



GEORGIA MUSIC TEACHERS ASSOCIATION



FALL NEWSLETTER 2022

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE GEORGIA MUSIC TEACHERS ASSOCIATION, AN AFFILIATE OF MTNA

Inside this issue:

President's Report	2
President-Elect's Report	3
GMTA Conference	4
Composer Interview	6
New Executive Board	9
Membership	13
Certification	14
MTNA Competitions	15
GMTA Auditions	15
Local Associations: NFMTA & NEGMTA	16
Local Associations: RMTA & WGMTA	17
Arts Awareness & Advocacy	18
Theory	18
Judges List	19
Georgia's Own	19
Award Funds	20
Wellness Report	21
Advertising Index	21
GMTA Calendar	22
GMTA Leadership	23
Local Associations	24
GMTA Financial Report	25

2022 GMTA STATE CONFERENCE

November 3-5 at Kennesaw State University

REGISTER NOW

Make plans to join us at the 2022 GMTA State Conference at Kennesaw State University! With the convenient location and fantastic [headliners](#), you won't want to miss this opportunity.

Registration is now open, including banquet and lunch options. To register, click the button above or visit

<https://georgiamta.org/conference-register.php>.



**Wynn-Anne Rossi,
Pedagogy Headliner**

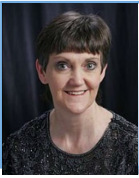


**Paul Barnes,
Conference Recitalist**



**Brandon K. Smith,
Commissioned
Composer**

Even more conference news on pages 4 and 5



FROM THE PRESIDENT

JAN ADAMS, NCTM, GMTA PRESIDENT

2

After the long, restful days of summer, it is time for fall—cooler days, teaching schedules, meetings, etc. It is nice to see a new sense of normalcy returning after the past three years of pandemic. We have been flexible with new ways of teaching, and even GMTA has made some changes since the pandemic – some of which have proven to be better for our organization.

Our GMTA Auditions now offer the Regional Auditions virtually as a permanent solution to the expenses of location, personnel and hospitality. Local Associations can choose between virtual or live Auditions, and our State Auditions continue to be live. The State Auditions will once again be at Piedmont University in Demorest on April 14-15, 2023.

Our Executive Board meetings have had record attendance over Zoom. This really helps reduce expenses for many of our members who must travel from all over the state.

Meanwhile, our MTNA Competitions will return to live auditions this year at Columbus State University on October 21-22, 2022. Check the MTNA website for more information.

Our GMTA Conference will be held at Kennesaw State University on November 3-5, 2022. There is information throughout this newsletter, but it promises to be exciting and informative with great headliners in Paul Barnes and Wynn-Anne Rossi. I'm looking forward to seeing old and new faces at the conference.

We are excited for the many college members who have attended our conference and been involved in other GMTA/MTNA projects such as presentations at the MTNA Conference. It is wonderful to see young faces joining our organization. They have lots of fresh ideas. Be sure to meet these new teachers at our conference. They are the future of GMTA!

Just a reminder to renew your MTNA/GMTA membership and to apply for the grants that GMTA offers. All information can be found on the GMTA website.

These two years as President have really passed quickly. I didn't get to attend MTNA conferences and summit meetings in person like other presidents before me, but I have met wonderful teachers in our state and nationally via Zoom. My Executive Board has worked together during an unusual term to promote GMTA during the past two years. They have made this job easier as everyone has taken responsibility for their office. It has been an honor to work with them as well as our Executive Director, Mandy Reynolds. She is the rock of our organization, and we are blessed to have her knowledge and expertise continue with each administration.

See you at the conference in November!



FROM THE PRESIDENT-ELECT

CATHY THACKER, NCTM, GMTA PRESIDENT-ELECT

The local association presidents and I met via Zoom on Saturday, August 20, with fourteen out of twenty local associations represented. There was a very positive atmosphere as we shared our upcoming programs and events. Many of the Georgia's Own speakers are presenting programs throughout the state in 2022-23. You can find that list at <https://georgiamta.org/georgias-own.php>, and there is additional information on [page 19](#) of this newsletter. Several local associations offer festivals and competitions in which other associations can participate. We have many wonderful opportunities for performance and musical growth!

It has been my pleasure to serve as your president-elect, and I look forward to my term as GMTA president. Jan Adams has modeled well for me what it means to lead a state music teachers' association, and I thank her for her guidance and patience.

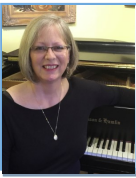
Attend your local association's meetings, and challenge yourself to try something new. I look forward to seeing you at the state conference!

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2022 GMTA STATE CONFERENCE

KRISTI HELFEN, NCTM, GMTA VP OF PROGRAMS

4

A very special thanks to Kennesaw State University for hosting us this year and to Huu Mai for helping work out many of the logistics. We are looking forward to hearing from 14 session presenters, with two sessions held concurrently.

