

Lucinda M. Lear, NCTM

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COMPETITIONS AND AWARDS DIVISION REPORT—JUNE 2026

Submitted by Lucinda M. Lear, NCTM

NFMC has been quite blessed with members and friends who have provided thought and effort into endowing awards of all kinds for all ages in our membership. A perusal of the C&A Awards charts reveals many options. Some awards need membership, some do not. Some awards have entry fees, some do not. Some awards are for individuals others are for clubs. With such diverse opportunities it is time well spent to read through the awards or do a search for interested areas.

I am indebted to the terrific award chairs in this division. It is due to their efforts that we have been able to issue awards in areas that have been dormant for quite some time. One of those is the NFMC Hinda Honigman Award for the Blind and NFMC Vivian Menees Nelson Award for the Disabled and Visually Impaired. Take time to read Mary Margaret Yeilding's report and celebrate these deserving winners.

During this 250th celebration year of our Declaration of Independence, we hope to highlight the three Veterans awards that NFMC offers. Paul Brady, award chair will be sharing an article on these as the award deadline is not until May 1 which makes announcing it by report deadline next to impossible. Stay tuned to the Music Clubs Magazine and newsletter for more details on that.

The C&A Award chart was rearranged a bit in hopes of making it easier to search for specific awards, placing the Index at the front of the chart. Updates to the application pages on the website are a little slower in coming so use the C&A chart (CA 20-1) for the most up-to-date information as award chairs revolve.

Although the Young Artists competition is only every other year, the Young Artists are available for bookings throughout two years. Terry Blair has provided a recap of their performances and encourages every region/state/club to take advantage of this great opportunity for professional quality performances at a significant cost reduction.

NFMC Public Relations and Media chairs helped to set up a Google Doc for winner's bios and pictures to be collected and used to help in promoting these through the NFMC website and FaceBook page.

Congratulations to all award winners whether in this division (adult) or Student-Collegiate or Junior. And Kudos to every award chair: Paul Brady-Veterans Awards (3); Elaine Brady—Ouida Keck Pedagogy; Dr. Donald "Mack" Hassler—Beyer Composition Awards (3); Ron Marenchin-Glad Robinson Youse Composition; Moriah Schmidt—Mayfield Opera; Naomi Sanchez—Ellis Duo; Melanie Perez—Martha Marcks Mack Vocal; Pat Reuter-Ridder—Ruth Morse Wilson Handbell; Mary Margaret Yeilding—Hinda Honigman and Vivian Menees Nelson awards for the disabled and visually impaired composition and performance; Kay Hawthorne—Virginia Allison Collaborative Pianist; Mary Ellen Nolletti—Summer Music Centers; Donna Gerber—Robinson Conducting; Zuill Bailey—Young Artist Competition and Terry Blair—Young Artists Presentation.

REPORT ON THE 2026 BEYER AWARDS

Donald M Hassler, Chair

It has been a very strange year for us for several reasons. First of all, we have only one composer-- what I will call below "A Starburst of creativity right over the Middle of our vast country that stretches across the whole continent.". We think he is a composer in the tradition of the young Mozart, a great musical mind with some connections to the great city of Vienna.

Second, I am working very hard at the end of a long month of delays to wrap-up up our 2026 judging. The security in the headquarters to protect the identity of both the entrants and the judges who judge their work is remarkable.

The only winner in Ensemble was the same person who was the winner in Piano Solo. Miles is only 22 years old. His bio associates him with Vienna. Miles stated that both he and his father would often sit out at night in order to spot stars as they would appear in the night sky.

A suggestion: Make it a little easier to open the files and to move around the website in order to down load the files we all need.

I regret that I will be unable to attend the Scottsdale Conference.

Glad Robinson Youse Adult Composers Award

Ron Marenchin, Chair

The Glad Robinson Youse Adult Composers Award is a Senior Division award presented in odd numbered years. In 2025 there were six entries, which I was told was a pretty good number based on past experiences.

Dr. Yuko Kato was awarded the 2025 Award. A member of the Morning Etude Club of Carbondale, IL, she currently serves as Associate Professor of Piano at Southern Illinois University Carbondale. Her composition, *Nothing but Light*, is a setting for baritone voice and piano of the poem by Mary Oliver and was written in memory of her father who passed away in 2023.

A news release including her photo was sent to the appropriate NFMC news sources.

The NFMC award honors the memory of Gladys "Glad" Robinson Youse (1898 – 1985), an American composer from Miami, Oklahoma. She graduated from Stephens College in 1919 with a music degree and then pursued further composition studies with Tibor Serly in New York. After marrying Clare Youse, the couple settled in Baxter Springs, Kansas. Youse was a member of ASCAP and served on the board of the Sigma Alpha Iota Foundation, supporting the professional international music fraternity, in 1971.

