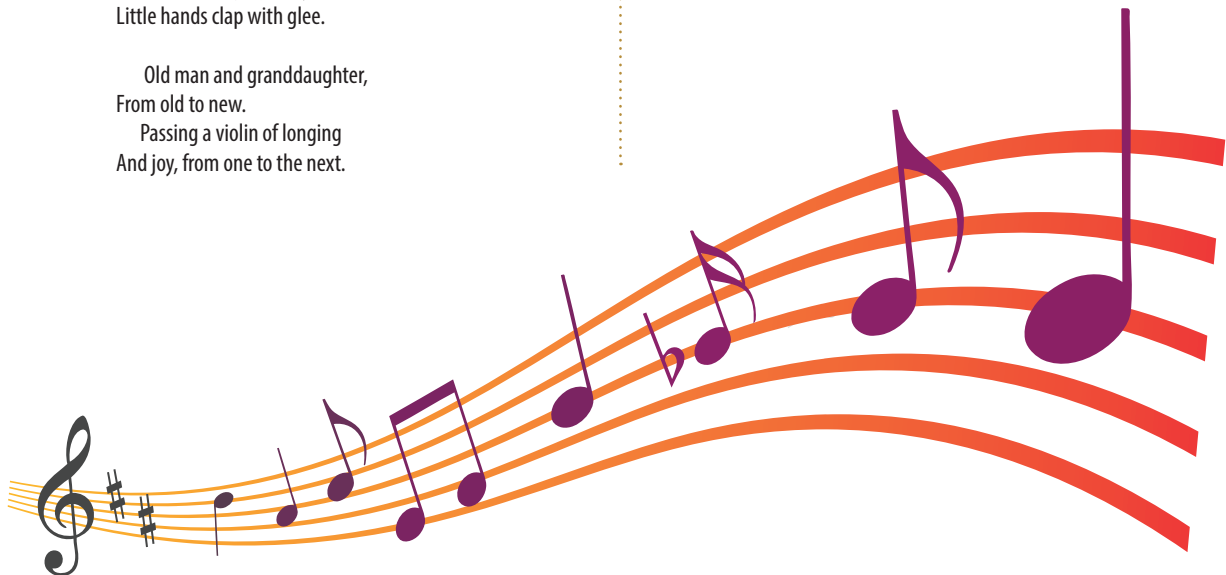
I'm **Luci O'Leslie** and I enjoy music, art, games, and the Gospel! I love trying new things!

"Pitch and Rhythm"

by **Luci O'Leslie, FL**

I am *pitch*, the height upon the line,
The measure of a voice, whether low or fine.
I'm born from how the air vibrates, fast or slow,
A thrilling, rising tension, or a calm, steady flow.
I am the specific place a melody must rest,
The name of every note, put to the listener's test.
I give the music color, its mood, and degree,
The very soul of tune, defined by frequency.

I am *rhythm*, the pulse that moves the feet,
The ordered, dividing pattern, the long and short so sweet.
I not mind the height of the note you play,
But when the sound starts, and how long it will stay.
I am the beat that counts one, two, three, four pace,
The silent, steady grid across the music's face.
The way the measures build, and precisely where it breaks,
I am the space between the notes, the breath the singer takes.
I give music structure, its energy and drive,
The reason every melody feels so incredibly alive!





NORTH CENTRAL REGION

James Montplaisir

Iowa

James Montplaisir is a 7th grade homeschool student who enjoys playing with his friends and sketching plants and animals. He has been playing piano for two and a half years and plays keyboard for his youth group worship team.

“Music of the Trees”

by James Montplaisir, IA

I hear the music in the trees
 The leaves rustling from the breeze
 Birds singing sweet songs of old
 And squirrels chatter of tales untold
 I hear the sticks breaking up very high
 The trees yelling, a loud outcry
 The music that I hear,
 The music of the trees is clear



NORTHEASTERN REGION

Kate Shiflett

New Jersey

Kate Shiflett is a freshman at West Orange High School in New Jersey. Besides writing, she enjoys birdwatching, playing piano, running cross country, drawing, and acting. She is excited to have been chosen for this award and would like to thank her piano

teacher, Ms. Rebecca Eng, for her encouragement and support.

“Ode to the Dawn Chorus”

by Kate Shiflett, NJ

Birdsong warbling o'er the dawn
 Greeting those who wander long
 And waking poets from their slumber
 Rushing to their scores to mumble
 The same string of notes that tumbled
 Out of the beaks of birds galore
 Written, perhaps, for reed or keys,
 Or an orchestra's encore
 To the rhapsody of wrens and robins,
 A lilting liturgy of undeciphered lore
 The chorus of the dawn calls a query
 That for which we have no answer
 Why be a singer, writer, dancer?
 Why do the birds sing their declarations
 With their strange melody and rhyme?
 Perhaps they whistle a tale of time
 Passed down through the feathered generations
 Telling of the need for life
 To craft a musical creation,
 And to grace the dawn with song



WESTERN REGION

Alexander Hu

California

Alexander Hu is a sophomore at Redondo Union High School in Redondo Beach, California, and has been studying violin with Soo Choi since the second grade. He has a strong passion for sharing music with his community and especially enjoys performing at senior centers, where he hopes to uplift others through meaningful musical connection.