I know you will love visiting historic Kennesaw and experiencing the marvelous acoustics of Morgan Concert Hall in the Bailey Performance Center. We have a special Thursday evening concert that will feature our GMTA Concerto Competition winners as well as performances by some of KSU's music faculty. And of course there are multiple opportunities throughout the conference to hear our student performers.

I look forward to seeing you there!



MORE CONFERENCE DETAILS

VENDOR BOOTHS: Vendor booths are available to academic institutions, music-related businesses, and interested individuals. Contact Mandy Reynolds at <https://georgiamta.org/exhibitor-contract.php> if you would like to exhibit at the conference.

CONFERENCE HOTEL: The Hampton Inn by Hilton in Kennesaw is only 1 mile from KSU's Bailey Performance Center. Reservations are required no later than October 21 to receive the conference rate of \$109 per night (plus taxes). Book at [this link](#), or call 770-427-2002.

CONFERENCE CANCELLATION POLICY: Before the pre-registration deadline, the full registration fee—less a \$20 cancellation fee—will be refunded. After the pre-registration deadline, a percentage of the registration fee—less the \$20 cancellation fee—may be refunded at the discretion of the Executive Director and the GMTA President. No meal refunds are given after the pre-registration deadline.



STUDENTS ATTENDING THE CONFERENCE

As always, the GMTA conference is **FREE for our Collegiate Members**. In addition, this year GMTA is pleased to offer a **FREE lunch** to all GMTA collegiate members attending the Collegiate Chapters Luncheon at the conference on Friday, November 4 from 12-1. Room TBA. Come network with Georgia's future music leaders!

Students must **pre-register by October 17**.

NOTE: When registering for the conference, **DO NOT** select to purchase a lunch ticket or it will charge you \$10. All collegiate students will automatically receive a complimentary cafeteria lunch ticket with their registration. They also do not need to go through Paypal to complete their registration. They will receive a message that "registration is not complete until payment is made" but that does not apply to the collegiate students since collegiate members can attend the conference for free.



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This year, GMTA is excited to welcome Brandon K. Smith as our 2022 GMTA Commissioned Composer. I am excited to share the following interview as a further introduction before we hear his new work at the conference.

- Jeri-Mae Astolfi, NCTM, Commissioning Chair

Tell us about your musical background.

My introduction to music began in the 4th grade when I learned how to play violin in my elementary school orchestra class. I started teaching myself piano when I was 13; to this day I've never had a formal piano lesson. While I think that a lot of my composition instincts stem from

being a self-taught musician, I often regret that I never took private music lessons when I was younger. I started taking voice lessons in college, mostly because applied lessons were a requirement for my degree, but I grew to enjoy the discipline that came with them. Few things improve your musicianship more than a great private instructor.

When did you start composing and what drew you to composition?

I started composing around the age of 15 when I was a freshman in high school. I started out doing arrangements of popular songs for my high school string orchestra before branching out into my own compositions. What I loved about composition was the spaces that it allowed me to occupy. I was never the strongest musician or performer, but composing allowed me to communicate and engage with musicians far superior to myself. I also loved the sense of construction that comes with the composition process. Rarely am I inspired to write an entire piece in one sitting, but I love starting with a small idea and slowly building something special with each writing session.

Were any particular composers influential in your development as a composer?

In terms of classical composers, my earliest influences were Dvorak, Tchaikovsky, and Vaughan Williams. These were composers that my high school orchestra director loved and programmed often, and I fell in love with their melodic language and their sense of orchestration. Later in my development I fell in love with Debussy, Sibelius, and Rachmaninoff. These composers really showed me the power of orchestration, how a piano could sound as full as an orchestra or how an orchestra could sound as intimate as a piano. Contemporary composers like Eric Whitacre and Caroline Shaw have been huge influences as well. Outside of classical music I am greatly inspired by musical theatre composers Stephen Sondheim and Jason Robert Brown, and alternative rock bands Radiohead and Coldplay.

How would you describe your compositional style?

I would describe my compositions as neo-romantic and neo-classical. My music is very tonal; however for this commission I attempted writing deliberately dissonant and atonal music for the first time. I am more drawn to how a piece feels than how it sounds, meaning that my main goal when I am composing is to invoke a very specific emotion from the performers and audience. I also attempt to write music that I could listen to and enjoy casually, but can also be enjoyed when analyzed at a deeper level. My early works tended to be more songlike, with an emphasis on melody and harmony, but throughout my education I've branched out in experimenting with rhythm, orchestration, timbre, and texture.



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Do you have a routine or specific creative style when creating a new work?

My writing process falls into 4 broad categories: sketching, notating, editing, and logistics. Sketching involves listening to pieces for inspiration, communicating with performers if they have already been determined, and notating some basic ideas on manuscript paper. This allows me to clearly establish my goals for the piece. Notating involves composing the piece into notation software, with the primary goal being completion. I try not to be too perfect in this part because I know that I will set aside time specifically for editing. Editing involves going over the finished piece with the performers, my composition teachers, and myself making sure that the piece is as strong as possible. Even though this part of the process doesn't take a lot of time, it requires the greatest focus. My GMTA commission went through relatively small but essential edits before the final draft. Logistics involve coordinating rehearsal, performance, and recording times for the piece. I've been fortunate that almost all of my pieces have been performed and recorded by live musicians, but occasionally I'll write just for fun as well.

