



MusiGram

Winter
2026

Arizona State Music Teachers Association
Affiliated with the Music Teachers National Association

Tatyana Eldridge
ASMTA President



Dear ASMTA Teachers,

It's difficult to believe that we are moving toward the end of this school year. Spring is coming and it's time to think about preparing for future competitions on the local and state level as well as thinking about ambitious new projects for the next school year.

MTNA Competitions: We had **four winners** in the Southwest division. Congratulations to Lillian Tan, Junior Composition (student of Karalyn Schubring); Iris Li, Senior Composition (student of Karalyn Schubring); Gian Carlo Lay, Young Artist Composition (student of Christopher Creviston); and Joshua Lee, Senior Performance String (student of Jooyeon Han). We also have two alternate winners, Momoko Hoffman, Young Artist Performance Piano (student of Baruch Meir) and Wesley Tayler on Saxophone, Young Artist Performance Woodwind (student of Christopher Creviston). Congrats to everyone!

MTNA Foundation Fellowships: We are pleased to announce that we have two Foundation Fellows who will be recognized at the Gala at the National conference in Chicago. Our nominees are **Kassandra Weleck** and **Raymond Ryder**, and they are both from Tucson. Each of them has had a substantial and positive impact on the association and its members. It's difficult to describe in a small paragraph all the positions they have taken over decades sharing their passion and love for music with colleagues and friends. We are lucky that our state has such valuable, dedicated members.

ASMTA Conference 2026: The 96th Arizona State Music Teachers conference will be held at the University of Arizona School of Music in Tucson on May 28–30, 2026. The theme is **Peak Performance**. This year's conference is dedicated

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ASMTA Board of Directors

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to the intersection of psychology and music. The conference co-chairs, **Ian Houghton and Daniel Linder**, are working hard to make this conference successful and memorable. Please come to this conference to hear new ideas, to meet old and new friends and share with them your ideas as well.

ASMTA 2026 James R. Anthony Honors Recital/Competition will be held at the state conference in Tucson on May 30, 2026. The Honors Recital competition now has 3 co-chairs: **Dr. Karali Hunter, Dr. Raymond Ryder and Johnny Rice**. The ASMTA Board voted for Johnny Rice to be a new Honors Recital co-chair at the last board meeting, which was held on January 31st. We are excited that this year the state competition will start to use Tenuto Web. This program was developed by Alejandro Cremaschi who is a professor of pedagogy at the University of Colorado and is a member of the Colorado Music Teachers Association as well. We hope that using Tenuto Web for the Honors Recital competition will make the registration process more efficient, friendly, and productive. Karali Hunter is handling Tenuto Web for the upcoming Honors Recital. Raymond Ryder and Johnny Rice are in charge of piano and string/voice divisions, and they are trying to expand the string division.

In the past, piano students participating in the competition were awarded special awards: Pee-Yaw Wilkes Endowment Award and James Saverio Ruccolo Piano Solo Awards, along with other awards provided by ASMTA. This year our ASMTA member **Margaret R. Ruccolo** established new awards for the string division.

MTO (Music Teachers Online): Arizona State MTA was honored to host **the national online event celebrating MTNA's 150th Anniversary**, uniting virtual and online music teacher associations nationwide. **Radmila Stojanovic Kiriluk** (ASMTA past president and now treasurer of MTO) and **João Paulo Casarotti** (the president of MTO) did a lot of work to prepare this unique event, which showcases how online and hybrid education continue to expand access, innovation, and community for the next generation of music educators. This virtual event was held on January 16, 2026. It included multiple sessions and was very successful.

ASP: Arizona Study Program successfully continues to use Tenuto Web for students' registration and different reports, and this year ASP started using Tenuto Web to register the pieces that students will perform at the evaluations. This makes

it easier for teachers to check the level of the pieces being entered, and it also makes the approval process of students' programs more efficient.