He currently serves as the Vice President of the SKC Violin Academy Junior Club, helping support student musicians and organize volunteer events. Since 2017, Alexander has participated in the SCV Federation Festival, consistently earning Superior ratings for his performances.

A dedicated student and musician, he continues to refine his artistry and expand his repertoire each year. Outside of music, Alexander enjoys playing basketball and participating in robotics, where he explores creativity, teamwork, and innovation.

“Where the Strings Breathe”

by Alexander Hu, CA

I slip away to quiet space and lift my violin into the glow of soft evening,
 This is when the bow rises,
 air slows,
 thoughts settle like feathers,
 and a hush opens inside me.
 Others hear nothing but a room at rest,
 yet I hear a world unfolding.
 To some, it's simply wood and wire,
 but to me, it is a doorway made of sound.
 Each stroke, each quiver of tone, each breath of vibration -
 they gather around me, gentle as warm light,
 steady enough to steady me.
 Old melodies, new phrases, fragments of forgotten practice,
 all drift together, forming something unnamed
 yet deeply known.
 Music like this isn't written down,
 and it doesn't need to be.
 It exists only to soothe what tightens in the chest,
 to cradle minds that wander too far,
 to teach the restless hand how to be still,
 and to remind hearts they are never alone.
 Here is where I rest,
 where minutes blur and worries fall away,
 where silence and sound weave into one calm breath.
 Here is where I return to myself
 where each note is a heartbeat,
 each pause a moment for the soul to exhale.
 Here, in the space between bow and string,
 I learn to be quiet,
 I learn to listen,
 I learn to breathe -
 until peace settles in, and I begin again.



2025 NFMC Lynn Freeman Olson Composition Awards Results

by Lisa Smith, Chair

There were many remarkable and creative musical ideas contained within the entries for the 2025 NFMC Lynn Freeman Olson Composition Awards, and the compositions selected for awards reflected originality, a firm grasp of compositional skills, and strict adherence to the competition requirements.

THE FIRST PLACE WINNERS FOR 2025 WERE:

INTERMEDIATE: **Charlotte Connors**, student of Dan McCurry, SC
Composition: "The Ugly Duckling"

HIGH SCHOOL: **Emily Bennett**, student of Heather Riley, MA
Composition: "Wind Chimes"

ADVANCED: No Winner

There were no honorable mentions awarded in either the High School or Advanced categories but there were two honorable mentions in the Intermediate category:

Kendall King, student of Dan McCurry, SC for her composition "Swing On By"

Maggie Oakman, student of Dan McCurry, SC for her composition "Calm Echoes"

Congratulations to these outstanding students for their entries!



Emily Bennett

Emily Bennett FIRST PLACE - HIGH SCHOOL Massachusetts


Emily Bennett is a pianist and composer living in the greater Boston area. She has been playing the piano since she was seven years old. Emily began composing at a young age as well and loves telling stories through her music. She has won multiple awards for her compositions and piano performances, including Best

Performance in the Micolot International Competition and the Olga K. Nelson Award in Class IV of the NFMC Junior Composers Competition. Emily has a passion for drawing others into her love for music, as demonstrated by how she frequently writes and arranges pieces for herself and her three sisters to play together. Emily and her sisters also love singing together, including a *cappella* hymns and barbershop arrangements. She will graduate from high school in 2026 and plans to pursue music composition.

Do you know a talented young composer? If so, please encourage them to enter the next NFMC Lynn Freeman Olson Composition Competition in 2027. The Lynn Freeman Olson Composition Awards are given biennially in odd-numbered years. The applicants must be nonprofessionals, whose works have not been previously-published for the purpose of general public use or sales. Applicants must have current membership in the National Federation of Music Clubs and may enroll as Individual members by visiting www.nfmc-music.org/payment. Applicants must be at the appropriate age/grade level and be studying in some area of music at the time of the application closing date (March 1) of the year of entry. There are three different categories and awards based on age/grade:

- **Intermediate:** Grades 7-8-9 at application closing date \$750.00*
- **High School:** Grades 10-11-12 at application closing date \$1,500.00*
- **Advanced:** High School graduates through age 25 at application closing date \$2,250.00*

**In the event of financial shortfalls, advertised award amounts may be adjusted. Applicants would be notified of the award change.*

Only one composition may be entered any given award year and applicants who receive awards are not permitted to enter the same category a second time. Applicants who receive awards and whose compositions are subsequently published cannot re-enter the competition. It is important to note that solo/ensemble arrangements and ensemble settings of standard works are not eligible. All award recipients will be notified on May 18 of the award year. Each applicant must submit the JR 8-2 application and additional required materials postmarked by March 1 to the national chair. Exceptions will not be granted to this deadline. Additionally, applications will not be accepted more than one month prior to the postmark deadline. For more information, please visit nfmc-music.org and download form JR 8-1 as well as the application JR 8-2. 




