

gcmta news

From the President

Whether you're teaching in your studio or online, it's a fact that maintaining any semblance of normalcy in today's world is nigh impossible. Here are a few coping strategies I have found useful.

Be kind to yourself.

You're doing the best that you can! Practice daily self-care so that you will be rested and better equipped to be calm and patient with your students during their lessons.

Be kind to your students.

I'm definitely not at the top of my game right now, and neither are my students; the word "overwhelmed" comes to mind. The most important thing right now is our *relationships* with these kids. Sometimes just listening and offering a few words of encouragement takes priority over drill and repertoire.

Minimize everybody's workload.

You're working from home; perhaps your spouse and school-aged children are there with you too, and your family needs you now more than ever. Meanwhile, our students are spending long hours in front of their computers, isolated from their peers and missing all their normal social outlets. As one of my high school girls said to me last week, "Everything takes twice as long as it used to, but it's half as much fun." Sure, maintain high standards and set goals, but be realistic given these circumstances. Your students will thank you for it.

Reach out.

According to the CDC, the stress of quarantine has taken a "highly elevated" mental health toll on society. Make the effort to network with colleagues and others to get the support you need. Teaching is never easy but it is more challenging now than ever before, and it can be immensely helpful to simply be in the company of others who are going through what you're going through – even if the only way to connect is via Zoom.

continued



October Meeting

On October 28 we will celebrate the 250th anniversary of Beethoven's birth year! David Watkins, NCTM, a certified master teacher from Atlanta, will present a program about **Beethoven's Transition from the Classical Period to the Romantic Period** via Zoom after our business meeting. Please "show up" for the program because there will be some Beethoven-themed door prizes as the icing on the birthday cake!

Cathy Thacker, NCTM

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Everyone thinks they can't – until they can.

Undoubtedly, you already have made great strides already in acquiring the tools necessary to teach lessons in new ways. Keep up the good work! Teaching online lessons will never be my preference but I am so grateful to be able to do so when necessary. Stay open-minded and flexible and don't hesitate to ask for help if you need it.

Make the most of every moment.

The COVID-19 pandemic has weighed heavily upon all of us, but we don't need to carry that weight on your shoulders. Simply let it go and bear instead the weight of the present moment, finding creative ways to make our time with our students meaningful and memorable. Send a personal note to that young lady who went above and beyond in her practice last week; find ways to incorporate theory games into your lessons; organize a coloring contest or a composition contest; challenge your students to make up silly lyrics to go with one of their songs or to make up a story to go with one of their classical pieces; if you play a second instrument, accompany one of their pieces (a pair of maracas or a tambourine will do!) Your students will appreciate your efforts and you will feel better for having made them.

GCMTA Music Day Instructions

Application Deadline: Submitted online by Friday, October 2, 2020

Postmark Deadline: Friday, October 9, 2020

Mail checks (payable to GCMTA) to Patti Bennett, 4745 Bennett Road, Buford, GA 30519-1805.

Entry Fee: \$22.00 per student \$10.00 each additional instrument

The 2020 GCMTA Music Day will be a virtual (video) event.

A [Comment and Rating sheet](#) (one form) must be provided for each student on the day of the festival along with a PDF copy of the registered music as well as student videos in MP4 format.

All required materials should be submitted via Dropbox to pam.asberry@gmail.com. The deadline for submission is midnight on Friday, November 13, 2020. THERE WILL BE NO SUBMISSIONS ACCEPTED AFTER THIS DEADLINE.

Required materials should be labeled following the example below.

Jane Doe, a fourth grader, is playing *Moonbeam Waltz* by Martha Mier and *Allegretto* by Gurlitt.

Video titles:

4_Doe_Mier_Moonbeam Waltz.mp4

4_Doe_Gurlitt_Allegretto.mp4

Comment & Rating Sheet title:

4_Doe.pdf

PDF sheet music titles:

4_Doe_Mier_Moonbeam Waltz.pdf

4_Doe_Gurlitt_Allegrett.pdf

All submitted materials will be forwarded to the judges, who will have one week to evaluate the performances and make their decisions. Participating teachers will be notified with the results of the judging by email on Saturday, November 21st. Comment sheets, certificates, and award checks will be mailed to participating teachers for distribution to their students the following week.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to ask!

Theory Tests

The GCMTA Executive Board voted to cancel the GMTA Theory Test this year.

GMTA is not requiring the GATE for Local Auditions 2021.