Youse composed sacred and secular music for solo voice, choir, and piano. Her 1969 setting of *Bless Us, O God* was dedicated to Hinda Honigman, the 21st National President of NFMC who served from 1967 to 1971.

Ruth Morse Wilson Handbell Award Report

Pat Reuter Riddle, chair

We had one entry for the Ruth Morse Wilson Handbell Award for 2026. This was an admirable entry and was awarded the amount of \$500.

The award winner was the Celebration Ringers Handbell Ensemble of First Congregational Church, Ridgefield, Connecticut; Kathleen Theisen, Director.

The award was publicized through the Handbell Musicians of America (formally American Guild of Handbell Ringers). Based on what I have seen, I believe that additional advertising in handbell social media sites may be more effective.

There was a bit of a learning curve this first year of chairing this award, along with some confusion over who was the actual Handbell Award chair. 😊 With all that resolved, and with the knowledge gained from this year's competition, I am looking forward to chairing the award for the coming year.

Report to Lucinda Lear,
Division Chair of Competitions and Awards
April 16, 2026

Award # 1

The NFMC Hinda Honigman Award for the Blind

Number of Entrants: 1

Winner: Sean Strasser, Man's Voice

Award Amount: \$2,000 First Place

(from Columbus, GA)

How he became aware of the award: (from his bio)

Sean Strasser, baritone, is currently a sophomore pursuing his Bachelor of Music Education at the Schwob School of Music at Columbus State University in Columbus, Georgia. He is under the tutelage of Dr. Joshua May, who made him aware of the award.

Award # 2

The NFMC Vivian Menees Nelson Award for the Disabled and Visually Impaired

Number of Entrants: 1

Winner: Anna Josephine Maxwell, Piano

Award Amount: \$1,000

(from Salt Lake City, Utah)

How she became aware of the award: (in her words)

"I found out about NFMC from Eugene Watanabe. I work at Gifted Music School in Salt Lake City, which he co-founded, and I spent almost two years as his assistant. He has been very encouraging of my musical pursuits, including a potential return to school for a music degree. He recommended I look into NFMC for financial aid opportunities, and I found this award after perusing the website."

Lucinda, thank you for answering a number of questions I had throughout this process. I am grateful for your patience and extensive knowledge of the procedures to follow.

Sincerely,
Mary Margaret Yeilding

NATIONAL FEDERATION OF MUSIC CLUBS

MELANIE PEREZ
Martha Marcks Mack Award Chair
Email: MelaniePerezPiano@gmail.com



2026

Martha Marcks Mack Award for Graduate Students pursuing a Doctoral Degree in Vocal Performance

The NFMC Martha Marcks Mack Award for Graduate Students pursuing a Doctoral Degree in Vocal Performance is a very generous annual \$5,000 award. In addition to this award being posted on Yap Tracker, this chair sent email letters to 127 professors/teachers/coaches at 21 universities that offer Doctoral Vocal Degrees. I'm sorry to say that there were no applicants this year.

Our 2025 winner, Grace Roman, a resident of Houston, was able to perform at the 2025 NFMC Convention in Austin. She was very well received by the NFMC membership, and I was hopeful that this award had received more visibility.

With the help of NFMC Competitions and Awards Division Chair Lucinda Lear, the verbiage on the CA 8-2 was clarified this past year.

Melanie Perez, Chair

Martha Marcks Mack Senior Award

2025-2026 National Federation of Music Outreach Report

Dr. Cheryl Davis, National Chair

Congratulations to all of our National Federation of Music Clubs State Music Outreach Chairs who submitted hours of musical service to our local communities. It was a pleasure for this chair to receive 7 reports from the following States who submitted them by email and USPS. Many reports also submitted substantial supporting information which was much appreciated by this Chair

State Club Reports

Arkansas-Betty Pierce, State Chair
Andante Music Club of Bella Vista 100 hours

Kentucky-Carol Davis, State Chair
Stephen Foster Music Club 1042 hours

Ohio-Jeannine Morris, State Chair
Warren Music Club 129 hours
Nichols Music Center 165.75 hours
Ashland Music Club 475 hours
McDowell Music Study Club 239.5 hours
Nova Piano Studio 586 hours
Olgas Music Academy 270 hours

Pennsylvania-Kristin Ivers, State Chair
Williamsport Music Club 129 hours

South Carolina-Patricia A. Fuller, State Chair
Eau Claire Music Club 119 hours
Music Club of Greenville 727 hours

Virginia- Elizabeth Kennedy, State Chair
***Roanoke Valley Music Club 1517 hours
Club Chair : Donna Frost dzfro@cox.net 540-521-1242
2235 Overhill Trail, Roanoke Va. 24018