Mary Alice Cox Award

by Anna Cosma, Chair



Happy new year!

With the new year come new goals. What better time is there to work towards an award than now? The Mary Alice Cox award for cello and double bass is a wonderful opportunity to motivate students toward accomplishing their musical studies. This award offers three prizes of \$2,500, \$1,500, and \$1,000. Submissions are due no later than **March 1**. You will need to prepare a 10–25-minute program of at least two pieces in contrasting styles, with one piece by an American composer. For more details, please visit the NFMC website under Junior Division Awards and contact me with any questions. I look forward to receiving this year's submissions. 

NATIONAL FEDERATION OF MUSIC CLUBS

SPECIAL AWARDS

\$2,500 JOYCE WALSH JUNIOR AWARDS FOR SPECIAL NEEDS

\$1,000 MUSIC FOR THE BLIND COMPOSITION AWARD

\$1,000 BENZINGER/VALENTIN BLIND PERFORMANCE AWARD

DEADLINE MARCH 1






Junior Awards

\$2,500 Mary Alice Cox Cello/Bass Awards

\$2,000 Stillman Kelley Instrumental Awards

\$2,000 Wendell Irish Viola Awards

\$1,500 Martha Marcks Mack Vocal Awards

\$1,250 Marilyn Caldwell Piano Awards

\$500 Claire Ulrich Whitehurst Piano Awards

Deadline: March 1

More Information :







Claire Ulrich Whitehurst Piano Award

by Marcia Chaplin, *Chair*



Calling all Junior Pianists in 10th, 11th, 12th grades!!!

Could you use \$250 or better yet - \$500?? The NFMC Claire Ulrich Whitehurst Piano Solo Award could be just the opportunity you are looking for. The entry deadline for this award is **March 1, 2026**. High School students under the age of 19 should apply.

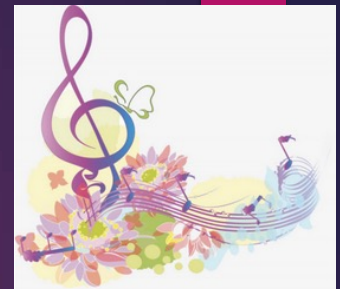
The repertoire requirements include a video performance of piano music representing various periods of music literature. You must also include one composition by an American composer.

The information and application can be found on the NFMC website (nfm-music.org). Just click on Competitions and Awards and click on Junior Division, then scroll down to the Claire Ulrich Whitehurst Award.

If you are an interested Junior or a Teacher who may have a junior interested in this award, now is the time to begin preparing. Please contact me if you have any questions.

Marcia Chaplin
Marciachaplin2@gmail.com

Martha Marcks Mack JUNIOR VOCAL AWARD



1st Place \$1,500, 2nd Place \$1,000, 3rd 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 nfm-music.org, Competitions and Awards, Jr. Division, forms JR 21-1 & JR 21-2. This competition has a **March 1** deadline so put those finishing touches on your performance and prepare your videos! Contact Kristin Ivers, National Chair. kivers210@gmail.com

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 5 qualifying applicants this year from Louisiana, California, (2) Pennsylvania, and New York.

1st place \$1,500 award: Katherine Berdovskiy, HS Sophomore, student of Narmina Sultanova, Bernadette Mondok Keller, and Angelina Kim, from Davis, California.

2nd place \$1,000 award: Mary Ella Bozeman, Graduating HS Senior, student of Megan Dearie, from Metairie, Louisiana

3rd place \$500 award: Serene Kwon, grade 11, student of Michael Janover, from Manhasset, New York



FIRST PLACE RECIPIENT

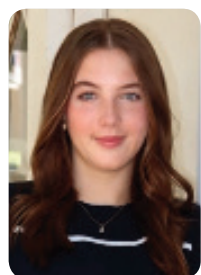
Katherine Berdovskiy, a 15-year-old mezzo-soprano, is a sophomore from Davis, California. She was always one of those kids you could find near the stage, singing and dancing along with bands at farmers' markets and county fairs, and she never skipped a single school concert or a talent show. She performed at many local events in the Yolo County area, sang in an ensemble, and had many roles at Davis Musical Theatre Company. She also joined an *a cappella* group, Davis Local Vocals,

Katherine Berdovskiy

sang in the school choir, and won various local and international singing competitions. Katherine and her childhood friend Matthew Vallero created a singing duo, "Kat&Matt," that performs pop, jazz, musical theater, and classical repertoire locally for various community events, competitions, and venues like the local retirement center. Katherine has studied classical music and singing with her brilliant teachers Bernadette Mondok, Narmina Sultanova, and Angelina Lim. Fluent in English and Russian, Katherine loves singing in Italian, Spanish, Latin, German, Belarusian, and other languages. Her other passions are painting, drawing, pottery, running the school art club, and working with kids as a summer camp assistant.