Best wishes,

Tatyana Eldridge
ASMTA President

Hannah Creviston

ASMTA 1st Vice President



It's hard to believe we are already through February! This past semester, I had the pleasure of attending meetings for IMTF, EVMTA, PMTA, and MTO. Dr. Karl Schindler from Phoenix College spoke at the October EVMTA gathering on "Prepared Piano and Interior Piano: Preparations, Performance and Composition." It was a very interesting and engaging session. At the PMTA November meeting, Deanna Rusnock presented "Jazz: The Four-Letter Word." Everyone in attendance was inspired and appreciative of her time and expertise.

I also was able to hear Nancy Keuper share with MTO on "The Future of Music with AI." As someone who knows nothing about AI and is a bit scared of technology, it was really helpful to hear her perspective on its possibilities. I also want to give a shout-out to Radmila and João for an absolutely fantastic day of learning and sharing. "Meaningful Connections" were absolutely made!

Lastly, I met with Peter Davis (and a second meeting with Peter and Cassandra Weleck) to discuss the future of IMTF and what purpose it might serve in the future. Peter also gave a wonderful webinar back in October called "Six Ways to Teach Higher Order Thinking."

Respectfully submitted,

Hannah Creviston, NCTM
ASMTA 1st Vice President

Ji-Young Kim

ASMTA 2nd Vice President

Dear ASMTA Members,

I am pleased to report that the 2025–26 MTNA state performance competition went smoothly on November 1–2, 2025 at Hammer and Strings Conservatory. Many thanks to the MTNA state performance competition co-chairs, Baruch Meir and Yali Luo, for expertise and efforts. The live audition process went successfully.

The Southwest Division Performance Competition was held by video recordings in December of 2025. Joshua Lee (in Senior Strings, a student of Jooyeon Han) advanced to the 2025–26 MTNA National Competition. We also have two alternate winners from Arizona: Momoko Hoffman, a student of Baruch Meir in Young Artist Piano, and Wesley Taylor, a student of Christopher Creviston in Young Artist Woodwind (saxophone).

For the Southwest Division Composition Competition, we have three winners: Lillian Tan (in Junior Composition, a student of Karalyn Schubring); Iris Li (Senior Composition, a student of Karalyn Schubring); and Gian Carlo Lay (Young Artist Composition, a student of Christopher Creviston).

The MTNA National Competitions will be held on March 21–25, 2026, in Chicago, IL.

I am happy to announce that Johnny Rice has agreed to serve on the board! The ASMTA Board voted on his position as a co-chair for the Honors Recital Auditions. He will be in charge of the strings & voice auditions.

Raymond Ryder, Karali Hunter, and Chenbaixue Yang will continue co-chairing this year's Honors Recital Auditions. The details are below.

Applications Open: early March 2026

Application Deadline: early April 2026

Preliminary Video Deadline (as needed): late April 2026

Final Audition Time & Date: Saturday, May 30, 2026, at the University of Arizona Fred Fox School of Music, 1017 N. Olive Rd., Tucson, AZ 85721.

Honors Recital Time, Date & Location: Saturday, May 30, 2026, at the University of Arizona Fred Fox School of Music, 1017 N. Olive Rd., Tucson, AZ 85721. Times TBA.

Respectfully submitted,

Dr. Ji-Young Kim
ASMTA 2nd Vice President

Ian Houghton
Daniel Linder
ASMTA 3rd Vice Presidents

ARIZONA STATE MUSIC TEACHERS
ASSOCIATION
presents
The 96th Annual State Conference

Peak Performance

May 28–30

University of Arizona School of Music
Tucson

Conference webpage:

<https://www.asmta.org/events/state-conference/>

Preparations for the 2026 ASMTA state conference are picking up steam with the new year. We're very excited to be hosting Noa Kageyama, a psychologist and musician who teaches performance psychology at Juilliard, and Hung-Kuan Chen, a renowned pianist and clinician, who is also on the faculty of the Juilliard School. Both guests will be sharing their insight into the mental and physical demands for confident, consistent successful performances. You can read their full bios on the conference webpage: <https://www.asmta.org/events/state-conference/>.

For members traveling from out of town, or Tucsonans looking for a conference-centered staycation, we have a room block at the Tucson Marriott. Reduced room rates can be booked through the ASMTA webpage. The hotel is just two blocks from the conference venue and is nestled amongst the great dining on University Avenue.