State Individual Reports

California-Soo Choir, State Chair
Soo Choir-220 hours
Virginia Feitelson-100 hours

Virginia-Donna Frost-Chair
***Judy Edgell-933 hours
Roma Scriven-268 hours
Anna Preston-316 hours

Ouida Keck Professional Development Award
for the Independent Piano Teacher
2026 Report

Each year the NFMC sponsors an award for piano teachers. The Ouida Keck Professional Development Award for the Independent Piano Teacher is named for Past National President Dr. Ouida Keck and is offered annually. It provides \$2000 financial assistance to an independent piano teacher who demonstrates superior teaching in the private studio and wishes to further enhance their teaching skills. Funds are to be used for advanced training through a variety of avenues including piano pedagogy classes, private piano lessons, and attendance at conferences featuring piano pedagogy. They can also be used to purchase musical instruments, computer software, new piano literature and method books, and other equipment needed to enhance the teaching environment.

Promotion efforts included reaching out to all State Presidents by email (through NFMC Office Manager, Ashley Mattingly). State Presidents were asked in turn to reach out to all Senior Club Presidents and Festival Chairs in their states. This year all three applicants indicated they had learned about this award through the NFMC magazines including Music Clubs Magazine and Junior Keynotes Magazine.

The deadline date for the award was May 1, and the three applicants came from the states of Virginia, Arkansas, and Washington. The files were forwarded to the judges who conferred and provided their findings on May 10. A letter of congratulations was sent to the winner, Tonya Robertson of Woodbridge Virginia, along with a request for her bio and photograph. The non-winners were then notified and encouraged to enter again next year. And finally, the State President of Virginia, Dr. Cheryl Davis, was alerted that the 2026 Ouida Keck Award winner comes from the state of Virginia.

Elaine Brady
Doctor of Musical Arts
National Federation of Music Clubs
Chair, Ouida Keck Professional Development Award for the Independent Piano Teacher

2025 ANNUAL REPORT-SUMMER MUSIC CENTERS

Thirty-two (32) scholarships, valued at \$36,800, were awarded to 15 SMC locations through the NFMC Summer Music Centers (SMC) Endowed Scholarship Awards Program. Each SMC (not NFMC) selects their scholarship award recipient(s). Selection criteria differ depending on the particular SMC. Scholarship award amounts vary based on costs associated with attending the particular SMC and availability of NFMC funds. A detailed article was published in the “Music Club Magazine Winter 2026 Vol.104, No.2, pages 8-21. Scholarship recipients were:

Aspen Music Festival and School, NFMC Award - \$1,250:

Margaret Carter, double bass, PA

Brevard Music Center, NFMC Rose Thomas Smith Award - \$2,500:

Louis Chen, clarinet, PA

Brevard Music Center, NFMC Lucile Parrish Ward Award - \$2,000:

Anabel Morgan, piano, MS

Chautauqua Music School, NYFMC Award - \$500:

Kirk Morrison, trumpet, NY

Chautauqua Music School, PAFMC Award - \$500:

Ryan Zhang, piano, CA

Chautauqua Music School, NFMC Eleanor Pascoe/Nancy Hartz Award - \$500:

Elizabeth Pascoe, voice/soprano, NJ

Chautauqua Music School, NFMC Martha Marcks Mack Awards – 2 @ \$3,000 each:

Alexander Bonner, voice/tenor, FL; Sarah Zieba, voice/mezzo-soprano, IL

Composers Institute, NFMC Evelyn Sampson Award - \$750:

Kiara Motwani, composition, IA

Eastern Music Festival

EMF was not held in 2025; BOD voted to dissolve organization due to unresolved labor issue.

Stephen Collins Foster Music Camp, NFMC Irene Muir (PNP) Awards – 4 @ \$500 each:

Elizabeth Broady, band/oboe, KY; Trina Lee, piano, KY

Carsen Keeling, choir/voice, KY; Samantha “Sam” Vittitow, viola, KY

Idaho Gwladys Comstock Summer Music Camp Award - \$500:

Mattie Miller, oboe, TN

Interlochen Arts Camp, Herman & Mary Neumann Award - \$1,000:

Sophia N/A, voice/songwriter, N/A

International Music Camp, NFMC Agnes Jardine (PNP) Award - (6@\$200)+\$50:

Aaron Jude Abellera, flute, Manitoba, Canada; Katherine Dahmen, oboe, ND;

Lev Frykoda, clarinet, Manitoba, Canada; Hudson McLain, bassoon, ND;

Alan Michels, trumpet, ND; Allison Schmidt, French horn, ND

Kneisel Hall, NFMC Ada Holding Miller (PNP) Award - \$1,250

Ari Peraza-Webb, cello, OH

Marrowstone Music Festival, NFMC Award - \$1,000

This award was not given in 2025. SYSO was on ten-day tour of Portugal.