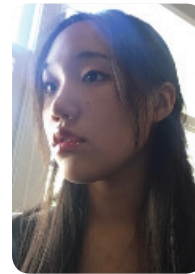
SECOND PLACE RECIPIENT

Mary Ella Bozeman is a senior at St. Martin's Episcopal School in Metairie, Louisiana. She has enjoyed singing from an early age. Ella has been fortunate to travel to Italy to sing with the New Orleans Children's Chorus and has been chosen to sing with the LA ACDA Honor Choir for the past 8 years. Ella plans to major in classical vocal performance and minor in broadcast journalism at Loyola University, New Orleans, in the fall. She is also the proud



Mary Ella Bozeman

recipient of their Rising Artist's Award scholarship. In addition to singing, Ella is Cheer Captain of her high school cheerleading squad, performs in musical theatre productions, is a student ambassador, an honor council representative and a member of the National Honor Society. She is appreciative to have been chosen as the second-place winner of the Martha Marcks Mack Junior Vocal Award.



Serene Kwon

THIRD PLACE RECIPIENT


Serene Kwon, a HS Junior from Manhasset, NY began singing children's songs in the second grade of elementary school and has since enjoyed nurturing beautiful emotions in young listeners. She contributed to the production of children's song albums in Korea and helped promote Catholic hymns by releasing an album with tenor Song Ki-Chang.

Her major awards include the Best Lyric Award at the KBS National Creative Children's Song Contest (2019), the Best Singer Award at the MBC National Creative Children's Song Contest (2018), the Excellence Award at the KBS National Year-End "Who Sings the Best" Contest (2017), and the Grand Prizes at both Our Children's Song Contest in Seoul (2018) and the Bean Tree National Children's Song Contest (2019). She also performed at various children's music festivals in major cities across Korea (2016–2019), including Children's Day celebrations at the Korea Arts Center in Seoul (2017, 2018), while serving as the soloist for the Banpo 4-dong Catholic Church Children's Choir (2017–2019).

After moving to New York in eighth grade, Serene continued her passion for music by participating annually in the New York Nassau All-County Festivals and volunteering as a choir member at St. Mary's Church. Expanding her talents into classical vocal performance, she earned Third Place in the 2024 American Protégé International Vocal Competition, First Place in the 2024 American Virtuoso International Music Competition, First Prize in the 2024 Bach International Music Competition, Second Prize in the 2024 International Classical Music Stars Competition, and the Platinum Prize in the 2024 Summer Global Genius Music Competition.

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

Leah Ann is a retired 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. 



Southeastern Minnesota Federation of Music Clubs

by Amy Heetland, *President*

The Southeastern Minnesota Federation of Music Clubs (SE MN FMC) held their first scholarship competition on March 1, 2025, in Rochester, Minnesota.

Students who participated in our local Festival in February, 2025 and received a superior rating, were given the opportunity to participate in a scholarship competition 3 weeks later.

Thirty-four Applicants auditioned in the solo category for piano and strings and they used their required selection from the Bulletin for the competition. Categories were determined as follows:

- Primary II- Primary IV
- Elementary I- Elementary III
- Elementary IV- Moderately Difficult I
- Moderately Difficult II through Difficult I
- Difficult 2 and above

First, second, and third place winners were determined by a panel of 3 judges in each category. First place winners received a monetary award and were required to perform at the Winners

Showcase recital in the evening that same day. Monies awarded were designated toward private music lessons or a summer music camp or clinic. Second and third place winners received medals. In the 5 categories, there were 15 student awards.

Teachers of the winning students are: Kathleen Covalt, Vona Murrell, Rosanna Nuguid, Basia Vanderzanden.

Our local Festival group has received grant money from the SEMAC (Southeastern Minnesota Arts Council) and with a small budget surplus, we chose to initiate this first competition that afforded a performance opportunity for piano and string students. Students were rewarded for their hard work and dedication, and provided a motivating goal to continue their music study.