We've had some requests to extend our conference session proposal deadline, and consequently we're allowing submissions through the end of the month of February. That means there's still time to present your project or research

at our conference. The new deadline is February 28th. The application can be found on the webpage.

This year we're including poster presentations at the conference. This is a great way for members, particularly our collegiate members, to participate in the conference without the need to prepare a full 25- or 50-minute session. Poster presentation information and applications (due April 1st) can be found on the webpage.

We're very excited to announce we'll be hosting the Gala Dinner at the Treasury 1929, one of the newest and most unique fine dining venues in Tucson. Designed specifically to host dinner concerts, the Treasury 1929 offers a luxurious dining experience centered around classical music performances, making it the perfect location for our conference Gala Dinner.

The ASMTA state conference always offers a meaningful and enriching experience. We can connect with our colleagues and grow in our profession together. We're hopeful that this year will be a special event for all members and you'll join us in May. Conference registration is open now for all members. See you in Tucson!

Dr. Ian Houghton
Dr. Daniel Linder
ASMTA 3rd Vice Presidents

Luba Brodsky-Benefiel

ASMTA 4th Vice President

From September 2025 through January 2026, ASMTA's MusiEmail communications were delivered consistently each month, with four regular issues and nine special announcements for a total of thirteen emails.

These covered major items including the Fall MusiGram newsletter, conference follow-ups, webinars, scam alerts, community events, and important member notices. Member engagement remained strong, with open rates ranging from 28.5% to 54% and averaging 41.4%, reflecting effective communication and continued member interest.



Emily Ruben put together all the articles for the MusiGram, which was delivered to the membership on November 14th, 2025. With regards to membership, as of January 8th we have 407 members in Arizona.

On the website and registration front, the Arizona Study Program has successfully transitioned registrations to the Tenuto Web platform, simplifying the process by removing the need for members to log into the ASMTA website dashboard. The Honors Recital is currently in the process of making the same move.

Additionally, the ASP Online Public Store was expanded in December 2025 to allow public access to all program materials, including theory workbooks, resulting in 18 orders within the first two months.

Looking ahead, plans are being explored for a website platform upgrade in summer 2026, pending approval and budget, to improve functionality, security, and future offerings such as conference session videos and centralized board report access.

I want to thank Nina Tahbaz and Suszy Traylor especially for the care, consistency, and thoughtfulness they bring to this work.

Respectfully,

Luba Brodsky-Benefiel
ASMTA 4th Vice President

Radmila Stojanovic Kiriluk

ASMTA Immediate Past President

For the past several months, I was focused on organizing the online event for which ASMTA received the \$1,000 150TH Anniversary Celebration MTNA Grant. It was very rewarding to be part of this project. I would also like to thank the MTO president, Dr. João Paulo Casarotti, for his participation and help with the event organization, as well as to other MTO Board members, James Heuser, Dr. Michèle Adler Cohen, and Michael Zheng. I believe this event was a great representation of our state association on a national level and a contribution not only to MTNA members



but also to innovation and relevance in teaching within our fast-changing world.

Below, you will find the report and event details.

Dr. Radmila Stojanovic Kiriluk, NCTM
ASMTA Immediate Past President
MTO Treasurer

MEANINGFUL CONNECTIONS: A 150th Anniversary Celebration of Educational Innovation

EVENT REPORT

The event *Meaningful Connections* was imagined as a celebration of MTNA's 150th anniversary. It was hosted by Dr. Radmila Stojanovic Kiriluk, the ASMTA Past President, and Dr. João Paulo Casarotti, the MTO president. This was a national online gathering of MTNA-affiliated virtual and online music teacher associations. This unique event honors MTNA's legacy while showcasing how online and hybrid education continue to expand access, innovation, and community for the next generation of music educators.

Event Schedule and Highlights (see detailed scheduled below)

The program began with a Showcase of Best Practices presented by online chapter presidents Leonidas Lagrimas, Linda King, Sharon Ard, Christie Sowby, and João Paulo Casarotti, who shared effective strategies from their respective MTNA online associations.

