

GCMTA NEWS



From the President

Welcome to a new year of GCMTA! I hope that you had a nice summer break and got all of your wish lists, reading, and travels done. Once again I began the summer with high expectations of finally organizing my music. It seemed as though there would be plenty of time to get everything done. Big hah. Exactly where does the time go? The experts say that time seems to move faster when you are older because you are in predictable routines which allow the years to blend together with no distinct memory markers. Okay, that makes sense. Maybe next summer I will begin the organization on the first day of summer break, which would certainly be a novel experience for me, and I can get it all done. One can dream...

We have a great lineup of programs for the year, including Dr. Barbara Lister-Sink, Lois Finley, Geoffrey Haydon, and our very own Cathy Thacker. Many thanks to Kathy Dawal for her work on our programming for the year.

Also, GMTA is now accepting nominations for the Teacher of the Year Award. The application deadline is September 14. The application process can be found here:
<https://georgiamta.org/teacher-year-application.php>
The list of previous winners can be found here:
<https://georgiamta.org/teacher-of-the-year.php>

Enjoy the final dog days of summer, the beginning of the school year, and the return to teaching that follows. I hope that this will be your best teaching year yet!

Kimber Kwiatkowski

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MUSICLINK

If you reduce your fees to help out a family who couldn't otherwise afford lessons, why not consider becoming a MusicLink teacher? It's a national nonprofit organization that helps link underprivileged students with teachers who are willing to reduce their fee so that the student can get a musical education. For more information, reach out to Chris Morrow at twomorrows93@gmail.com.



Are you Nationally Certified? Let this be the Year! Click here for more information:
<http://www.mtnacertification.org>

NFMC AWARDS

Congratulations to GCMTA for winning four NFMC Senior Club Awards this year. This means we won in each category that we entered and that's huge because many clubs enter from all over the US! Here's the breakdown:

~American Woman Composers - \$100

~American Music Award - 3rd Place - \$100

~Schramm Parade of American Music in November - 2nd place - \$200

~Jazz Award - \$100

Woohoo for Gwinnett County! Special thanks to these members who have participated by performing American music at our meetings/events and made these awards possible: **Jennifer Luo, Kathy Dawal, Gloria Park, Young Lee, Yulia Soboleva, Debra Hughes, Mary Marshall Dekkers, Cathy Thacker, Francis Leach, Deborah Brady, and Dave Reesman.**

DID YOU KNOW that NFMC offers awards to Junior Clubs, too? Each teacher who has students who are Federated as members of NFMC are a Junior Club. Debra Hughes Studio entered three and won 2 national awards this past year (Folk Music, Jazz) which comes with prize money which can be used however you'd like. I used it for a summer celebration with a group lesson/swim party & refreshments for the students. They were pleased (and intrigued) that by participating in performances that they won these awards. I am entering (due in August) two more summer program awards. If interested for next year, go to nfmc-music.org for information or ask Deb Hughes.

MEMBERSHIP

WELCOME to our newest members: **NANCY ELTON** from Atlanta who teaches piano and voice, **JEE EUN WADA** from Alpharetta, and **DANIEL WILKINSON** from Peachtree Corners who teach piano. We are looking forward to having you get involved in our many activities.

Welcome to GCMTA!

by Debra Hughes, NCTM

Hip, hip, hooray--let's give a cheer,
 Daniel, Jee Eun, and Nancy are here!
 We're thrilled you've joined our music crew,
 And saved a special seat for you!

There'll be music, laughter, friends galore,
 At maybe a meeting or two--or more!
 We share our talents, learn, and grow
 And swap a few teacher tales, you know!

So welcome, friends, we're glad you came--
 GCMTA won't be quite the same!

With Daniel, Nancy, and Jee Eun in the mix,
 We're sure our group just got three times the kicks!



DIGITAL RESOURCES

This has been a busy summer. We have been working hard to make our website more useful. The information you need the most will be at the top of the page. Following that will be teacher information, participant information, rules, guidelines, etc. When you have questions, always check the website first.

Our newsletters should be your go-to resource for all things current with GCMTA. You will find the important updates, reminders, and live links to resources and forms you need. Keep in mind that unforeseen changes happen - and way too often. Always check the newsletter before contacting your event chair with questions.

Event chair persons: To make our website and newsletters provide maximum help for us, please include links to resources, forms, etc. Our newsletter editor, Diana Cleland Passmore, goes the extra mile in making sure all links in our newsletter work with a click.

Event participants: Simply click on newsletter links and they will open to the appropriate page. Before contacting your event chair, check the webpage and current newsletter to find the information you need.

If anyone needs help in providing live links, please contact Kathy Dawal.
kdawal81@gmail.com



JR./SR. SCHOLARSHIP

Jr./Sr. Scholarship is set for Saturday morning, April 17, 2027, at PianoWorks. Registration is online, and the firm deadline is March 19, 2027; please see the website at

<https://gcmta.org/home/index/student-activities/juniorsenior-scholarship> for the information and repertoire requirements. This is a reminder that students must participate in at least one other GCMTA-sponsored event during the school year to be eligible.

If you have questions, please contact Cathy Thacker, NCTM, Chair, at <mailto:csbt88@gmail.com>.