A lovely showcase recital was given by the first place winners to recognize their achievement. Afterwards, a reception was given to honor the participants and families. The response to this first competition was overwhelmingly positive, and our group looks forward to the 2nd annual competition in March, 2026. We couldn't have been successful without the dedication of our amazing teachers and judges who made this all possible. JK



Category P2-P4

From left: June Trinidad- 1st place, Eowyn Gao- 2nd place, Catherine Zhang- 3rd place



Category E1-E3

From left: Juliet Phan-2nd place, Neo Ding-3rd place, Larry Zhang-1st place



Category E4-MD1

From left: Sophia Wang- 3rd place, Jayden Wang- 2nd place, Chloe Munis - 1st place

2025 SE MN Federation Scholarship Competition Showcase Winners Recital

Division P2 - P4

Softly Whisper K. Costley
Catherine Zhang - 3rd Place

A Place to DreamChee-Hwa Tan
Eowyn Gao - 2nd Place

Autumn is HereW. Gillock
June Trinidad - 1st Place

Division E1 - E3

The Midnight Express C. Fisher
Neo Ding - 3rd Place

Valse Parisienne G. Austin
Juliet Phan - 2nd Place

Mazurka For ChopinC. Rollin
Larry Zhang - 1st Place

Division E4 - MD1

On a Paris BoulevardW.Gillock
Sophia Wong - 3rd Place

Etude Brillante.....M. Goldston
Jayden Wang - 2nd Place

Sarabande in G minor Carl Bohm
Chloe Munis - 1st Place

Division MD2 - D1

Phantom RiderW. Gillock
Derrick Leng - 3rd Place

The Firefly A. Bilotti
Elma Zhang - 2nd Place

Bal du Moulin de La Galette.....C. Rollin
Emma Zhong - 1st Place

Division D2 - Above

Valse EtudeW. Gillock
Lucas Wang - 3rd Place

Prelude in C-sharp Minor, Op. 3, No. 2
S. Rachmaninoff
Vincent Pham - 2nd Place

Hungarian op.39 no.11E. MacDowell
Audrey McCollough - 1st Place

*Thank you
Heartfelt gratitude to our teachers for your
guidance, our students for your dedication,
and our parents for your support. Your
encouragement makes this musical
journey possible. Thank you for being part
of this special evening!*



Category MD2-D1

From left: Emma Zhong-1st place, Elma Zhang-2nd place, Derrick Leng- 3rd Place



Category D2 and above

From left: Lucas Wang- 3rd place, Vincent Pham- 2nd place, Audrey McCullough- 1st place



All the winners in the showcase recital



NFMC Western Region launches Practice for Hope fundraiser

by Wilma Hawkins, Western Region Vice-President, *Chair*

For this year's fundraiser, Practice for Hope, students will be practicing their instruments to earn money for the Dr. Alex Kim Foundation (<https://alexkimfoundation.org>) in Phoenix, Arizona. In previous years it was titled Practice for Disaster. The goal this year is to raise \$3,000 to purchase 100 Ukuleles. This will provide the Foundation with enough instruments to open an additional classroom of music education.

The mission of the Dr. Alex Kim Foundation is to break down barriers and create pathways to success by offering accessible services that address physical, emotional, educational, and spiritual needs. This Foundation believes in the transformative power of art. The Art Academy offers children from low-income families the opportunity to express themselves, build confidence, and learn valuable life skills through creative outlets like music. They offer free lessons for string instruments, drums, voice, piano, and guitar (acoustic and electric) for children ages 6–18.



Besides sponsoring the purchase of the instruments, the other purpose is to encourage kids to help kids by using their talents to raise money. **JK**



FEDERATION FESTIVALS

Bulletin

2024 - 2028

A project of
NATIONAL FEDERATION of MUSIC CLUBS

FEDERATION FESTIVALS

Bulletin

JULY 2024 - JUNE 2028

AVAILABLE NOW!

**Contact NFMC Headquarters
for more information**

317.882.4003 | info@nfmc-music.org

State Buzz

ARKANSAS

The Junior Beat

Submitted by Kathie White, Arkansas Federation of Music Clubs State President



We have a new Arkansas state Junior Newsletter called **The Junior Beat**. My goal as state president this year is to develop our Jr. Division with stronger connections to AFMC and NFMC. This will certainly go to our Senior clubs, but it is designed especially for our Juniors and their teachers. We will be sending it to all our festival teachers for them to send on to their students. That “sending” will be primarily by text and/or email. This is done with Canva

(I’m learning!) and easily shared via text and email. It can also be converted to a PDF or into Word.

We have also created a Junior Division Leadership Team and today we have our third Zoom meeting. Arkansas has not had a Junor Day for several years and we are excited to plan one for April 25, 2026.

If you are interested in seeing *The Junior Beat*, email me at whiteka23@yahoo.com and I’ll send you a PDF copy.

CALIFORNIA

Halloween Costume Recitals

Claremont Community School of Music hosted our annual Halloween Costume Recitals in October, featuring more than 100 young musicians performing in costume for family and friends. Students from beginner through advanced levels shared solo repertoire and duets, celebrating preparation, stage confidence, and community spirit.

Photo credit: Claremont Community School of Music (CCSM)

CYSO Concerto Competition

The Claremont Youth Symphony Orchestras held their annual Concerto Competition at CCSM in October. Division winners will perform as featured soloists with the Claremont Symphony Orchestra this season, highlighting exceptional artistry and dedication from student musicians across our region.