At 10:00 AM MST, guest speaker Leila Viss offered a dynamic presentation titled "Innovative Tools for Teaching Creativity in the Hybrid Piano Studio." Her session integrated technology, artistry, and pedagogy, sparking valuable discussion and reflection.

A panel on Online & Hybrid Instruction followed, featuring Daiane Raatz, Éder Giaretta, and Dr. Jason Sifford, moderated by Dr. Casarotti. Their insights on digital engagement and evolving teaching practices reinforced the central theme of adaptable, student-centered instruction.

Afternoon sessions featured short educational presentations by Dr. Elizabeth Davis-Everhart and Tara Mock (on neurodivergent learning), Dr. Marina Bengoa Roldan (on Spanish piano repertoire), Dr. João Paulo Casarotti (on visual communication in teaching), and Dr. Paulo Steinberg (on the use of Instagram for music education).

The event concluded with an impressive Online Recital, showcasing performances by Gabriel Kostecki Nunes, Sophia Sun, Eve and Aurora Vasefi (with Dr. Christie Sowby), Zifeng Michael Zheng, and Dr. Casarotti himself. Each performance represented musical excellence and the growing global reach of online piano study.

This international gathering featured presenters and performers from Brazil, Spain, Iran, and the United States, offering a vivid cross-section of educational and artistic traditions. The inclusion of young performers alongside established professionals highlighted the continuity between teaching, mentorship, and performance in today's online music community.

Events like *Meaningful Connections* demonstrate the power of online collaboration to connect educators across borders. Through technology, common interest and creativity, participants continue to redefine what it means to teach and inspire in the digital age. Supported by the MTNA 150th Anniversary Celebration Grant, this virtual meeting not only honored history but also looked forward to the future of piano pedagogy.

EVENT SCHEDULE AND DETAILS

Event Hosts:

- Dr. Radmila Stojanovic Kiriluk, ASMTA Past President
- Dr. João Paulo Casarotti, MTO President

9:00 AM MST | 11:00 AM ET

Showcase of Best Practices from Online MTNA Associations

- Leonidas Lagrimas (VLMTA - Western North Carolina)
- Linda King (Virtual VA - Virginia)
- Sharon Ard (South Arkansas Online Chapter)
- Christie Sowby (Utah Music Teachers Association Online Chapter)
- João Paulo Casarotti (Music Teachers Online - Arizona)

10:00 AM MST | 12:00 PM ET

Guest Speaker

- Leila Viss: "Innovative Tools for Teaching Creativity in the Hybrid Piano Studio"

11:00 AM MST | 1:00 PM ET

Panel Discussion: Online & Hybrid Instruction

- Daiane Raatz
- Éder Giaretta

- Jason Sifford
- *Moderator: João Paulo Casarotti*

12:00 PM MST | 2:00 PM ET

Educational Presentations

- Tara Mock & Elizabeth Davis (NC) – “Strategies for Teaching Neurodivergent Students”
- Marina Roldan (AR) – “Exploring Spanish Identity: The Influence of Flamenco and Sevillanas on Isaac Albéniz’s ‘Sevilla’”
- João Paulo Casarotti (AZ) – “Visual Communication in Piano Instruction”
- Dr. Paulo Steinberg (VA) – “Instagram for Music Teachers: Connect. Educate. Inspire.”

1:00 PM MST | 3:00 PM ET

Online Recital

- Gabriel Kostecki Nunes (VA) – *Chopin, Etude Op. 25 No. 11 “Winter Wind”*
- Sophia Sun (AZ)- *Debussy, Etude No.11 “Pour les arpèges composés”*
- Eve & Aurora Vasefi with Christie Sowby (UT) – *Poulenc, Double Piano Concerto, I mov*
- Zifeng Michael Zheng (AZ) – *The Jade Emperor’s Atlas: Prelude to the Twelve Chinese Zodiacs*
- João Paulo Casarotti (AZ) – *Ernesto Nazareth, Piano Music*

Special thanks to the MTNA leadership for their support and for awarding our association the 150th Anniversary Celebration Grant that made this meeting possible.