Meadowmount School of Music, NFMC Suzanne Anderson Award - \$1,000

Margaus Hicks, cello, OR

Music Academy of the West, NFMC Award - \$1,500

Makenna “Kenny” Ford, bassoon, MI

Opera in the Ozarks, NFMCAward for Opera - \$2,100

Benjamin Somervell, voice/bass, AR/AL

Opera in the Ozarks, Mary Prudie Brown Award for Continuing Education - \$2,000

(Note: Award divided eqqally between two recipients.)

Payton Boldt, voice/soprano, KS; Madeline Friesen, voice/mezzo-soprano. KS

Opera in the Ozarks, Martha Marcks Mack Awards – 2 @ \$3,000 each

Rachel Mellman, voice/ soprano, CA; Ian Sherwood, voice/tenor, ND

Ravinia Steans Music Institute, NFMCAward Rose Thomas Smith Award - \$3,000

David Bernot, saxophone, AZ

Rocky Ridge Music Center, NFMCAward - \$1,000

This award was not given in 2025.

Santa Fe Opera Apprentice Program, NFMCAward Ruth Freehoff Award - \$1,000

This award was not given in 2025.

Sewanee Summer Music Festival, NFMCAward Gladys R. Coult Award - \$1,000

Samuel Gaytan, violin, TX

Andrew Battaglia, clarinet, PA (2024 award recipient acknowledged.)

The Walden School, NFMCAward - \$1,000

Nayeli Monshan, composition, ME

Respectively submitted,

Mary Ellen Nolletti, Chair

NFMCAward SMC Awards

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Report on the NFM Virginia Allison Collaborative Award – May 2026

Ellen Rie Boll was the 2026 winner of this award. Ellen is a student at the Cleveland Institute of Music and is a candidate for the Graduate Diploma in Collaborative Piano. Her professor is Anita Pontremoli. The very qualified judge was most impressed by Ellen's playing.

Because this award is not in the Student Division, it is difficult to make the award known to the student population. In this case, Kristin Ivers, Pennsylvania Federation of Music Clubs President, made Ellen aware of the award. I would encourage all state presidents to always look for likely candidates from their state.

Kay Hawthorne

Chairman

NFMC YOUNG ARTIST AUDITIONS

2025-2026 Report

The biennial NFMC Young Artist (YA) auditions are held in the odd-numbered years. This year is an even-numbered year and is the time to support current YA winners and to begin the publicity for the 2027 Auditions.

In addition to circulation of 2027 publicity posters, commercial advertising for the 2027 YA auditions has been contracted with The Violin Channel, a social media platform that reaches thousands of potential applicants.

The ultimate goal is to introduce the National Federation of Music Clubs to a wider audience via its most prestigious award, the Young Artist Auditions.

The Young Artist Committee: Dr. Zuill Bailey, Chair; Dr. George Keck, Terry Blair, Presentations Chair; Starla Blair, former Presentations Chair, and four Category Chairs: Dr. Candice Aipperspach, Dr. Andre Chiang, Andrew Armstrong, and Lana Bailey

**Zuill Bailey, EdD
Young Artist Chair**

NATIONAL FEDERATION OF MUSIC CLUBS

Young Artist Presentations

TERRY BLAIR, Chair
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NFMC Young Artist Presentations Report **National Conference** Scottsdale, AZ; June 2026

NFMC Young Artists for the 2025-2027 biennium are: Misha Galant (piano) based out of Salt Lake City, Claire McCahan (woman's voice) based out of New Hampshire, and William Suh (cello) based out of New York. All artists are available for performances and masterclasses. Inquiry forms are available on the NFMC website. Completed forms are to be sent to the Young Artist Presentations chair to ascertain availability of an artist and to secure artist services.

During the first year of the biennium, 13 performances and 3 masterclasses have been completed by the artists: 11 performances by pianist Misha Galant, and 2 performances by mezzo soprano Claire McCahan. To date, 8 performances have been contracted for year 2 of the biennium: 6 performances by mezzo Claire McCahan, and 2 performances by pianist Misha Galant. This makes a total of 21 performances contracted for the biennium. Additional performances are anticipated in year two. The chairman has a personal goal of at least 30 Young Artist performances for the biennium.

Please consider bringing an NFMC Young Artist to your community. These are excellent artists who are available at a very inexpensive price and expense. NFMC clubs and organizations receive a very special low price of \$300 per performance. These rates are EXTREMELY low for professional quality classical artists. Information about the artists is available on the NFMC website www.nfmc-music.org including hours of YouTube recordings/performances. Additionally, printed brochures are available from the NFMC headquarters to assist with advance publicity for performances.

Do your part to continue the great tradition of live classical music across America. Support NFMC's Young Artist program by bringing a performance to your community!