Photo credit: Claremont Community School of Music (CCSM)



Claremont Community Music School students



Claremont Youth Symphony Orchestra School students



DANCE AWARDS



\$2,500 THELMA A. ROBINSON BALLET AWARD DEADLINE FEB. 1 (ODD YEARS)



\$400 DANCE AWARDS IN BALLET AND/OR DANCE STYLES DEADLINE MAY 1

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State Buzz ...continued

GEORGIA

The Georgia Federation of Music Clubs had a very busy, successful year. In September, we hosted our Biennial Fall Conference.

It was very exciting! Dr. Helen Marlais was our guest clinician, with Dr. Arthur Campbell as the keynote speaker. Dr. Campbell spoke about “Honest Pedagogy is the Kindest and Most Effective Pedagogy”.

Dr. Marlais led two marvelous workshops: “Coaching Piano Ensemble Teams to be Exemplary!” and “Teaching Beginner Students Technique and Musicality.” She also gave a masterclass to three ensemble teams, which was outstanding!

GFMC also sponsors three annual scholarship competitions with monetary awards: the Floride Smith Dean Piano Scholarship, which is awarded to students ages 19 to 26. They play a piece by an American composer and another piece by a non-American composer. First place Distinguished Performer was Annabel Shu, student of Alan Woo who was awarded a \$2,000 scholarship. Second place Accomplished Performer was Evan Wyatt, student of Jerico Vasquez who received \$500.

The second competition is the Continuing Education Piano Scholarship, a competition for high school pianists. The first place Distinguished Performer was Eric Shu, student of Ping Xu, receiving a \$600 scholarship; the second place Accomplished Performer was Nelson Solon Liu, student of Hwee Boon Hg, receiving \$400; the third place Notable Performer was Nicole Lee, student of Ping Xu who received a \$200 scholarship.

The third competition, the Bailey-Cobb Scholarship, is a non-piano high school competition for vocal solo and instrumental solo. In the Vocal solo, the first-place Distinguished Performer was Nishevitha Suresh, student of Margaret Liu receiving a \$350 scholarship; the second-place Accomplished Performer was Alishia Baiju, student of Margaret Liu, who received a \$200 scholarship. The first-place distinguished performer in instrumental solo for violin was Santiago Machain, a student of Denise Burcham, receiving \$350.

We had 6,500 students participate in the 2025 festivals, with over 350 teachers. Georgia is an active state with wonderful volunteers who strive to help all our students!



May Awards





\$5,000 Michael Edwards Senior Performance Award


\$2,000 Dr. Ouida Keck Professional Piano Teacher Development Award

\$2,000 Lana Bailey Piano Concerto Awards for Juniors

Deadline: May 1

More Information :





JUNIOR COMPOSERS CONTEST

For More Information Visit:
www.nfmc-music.org/competitions-awards

Encouraging Today's Young Composers for the Music of Tomorrow.




MICHIGAN

Michigan Southwest District Workshops

Michigan Southwest District members Barbara Tanner, Dan Forbes, and Karla Shotts hosted their second annual workshops for festival students. This year's sessions included an engaging composer workshop, where students prepared a short report on a composer and performed one of their works. A second workshop, led by Dan Forbes, focused on creating motifs using various rhythms and harmonies.



Students from Tanner Music Studio from March Festival Workshop



Pictured Left to Right: Michigan Southwest District members Barbara Tanner, Dan Forbes, Karla Shotts

OHIO

Ohio Junior Day

On Saturday, October 18, 2025, fifty-three student competitors and junior composers participated in Junior Day at Denison University's Michael D. Eisner Center for the Performing Arts in Granville, Ohio. Winners were selected for the Elizabeth Gerber Award, the Marilyn Walter Young Musicians Award and the Charlotte and Alfred Gray Competition.



Elizabeth Gerber Award: Lucas Li-1st place, Sofia Galbmillion-2nd, Randy Mullen-3rd place, Sophia Kuwik-Honorable Mention, Moses Marino-Honorable Mention



Marilyn Walters Young Musicians Award Winners: Ian Luo-1st place, Chrysanthi Constantinou-2nd place, Benjamin Lu-3rd place, Avnish Pai Dhungat-4th place, Adam Wu-Honorable Mention, Sophiya Dydyk-Honorable Mention



Charlotte & W. Alfred Gray Competition: Saya Uejima-1st place, Erik Jacoby-2nd place, Aiden Wang-3rd place, Isabella Wang-4th place, Luis Burgoyne-5th place

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State Buzz ...continued

OKLAHOMA

2025 Poteau Musical Arts Tea Party

Submitted by Natlynn Hayes

The October 4, 2025, Poteau Musical Arts Tea Party had a new look this year. We expanded the age of participants, and young men were also included. Young men should also experience a tea party.