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Barbara Russell
Arizona Study Program

What an exciting time for the Arizona Study Program! Last year, 2025, marked the first year using the online Tenuto Web platform for enrolling students in ASP. This year, 2026, we have included the ability for teachers to input student repertoire and get immediate approval if using pieces from the Teachers Repertoire Guide. There will also be big changes on evaluation day at our venues across the state as student evaluation forms will be filled in and preprinted for students to pick up on site on evaluation day. This will eliminate the scheduling and emailing required by teachers in the past. In addition, these changes will simplify the enrollment and repertoire submission processes for future years, as we strive to preserve the longevity of this unique evaluation program for our great state.



Dr. Barbara Russell, NCTM
ASP State Chairman

Michael Zheng
Social Media Chair

As the Social Media Chair of ASMTA, I have actively managed ASMTA's social media platforms to promote key events, highlight member achievements, and enhance engagement within our community. A central focus has been increasing visibility for professional development opportunities and celebrating the accomplishments of our members.



To encourage participation in the upcoming MTNA National Conference, I shared updates emphasizing its value for professional growth and networking. Additionally, I worked closely with the ASMTA Conference organizers in making the promotional materials. These efforts are part of a broader strategy to strengthen ASMTA's online presence, create meaningful connections, and support our mission of advancing music education.

By maintaining an active and purposeful digital presence, we continue to engage our members and amplify the impact of ASMTA within the broader music community.

Michael Zheng
Social Media Chair

Susan Traylor
Website Manager

What's New in 2026 on ASMTA.org?

Two Events Move Registrations to Tenuto Web: The **Arizona Study Program** has now successfully moved its registrations (and more) to the third-party event registration and scheduling app, **Tenuto Web**, which has its own login. This means that when registering for ASP you are no longer required to log into ASMTA's website Member Dashboard. You can go directly to Tenuto Web and log in to register students and submit repertoire. The **James R. Anthony Honors Recital** is also moving its registrations to Tenuto Web for this year's registrations. Although Honors Recitals is using Tenuto Web, its login will be separate from the Arizona Study Program.

Lastly, **but importantly**, all instructions for our events' registrations will continue to be posted on the ASMTA website under their respective web pages. The **ASMTA Conference registrations will remain** on the ASMTA website, for now at least.

ASP Online Public Store: In December 2025, we launched the **Arizona Study Program (ASP) Online "Public" Store** for purchasing all of ASP's materials (reference guides, syllabus, practice exams, and now ... theory workbooks) by members AND non-members (at a higher price). There are two (2) important things to understand about the ASP Online "Public" Store:

1. In order to obtain your ASMTA Member discount pricing, you must first log into your Member Dashboard.
2. Even though you can now purchase theory workbooks online, you cannot download them. You are only ordering and paying for them online. You will still need to refer to the Materials Order form in your **ASP Packet 1** and make

arrangements with the distributor to pick up your theory workbook order.

Remember to Visit Your Member Dashboard!

Independent Music Teachers Forum (IMTF) video recordings of all their Zoom meeting presentations are on your Member Dashboard > left-hand menu. These are excellent resources on topics of excellence, improvisation, pedaling, RCM, how to practice, technique, how to talk to your students, and preparing for ASP.

Membership Directory: You can pull up your directory for *all* ASMTA members or a directory for your local association only (e.g., CMTA, EVMTA, NAMTA, PMTA, TMTA), or you can search for an individual member. You can view it, save it to PDF, or print it out.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan “Suszy” Traylor
ASMTA Website Manager

Check the Archives

You can peruse the past online by checking:

[ASMTA MusiGram](#) webpage for the past 20 years of MusiGrams or

[ASU Repository](#) for the full Arizona State Music Teachers Association Collection. These easily accessible archives are available now!

- Local Associations -



Nadia Feeken

President, East Valley Music Teachers Association

Dear ASMTA Members,

Happy New Year! The East Valley Music Teachers Association hosted several engaging and successful events for our teachers and students during the fall semester.