Teacher of the Year

Congratulations to our 2020 Teacher of the Year, Patti Bennett! Patti has been teaching for over 35 years, and her students excel in many areas. They regularly win in GCMTA Music Day, and they play in GCMTA Performance Day. They appear in Master Classes and win at other competitions, including hymn-playing events. Patti has been a Piano Guild adjudicator for many years, and is listed on their Hall of Fame for her numerous national winners.

Aurelia Campbell, Past President of GMTA, wrote a letter of recommendation on behalf of Patti. She told us that "Patti has furnished me transportation to the GMTA Conferences for many years, and we have been roommates during our stay at these events. She is always excited about attending the various sessions and looking for ways to keep updated...Patti is a qualified teacher and shows excellence in all of her endeavors."

Patti has many outstanding teaching ideas, and she is constantly challenging her students to achieve more. She has had many students go on to major in music, and one notable example is Timothy Jones, a blind student whom she taught for many years. He earned his undergrad degree in Organ Performance from Mercer University in 2019, and is now pursuing a Master's Degree in Piano Pedagogy at Georgia State University. Patti's dedication and patience with her disabled student nurtured his own lifelong love for music and allowed him to realize that he could have a career in music.



Federated Festival

As you are preparing your students for Federated Festival, there are a few things to be aware of:



1. If you haven't purchased your new Bulletin, you should contact the National Federation of Music Clubs at nfmc-music.org.
2. Take note of the rules concerning literature choices and other important requirements.
 - a. Only original works allowed for choice pieces. Hymns and/or American folk songs are not acceptable for Piano Solo Event.
 - b. PP and PI choices must be at least 12 measures long, not including repeats. Beginning PII all pieces must be at least 16 measures long.
 - c. Students must not have reached their 9th birthday to participate in PP level.
 - d. Other questions can be answered in the General Rules section of the Bulletin, or p. 15 for Piano Solo Event.
3. If you have a Specially Capable Musician (SCM), you must complete form JR 3-13 and submit to your chairman at time of entry.
4. Teachers entering students out of district for scheduling conflicts or to participate in voice, strings, etc. competitions, should register their students in their own districts and only notify the two chairmen for scheduling purposes.
5. Questions concerning festival procedures and/or information about High School competition can be found at the GCMTA website, gcmta.org.

There is a new event in festivals: Sacred Music Piano Solo, and 19 of the required pieces in the Bulletin are composed by our own Becky Bonam. GCMTA President Pam Asberry also has a composition in Difficult II. Congratulations and thanks to these two talented ladies!



GCMTA Music Education/Pedagogy (MED/PED) Major Scholarship

This exciting scholarship opportunity of \$500 is available to eligible applicants who are high school seniors and who plan to pursue a Bachelor of Music Education or Pedagogy.

APPLICANT QUALIFICATIONS:

1. Applicant must be a senior in high school who has been accepted as a music major in education or pedagogy and is entering that particular program in the upcoming year. The higher education institution must have the ability to graduate students with a Bachelor's degree in music education or pedagogy. Verification of acceptance to the accredited music education school must be submitted with the application.
2. Applicant must be the student and/or child of a GCMTA teacher in good standing for the current year.
3. Applicant must have participated in at least one GCMTA adjudicated performance event in the previous twelve months (i.e. Auditions, Music Day, Federated Festival), and must submit a copy of the adjudicator's comment sheet to the MED/PED Scholarship Committee.
4. Applicant must submit the URL of an online video with applicant performing any repertoire on his/her chosen instrument not to exceed 10 minutes. Memorization is not required.
5. Applicant must complete and submit the MED/PED Scholarship application to the Chair by the deadline of May 1.
6. Applicant must submit a 350 word or less essay describing why music education or pedagogy is an important career path to pursue.
7. Applicant must provide the name and email address of his/her music teacher willing to write a recommendation for the applicant. He/she will be contacted to submit a recommendation for the applicant.

Cathy Thacker, NCTM, Chair

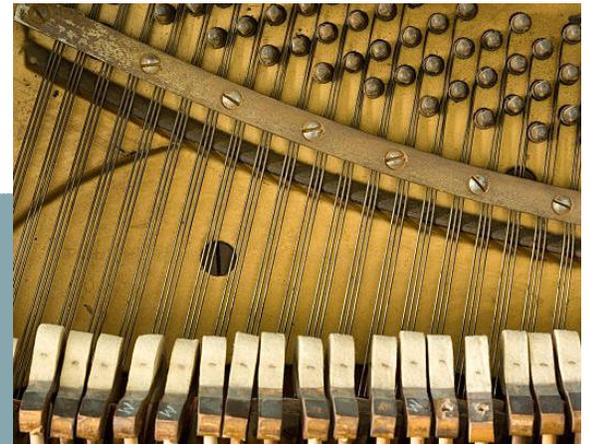
csbt88@gmail.com

Local Auditions

I have decided with the suggestions from the judges to hold the Local Auditions through Video Submission. The date for the registration is still January 15th, and the judges will have the videos via YouTube by February 13th. They will have until the 15th to judge and we will know the results by the 16th of February. I will let everyone know the details closer to the registration date.