2027 LOCAL AUDITION

Audition Chair: Sun Hee Kim

Sun Hee's email: sunheekim.piano@gmail.com

Sun Hee's phone: 404-655-2993

Audition Date: February 20, 2027

Location: PianoWorks

Address: 2805 Buford Hwy, Duluth, GA 30096

Registration Deadline: January 15, 2027

Registration is completed online by teachers only through the GMTA registration system
gmta.tenutoweb.com)

DIGITAL LIBRARY UNDER CONSTRUCTION!

We are in the process of building a Digital Library in Dropbox. All event chairs should have access to the documents they need for their event. You do not need a Dropbox account to use our Digital Library. Please contact Kathy Dawal if you need help. We will no longer be storing documents for decades on our website. But, they will be kept in our Digital Library.

Our new Digital Library will also be our site for uploading videos for event participation. Please check upcoming newsletters for links and instructions for naming and uploading files. Currently our events with a virtual performance option include Music Day and our three Federated Festivals.

2026-2027 MEETING LINEUP

We have an exciting lineup of presentations this year. Please make sure to attend each of our meetings.

We open the year with our very own Cathy Thacker, NCTM, presenting: Middle Movement Syndrome. Like middle children, middle movements tend to be a bit under noticed. We will get compelling reasons to start taking notice of these often neglected gems.

Our October presentation tackles a problem many of us face, just how to include jazz in our teaching. Dr. Geoff Haydon (GSU) will present: Incorporating Jazz Into the Piano Student's Diet. This presentation begins with a short introduction about why and how jazz is beneficial to both piano students and teachers, then presents 12-bar blues. It will also cover chord progressions, voicings, improvisation, styles, and contexts. You won't want to miss it.

Our November meeting is a special 2-hour presentation by Dr. Barbara Lister-Sink. The Lister-Sink Method is a sequenced step-by-step program for training the motor coordinations of piano technique from simplest to complex with application to musical requirements. It is an interdisciplinary method, drawing from biomechanics, anatomy, neuroscience, sports and arts medicine, and the Alexander Technique. We will be making separate arrangements for our business meeting. So, don't come late! It will be a full house as the North DeKalb chapter is co-sponsoring this outstanding program.

We start the new year off in January with our member luncheon. Watch the newsletter for details.

Having enough time to add theory in each lesson can be a challenge. Our February presenter, Lois Finlay, NCTM, will help us incorporate teaching music theory into our regular lessons without missing a beat!

Our March Masterclass will be presented by Dr. Grace Huang (UGA). She will gently guide students selected from outstanding Music Day participants as they reach even higher levels of performance.

And don't miss our final meeting of the year as we enjoy our luncheon and welcome our 2027 Teacher of the Year. And, please, start making your nominations now!



A NOTE FROM YOUR AREA FEDERATED CHAIR...

The deadline for your **Sr. Club Dues is Aug. 24th**. To submit your Sr. Club dues please send the following:

- 1) \$12 for your Sr. Club (Central, North, or West) membership
- 2) \$12 for any additional **Adult** members in your studio who will participate as Adults in a Federated Festival (Adult = 19+ yrs old)
- 3) On the GCMTA website, go to the NFMC Membership Page and scroll down to the **Sr. Club Registration Form**. Click the link, complete the form, and then send your payment via Zelle or check.

Fees can be paid by Zelle to GCMTA at events@gcmta.org or by sending a check to GCMTA at:

GCMTA Treasurer

Nancy Morris

3125 Dogwood Creek Pkwy,

Duluth, Ga. 30096

pianowithnancy@gmail.com

Teacher Transfers: If you are planning to participate in another Sr. Club/District, you must let both your old district and new district know that you would like to make a change. If you intend to transfer, please initiate that process now so that you can meet all the appropriate deadlines for your new district.

If you are new to National Federation of Music Clubs (NFMC) or Federated for short, I welcome your questions and would be happy to help you get signed up. Here is a brief snapshot about our Festivals.

In our Gwinnett MTA, we have 3 Districts available for teachers and students to participate - West, Central, and North. Each festival is held on a Saturday in late winter/early spring and students are judged on their performance(s) by other music teachers/professors from outside your district. Music to be performed must be selected from an NFMC Bulletin with one piece from an appropriate leveled list and a second choice piece. Both pieces are performed memorized in a closed setting (no audience, only the judge) and then the judge's comments and points are awarded. At the High School level, there is the option for competition and scholarship money for some events.

If you have never participated before, please get in touch with one of the District Chairs, or contact me as soon as possible to find out which district is the best place for you and your students to participate. Then, we can help you get your Sr. Club fees and information sent in.

West Gwinnett Federated Chair -

Rebecca Bonam at rbonam@bbelilburn.org

Festival Date: February 28, 2027

Location: Berean Baptist Church, Lilburn

Events: Piano, Voice, Instrumental (mainly flute), and Music Theory

Central Gwinnett Federated Chair -

Kathy Dawal or Lisa Ogg at kdawal81@gmail.com

Festival Date: March 20th, 2027

Location:

Events: Piano

North Gwinnett Federated Chairs -

Young Lee at eyoung20@gmail.com

Festival Date: March 6th, 2027

Location: First Baptist Church, Duluth

Events: Piano, Ensembles/Concertos, Voice, Music Theory

Virtual Federated Event Option -

Kathy Dawal, Melissa Slocum

Festival Date: March 27th, 2027

Location: online only, no competition available for High School

Thank you all for making our NFMC District Events so special!

Melissa Slocum