We began the year with a well-attended pizza party at Organ Stop Pizza in Mesa, where students and families enjoyed a unique musical experience while listening to live organ performances. Many of our students also participated in the Music Showcase (chaired by Marla Bradford and Bjorn Hanson), the Fall Recital (chaired by Nataliya Willoughby), and the Composers Celebration Concert (chaired by Michael Bryson). In conjunction with the Composers Celebration Concert, EVMTA held a toy drive, giving back to our community by providing toys to children in need during the holiday season.

Two enriching professional development workshops were offered for our teachers: “Composing for Prepared and Interior Piano,” presented by Dr. Karl Schindler and “Between Fingers and Strings,” presented by Leo Ostrander.

EVMTA began the new year with Piano Ensemble, our largest annual event, held in January and chaired by Marcia Havlovic and Becky Rogers. Looking ahead to the spring semester, we will offer two competitive opportunities for students: the EVMTA Piano Competition and the Jason Sipe Prize Piano Performers. In addition, we will host two recitals: the Spring Recital for all students and the Senior Recital and Awards Ceremony, where we recognize our graduating high school seniors, as well as a masterclass presented by Arizona State University professor Dr. Miki Aoki.

Through these events, EVMTA continues to enrich the musical growth of both our teachers and their students.

Respectfully submitted,

Dr. Nadia Feeken, NCTM
EVMTA President



Dani Shraibman
President, Phoenix Music
Teachers Association

Greetings from the Valley of
the Sun!

As we move into the spring of our 2025–2026 academic year, we are grateful for the many meaningful events already shared and look forward to several exciting opportunities still ahead. This year has featured an inspiring lineup of presenters, student performances, concerts, masterclasses, competitions, and social gatherings, continuing PMTA's tradition of excellence, artistry, and community connection.



Meeting Location

All general PMTA meetings and student recitals are being held at **Steinway & Sons Scottsdale**, located at 14418 N Scottsdale Rd, Suite 184, Scottsdale, AZ 85254.

Events This Past Fall

Our first general meeting of the year took place on September 11th, featuring a captivating performance-presentation by Prof. Eckart Sellheim and Dr. Dian Baker. They shared insights into Prof. Sellheim's musical journey in "A Musical Life: Early Days in Cologne," concluding with a special performance of "Stars & Stripes Forever" by our current and past presidents in commemoration of 9/11.

We also enjoyed two additional fall presentations organized by President-Elect Jesse Davlin. In October, pianist Benita Rose presented and performed "The Three B's: Bach, Beethoven, and Busoni." In November, Deanna Rusnock shared a dynamic and engaging presentation "Jazz/ Improvisation in the Learning Pianist," offering practical insights into incorporating jazz into piano study.

Our student activities were equally vibrant. Jenny Su and Rosmary Stelmach organized three successful student recitals—held in October, December, and most recently on February 14th—each beautifully showcasing the dedication and musical growth of our students throughout the year.

November was especially full, with Chris and Ivona Kaminska-Bowlby hosting our beloved Performance Plus event—an inspiring evening of teacher performances and fellowship. Shortly after, we gathered at **Glendale Community College** for our Fall Festival (co-chairs Tatyana Eldridge and Camille Conforti), themed *From Baroque to Modern*. Students performed repertoire spanning musical eras, showcasing both stylistic understanding and artistic growth.

We concluded the semester with our cherished Holiday Social, graciously hosted by Sue Shiner. The evening was filled with warm conversation, laughter, games, a book sale, and a festive potluck—truly a highlight of the season.

Events This Winter

In January, we were honored to present a masterclass with Prof. Caio Pagano, featuring four student performers. His thoughtful artistry, depth of musical insight, and engaging teaching style offered each student meaningful guidance while providing observers with valuable pedagogical inspiration. The masterclass was an enriching experience for all who attended and a wonderful highlight of our winter programming. And recently, we were privileged to host a presentation by Dr. Stephen Cook on "Nonprofit Leadership for Musicians." His insightful and practical session explored effective leadership principles, organizational structure, strategic planning, and community engagement within the nonprofit arts sector.