Jiyeon Kwak

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MY CERTIFICATION JOURNEY

By Cathy Thacker, NCTM

The first time I heard about MTNA certification was over a decade ago when Robin Engleman, NCTM, gave a program to our GCMTA members about becoming certified. I was intrigued at the time because it sounded very appealing, but I was also afraid because it sounded like a lot of work. I decided to shelve the idea because I was too busy raising children, teaching lessons, and playing piano for my church. There just wasn't time left over to pursue certification. Besides, I already had a college degree, so why was certification necessary?

A few years after Robin did her program, she asked for any of us who were interested in certification to meet with her at a local Panera. I went because I love Panera, and there was no real commitment. Once again, I was challenged to raise my level of professionalism to a higher level. This time I decided to follow through and embarked on the path to certification. That fall I received a grant from GMTA towards that goal, and the die was cast!

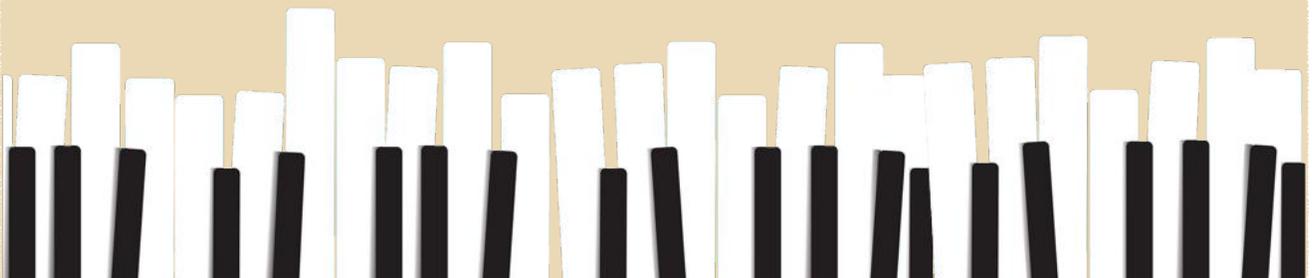
I enlisted the help of a local legend, David Watkins, an MTNA Nationally Certified Master Teacher, to mentor me. It had been years since I had performed on a serious level, and my theory knowledge and skills were not where they should be. Taking private lessons with David and having him review my written material was very nerve-wracking at first, but I learned so much from him, and he was supportive and encouraging every step of the way. He was a wonderful mentor!

Some people push certification as a tool for making more money, and it is a legitimate reason to charge higher rates than average. Others tout the professional respect it affords you from your colleagues, and that is true as well. The main reason I pursued certification, though, was to learn on a deeper level and to understand music like I never had before. I was awarded NCTM in September 2014, and I'm at the halfway point of becoming permanently certified. I like the fact that MTNA holds me accountable each year for re-certification with their points system.

Certification taught me about repertoire, theory, new approaches to teaching, the value of professional development, patience, and that undervalued characteristic called determination. I am so glad that I invested the time to become an MTNA Nationally Certified Teacher of Music in Piano! I'm very happy to meet with anyone who has questions, doubts, or concerns, because I did, too, and maybe I can help you in some way.

www.mtnacertification.org/process/

Robin Engleman, NCTM
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Membership

MEMBERSHIP REMINDER: Please consider how you might invite other potential music teachers to join us at our meetings. Send them a link so that they might also attend our meetings through Zoom.

Can you state one thing about why your membership with GCMTA is so valuable? Here are some thoughts from one person's experience of attending a single meeting:

1. "I could immediately see how it could challenge me to become a better teacher."
2. "My students were also able to participate in events - providing me with additional motivational tools for increasing my teaching effectiveness."
3. "Being welcomed, and quickly assimilated into my local music teachers association has led to over two decades of inspiration, leadership, and growth."
4. "The events we choose to offer, the various ways we work together and negotiate details, our ability to ask members to help out, our visibility to the local community at large - these are just some of the things that keep our teaching alive, prosperous, and exciting."

As a member of GCMTA, please write down one thing saying why you think GCMTA membership is valuable and email it to me at bndhughes@comcast.net by October 10. I will print your statements and put all of the emails in a music bag. I will have one of my music students draw out a slip for a prize and announce it at the next meeting and get the prize to you! Best wishes!

Deb Hughes