The Tea At Two Party was held at the First Freewill Baptist Church in Poteau, OK. It also served as a scholarship fundraiser with there being a fee or donation from the audience. Students donated to the fundraiser with their musical performances, and President Moriah Schmidt welcomed everyone to the Tea Party. The following students and their selections were enjoyed by the audience:

- Leah Hogan, "Rainbow Song" (vocal)
- Ariah Hayes, "Part of Your World" (piano) & "Count Your Blessings Instead of Sheep" (vocal)
- Kaylee Cook, "Last Minute Piano Practice" (piano)
- Carsyn Thompson, "Really Big Words" (piano)
- Claire Thompson, "Jumping Jelly Beans" (piano)
- Caroline Thompson, "This Little Light of Mine" (piano)



- Sawyer Price, "The Wheels on the Bus" (piano)
- Callie Phillips, "The Grand Duke of York" (piano) & "Castle on a Cloud" (vocal)
- Scarlett Price, "Tomorrow" (vocal)
- Arizona Perry, "The PB&J Song" (piano)
- McKenzie Staples, "Born to Entertain" (vocal)
- Tyler Wallis, "Gia il sole dal Gange" (vocal)
- Psalm Yandell, "Somewhere" (vocal)

There were fascinators, feather boas, and tea party props for the students to select and enjoy during the party. Cookies and tea cakes, as well as, tea/punch were served to the students by PMA officers, Diann Henson, Moriah Schmidt, and Natlynn Hayes. Refreshments were also shared with other members and guests. The tea cup, decorated cookies were donated by Brandy Thompson and the tea cakes were donated by Ginger Lemly. President Moriah Schmidt emailed the PMA 2025-26 Yearbook to members.

Each participant received a tea cup and saucer as a party favor and the tea party was enjoyed by all. For information on membership with Poteau Musical Arts, you may message our FB page, Poteau Musical Arts or our PMA officers.



NFMFC CONFERENCE 2026

Immerse yourself in *Sonoran Summer Sounds*, a National Federation of Music Clubs conference that blends the beauty of the desert with inspiring performances, learning opportunities, and connections that last a lifetime.

Scan to register:



SOUTH CAROLINA

African Ethnic Performance Program

Greenville Melody and Harmony Junior Clubs, of Greenville, South Carolina, enjoyed an Ethnic Performance Program on Africa. Led by Elizabeth Guest Martin, club members participated in drumming and enjoyed learning about African culture and their musical instruments.



TENNESSEE

Submitted by State President Bobette Spear

The Tennessee Federation has added several new Junior Music Clubs this year. We welcome the following teachers and their JMCs. In the Knoxville area, we have Jenny Ribble with The Sondheim Club and Birute Mockiene with the Nightingale JMC. The Chattanooga area welcomes Sarah Robertson with the Happy Place JMC and Brooke Safford with Safford JMC. Murfreesboro's new counselors are Christine Whelchel with the Whelchel Piano Studio and Chloe Harris with Dolcissimo JMC. The Nashville area welcomes Laura Gabriel with The Key Players and Justin Moser with the Moser Guitar Lab JMC. We look forward to these new Junior Clubs participating in our Festivals across the state.

WISCONSIN

Eleventh Annual State Festival Competition!

We are excited to announce that the Wisconsin Federation of Music Clubs will sponsor the Eleventh Annual State Festival Competition on Sunday, April 19, 2026, at the Milwaukee Youth Arts Center located at 325 W. Walnut Street, Milwaukee, WI. You can find more information on the WFMC website. <https://www.wfmc-music.org/state-festival-competition>

As preparations begin for our Eleventh WFMC State Festival, we are in need of scholarship sponsorship. This is an awesome opportunity to support our young musicians who will be working extremely hard this year.

Please know any amount is appreciated and is tax-deductible as a donation. Checks and donations should be made payable to WFMC and mailed to:

Lisa Mihas' Piano Studio
300 Cottonwood Avenue, STE 1
Hartland, WI 53029



2025-2026 NFMC AWARDS-AT-A-GLANCE

NATIONAL FEDERATION OF MUSIC CLUBS

President: Deborah Freeman

2025-2026 COMPETITIONS AND AWARDS CHART

Competition and Awards Board & Division Chair:

Lucinda Lear, lmlear@me.com



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 Solo Award	PIANO SOLO	High School: Grades 10-11-12 Must not have reached 19th birthday by application deadline	\$10	\$500 1st Place (for further study) \$250 2nd Place	March 1, even numbered years	Marcia Chaplin Marciachaplin2@gmail.com
NFMC Lynn Freeman Olson Composition Awards	COMPOSITION	Intermediate: Grades 7-8-9 High School: Grades 10-11-12	Paid by private donor	\$750 (Intermediate) \$1500 (High School)	March 1, odd numbered years	Lisa Smith lcpiano@gmail.com
NFMC Thelma A. Robinson Award in Ballet honoring a Past National President	BALLET	12 -14	\$20	\$2,500	February 1, odd numbered years	Beth Lee bethlee0123@gmail.com

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 Kivers210@gmail.com
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 M. Bailey zblb@verizon.net
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	Cynthia Waldon cynawaldon@hotmail.com
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	Dr. Jason Sifford jason@siffordmusic.com
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...)