Finally, we are proud to reflect on the recent success of our 74th Annual Piano Ensemble Concert, held on February 7th at Arcadia High

School Auditorium. This inspirational and highly successful event, led by Sue Shiner and Suszy Traylor, was a joyful celebration of collaboration and community. Teachers performed alongside their students, modeling artistry and partnership in a truly meaningful way. The stage was spectacularly set with seven grand pianos, creating both a stunning visual and an exhilarating musical experience. Adding to the festive atmosphere, several performers embraced a fun *Wicked*-themed element, complete with creative dress-up that delighted the audience and brought an extra layer of energy and theatrical flair to the program. It was a memorable evening that beautifully showcased the spirit, creativity, and camaraderie of our PMTA community.

Looking Ahead

As we continue into the spring and toward the close of our academic year, we eagerly anticipate several important upcoming events. These include a masterclass with Dr. Jessica Yam, an upcoming student recital, and an Adult Student Recital, as well as another inspiring Performance Plus gathering. We also eagerly look forward to the PMTA’s annual Fundraiser Concert on March 21st. In the months ahead, we will be preparing students for the Dean & Carolyn Elder Piano Competition and the ASP Evaluations—valuable opportunities that foster both artistic excellence and professional growth.

Should you need more information or have any questions about upcoming events, please don’t hesitate to reach out to me, our President-Elect Jesse Davlin, or any of our dedicated board members and chairpersons. We look forward to continuing a year of inspiration, growth, and connection within our vibrant PMTA community.

With warmest regards,

Dani Shraibman
PMTA President

Chase Coleman

President, Northern Arizona Music Teachers Association

At our meeting on February 8th, NAMTA made plans for student recitals in April and May, as well as exploring possibilities for our students to play at

assisted living facilities in Flagstaff. Everything is set for our ASP adjudications on May 15th; Dr. Aimee Fincher of NAU will be adjudicating. We have several topics for panel discussions, including this month’s AMT article on the problems of once a week lessons, problem student behavior, what to do when a student brings up a serious personal matter in a lesson, and a session where we would each bring a new piece of pedagogical or performance interest for sharing and discussion. Several of us are preparing students for the Northern Arizona Piano Competition at the NAU Kitt School of Music on May 17th.

Respectfully submitted,

Chase Coleman
NAMTA President

Francilia Schofield
President, Cochise Music Teachers Association



The Cochise Music Teachers Association closed out the year with a teacher’s potluck, after having many individual studio recitals, along with our fantastic Music-in-Mall event where we had more than 90 students performing from 11:00 am to 4:30 pm. It was a great gift to the community and motivating for our students.

We began 2026 with our monthly meetings to discuss eligibility for our senior scholarship, requiring students to reach a minimum level of theory to attain this scholarship. Dates were chosen for our Live at Kino event, and discussions were held about ASP exams, fundraising recitals, and our upcoming Inge Young Competition. We also laid plans to possibly have an organist do an improv presentation for teachers and students in the near future.

Thanks,

Francie Schofield
CMTA President

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Use code: ASMTA-N5ZUA (Valid through May 31, 2026)

Want to share this great resource with your students too? **Students and families** get 10% off their bench purchase, and ASMTA still receives 5% of the proceeds.

Student link:
<https://shop.pianoworks.com/accesso.../piano-benches/hidrau/>
Use code: ASMTA-SAVE10 (Valid through May 31, 2026)

Leah Houpt

President, Eastern Arizona Music Teachers Association

The Eastern Arizona Music Teachers Association had two activities for students in the last few months. On November 10 we had our annual Fall Festival at the home of Valene Bryce. She has a beautiful home with a living room large enough to accommodate a good-sized audience. The students played well and they seemed to enjoy playing for the audience in a more intimate and less intimidating space.

Our next activity was a music meet-up at the Giving Machine located in downtown Safford during the month of December. Our students, friends, and family came to play Christmas carols and other music as people came to donate for items in the Giving Machine. Most of the performers stayed around long enough to be able to play their pieces again to a different group of people. One of the other board members and I brought music in case there was a lull, but we didn't need to use it as we had a steady stream of performers. This was a great opportunity for the students to have a less formal opportunity to play their Christmas pieces. We had good feedback from the families and teachers involved.

Our board met to set dates for our Spring Festival and a masterclass with Greta Pasztor, who is the new piano professor at Eastern Arizona College. Also, we made plans for the Senior Showcase later in the spring. Eventually, we would like to sponsor a workshop on performance anxiety.

Sincerely,

Leah Houpt
EAMTA President

Astrid Chan

President, Tucson Music Teachers Association



Dear ASMTA members,

TMTA is beginning the new year with exciting and encouraging news. Recently, our organization received a generous \$1,000 donation, with \$500 designated to support the TMTA Ensemble and \$500 allocated to the Merit Scholarship program. This meaningful contribution will directly benefit our students and programs, and we are deeply grateful for this support.

In addition, Arizona Friends of Chamber Music has extended a wonderful opportunity to our members by offering 20 free student tickets per concert to TMTA members' students. This partnership provides invaluable access to high-quality live performances and reinforces our shared commitment to music education.

TMTA has an exciting and robust lineup of events planned for the coming months, reflecting our continued commitment to excellence in music education, performance, and collaboration.

On January 24, TMTA hosted a full-day event dedicated to the music of Edvard Grieg, featuring Dr. Sylvia Eckes and soprano Laura Loge. The day included a scholarly presentation, a concert, and a master class focusing on Grieg's solo piano and chamber music. This event offered a rich exploration of Grieg's work and performance practice.

On February 1, Kassandra Weleck held the Celebrating Music Creation event. This program provided a unique and valuable opportunity for student composers and performers to collaborate as a creative team. I personally witnessed the benefits of this process through my own student's participation, which led to noticeable improvements in both reading and performance skills.

Our TMTA Ensemble Concert will take place on March 14. This annual concert is the largest music event in Tucson and remains a highlight of our organization's event calendar. However, due to an unexpected 50% increase in rental fees from our venue and lack of income resources, TMTA has

been in the process of looking for donors to increase the income so we can continue to service our Tucson Music Community.

Looking ahead to late spring, TMTA will host the State Conference May 28–30 at the University of Arizona, centered on the theme Peak Performance. This year’s conference focuses on the intersections of music, education, psychology, and science, with the goal of applying research and best practices to enhance teaching and performance.

I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to our TMTA board members and the teachers who have generously given their time and energy to create and support these events.

I submit this report with love and gratitude,

Dr. Astrid Chan
TMTA President

João Paulo Casarotti

President, Music Teachers Online

It is my pleasure to share updates from the Music Teachers Online Association (MTO) of Arizona. Our organization continues to expand its visibility and service to the music teaching community through innovative programming and strong collaboration with ASMTA and MTNA.

In November 2025, MTO Arizona hosted the webinar “The Future of Music with AI,” presented by Nancy Keuper, ASMTA Technology Chair. The event fostered thoughtful discussion on the role of emerging technologies in music education.

On January 16, 2026, MTO Arizona presented *Meaningful Connections: A 150th Anniversary Celebration of Educational Innovation*, a national virtual event honoring the 150th Anniversary of MTNA. This program was made possible through the support of ASMTA, recipient of an MTNA 150th Anniversary Grant.

The event brought together educators, performers, and leaders from across the country to highlight innovation, collaboration, and the evolving role of online and hybrid instruction. Programming included the following:

- A showcase of best practices from MTNA affiliated online associations
- A guest presentation by Leila Viss on creativity in the hybrid piano studio
- A panel discussion on online and hybrid instruction
- Educational sessions addressing neurodivergent teaching strategies, cultural studies, visual communication, and social media for music teachers
- An online recital featuring students and teachers from multiple states

MTO Arizona also launched a new website, developed with the leadership of Vice President James Hassler and designer Phelipe Xadai, strengthening communication, visibility, and member engagement.

Looking ahead, MTO Arizona is planning additional webinars for 2026 with the goal of increasing participation and outreach. Webinars are offered at a per-session rate for nonmembers, and ASMTA members are warmly invited to explore and participate in MTO programming.

Website: <https://mtoarizona.com>

Thank you for your continued support of Music Teachers Online of Arizona.

Dr. João Casarotti, NCTM
MTO President