Name	Category	Age Limit	Entry Fee	Amount of Award	Deadline for Application	NFMC Chair
NFMC Benzinger/Valentin Junior 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	Dianne Williamson dwill879@aol.com
NFMC Agnes Fowler Junior Blind Composition Award	COMPOSITION	Must have reached the 10th but not the 19th birthday by application deadline	\$10 per manuscript	\$1,000	March 1	Dianne Williamson dwill879@aol.com
NFMC Dance Awards	BALLET and/or Dance Styles	Must have reached the 11th but not the 19th birthday by application deadline	\$10	Age 11-14: \$200 – 1st Place \$100 – 2nd Place Age 15-18: \$400 – 1st Place \$200 – 2nd Place	May 1	Lisa Moore nfmcdanceaward@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	Anna Cosma themusicalpiano@gmail.com
NFMC Angie Greer Music in Poetry Awards	POETRY	Must not have reached the 19th birthday by November 1	\$5	\$100 in each of the five NFMC Regions	November 1	Debra Hughes 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)	Kathie White Whiteka23@yahoo.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 keckg@att.net
Marilyn Caldwell Solo Piano Awards	PIANO SOLO	High School Grades 10-11-12	\$10	\$1,250 – 1st Place \$ 750 – 2nd Place	March 1	Dr. Marschnee Strong mstrongpianist@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 micedwards@aol.com

JUNIOR COMPOSERS

Name	Age Limit	Entry Fee	Amount of Award	Deadline for Application	NFMC Chair
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	Tom Gerou tgerou@tomgeroumusic.com
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	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	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	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 Above



INSTRUCTIONS FOR AWARD APPLICANTS

COMPETITION AND AWARDS (C&A) CHART

The C&A Chart may be downloaded or ordered online at www.nfmc-music.org or contact NFMC Headquarters. The Chart includes only endowed NFMC Awards. Check Individual State Federation websites for possible additional awards.

APPLICATION FORMS, INFORMATION AND SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Award requirements and application forms are available on the NFMC website nfmc-music.org or contact the Chair of the specific award. All NFMC Individual award applications must be submitted online by uploading them to the NFMC website. (*Exception: Club Awards should be mailed to the award chair*)

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.*)

NFMC MEMBERSHIP

Applicants must be NFMC 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, Summer Music Center Awards, and the three Veterans Awards.*) Application forms will include specific membership information.

Note: In competitions requiring NFMC 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 NFMC award listed in the C&A Chart is eligible to compete again for the same award. (*Exception: NFMC 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*) Previous winners of Recognition awards will receive lower priority than new applicants of equal merit.)

THE NFMC

The NFMC, 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 NFMC 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 NFMC offers more than \$750,000 annually in state and national competitions.

Anyone wishing to become a NFMC 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@nfmc-music.org

nfmc-music.org

NATIONAL FEDERATION OF MUSIC CLUBS



JUNIOR AWARDS

AMOUNT	AWARD	DEADLINE
\$100 in each region	Angie Greer Music in Poetry Award	November 1
\$75 in all states	National Music Week Essay Contest	January 10
\$2,500	Robinson Ballet Award	February 1 (odd)
Up to \$300	Junior Composers Awards	February 1
\$2,000	Wendell Irish Viola Award	March 1
\$2,000	Stillman Kelley Instrumental Award	March 1
\$2,500	Joyce Walsh Disability Award	March 1
\$2,500	Mary Alice Cox Strings Award	March 1
\$1,500	Martha Marcks Mack Junior Vocal Award	March 1
\$1,250	Marilyn Caldwell Piano Award	March 1
\$1,000	Music for the Blind Composition Award	March 1
\$1,000	Music for the Blind Performance Award	March 1
\$ 500	Whitehurst Piano Award	March 1 (even)
Up to \$1,500	Lynn Freeman Olson Composition Award	March 1 (odd)
\$5,000	Michael Edwards Graduating Senior Award	May 1
\$1,500	Lana Bailey Piano Concerto Award	May 1
Up to \$400	Dance Awards	May 1

For award requirements and to apply, visit the NFMC website: www.nfmc-music.org

NFMC Headquarters

www.nfmc-music.org / info@nfmc-music.org / Phone: 317-882-4003



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- **Front Cover Artwork:** Juniors, 8.5 x 11, Pen and ink w/color drawings, collages and photography will be considered. Please email high resolution JPG or PDF files.
- **Photos:** Please email good-quality, high resolution digital images accompanied by a news article in Word format.

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- November 1 – Winter Issue
- February 1 – Spring Issue

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