What was the inspiration behind your GMTA/MTNA commission "Time and Memory"?

Time and Memory is a suite for harp and flute written for Memoduo, a professional chamber duo comprised of harpist Molly O'Roark and flautist Elisa Moles. I first connected with them during the summer of 2021 when Molly was recording some pieces of mine for a separate project. The strength of our collaboration led to a discussion of a larger project and we settled on a multi-movement suite for her chamber duo. The inspiration for the suite came from the times of the day, specifically what each time of day invokes in our memories. There is something about seeing the sun rise that reminds me of early-morning walks with my mother during lockdown. Sunset reminds me of long stressful days at my day job finally coming to an end. But for each person who plays or listens to this, they could have completely different memories of those periods of time. *Time and Memory* is inspired by how powerful those 2 things are, and how specifically seeing a time on your watch or clock can invoke powerful feelings of nostalgia in anyone. As popular as the instruments of flute and harp are, they are instruments I had relatively limited experience writing for compared to other instruments, so I relished the opportunity to dive into the colors and textures of these instruments.

Do you compose in styles other than contemporary classical?

Not recently, but immediately before I began my studies at Georgia State, I was working on an original musical and a singer-songwriter album. I completed the writing of both, but neither project has been performed or recorded for logistical reasons. I greatly enjoy the times when I've written outside of classical music. I love these genres as a listener, and the more I study the more I realize that pop and theatre songwriters have very similar creative processes to classical composers.

What was the most artistically-stretching project you have been involved with to date?

In a lot of ways this commission has been a big artistic stretch. Most of my music is vocal, and that is what I'm most comfortable writing. Setting a text for a vocal piece gives you a structure that is harder to set up in purely instrumental music. This is also my first multi-movement work; the nature of my composition program encouraged stand-alone pieces. Creating a work where each movement had its own original character but still felt cohesive as a larger work was a challenge. Another artistic stretch was the recording and editing process for my debut album. I was so used to preparing music for a live performance and then just using live recordings, but my producer showed me the importance of recording multiple takes and editing them into a seamless performance. The process gave me a greater appreciation for the art of recorded studio music, in both classical and pop contexts.

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What challenges have you faced as a composer?

I've been very fortunate to have had an abundance of performance and recording opportunities for my music. One challenge I have experienced is the gap between encouragement of my work and support of my work. The difference is that plenty of my teachers and peers have complimented and praised my work very highly, yet I haven't seen the same enthusiasm reflected in increased commissions and collaborations. I understand there are broader logistical and structural reasons behind this, yet it is still frustrating to feel that the quality of my music doesn't affect how often it is performed or recorded. Another challenge is the dichotomy between more academic music and more commercial music. While this divide is applied more in theory than in practice, I've noticed little overlap in the music that appeals to other composers, other performers, and audience members. This makes it difficult to write music that moves and resonates with one audience without alienating another.

What advice would you give to instrumental or voice teachers who would like to incorporate composition activities into their lessons but who do not have a composition background?

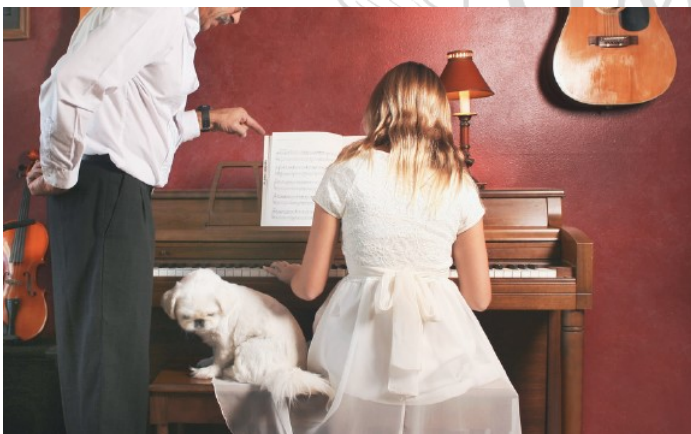
Compositions can start out very simple, most famous pieces start with one basic idea that is then developed. With my piano students I'll start with 3 random notes on the piano, then we'll create some sort of arpeggio or chord progression out of it. Starting small and setting simple goals (only 10 bars or 20 bars) will give students a lot of satisfaction when they complete them. I always remind myself and my students that any musician has the ability to compose; experienced composers only differ in the time they spend developing and editing their pieces.

What advice would you give to young people who aspire to compose?

I have 4 simple tips that I use for myself, and I use the acronym SCAR: Studies, Consistency, Attitude, Relationships. If you want to start composing music or improve as a composer, listen to a lot of music and attend a lot of concerts; this will give a constant well of music to be inspired by. Have a writing schedule that you can commit to, and make sure you always have something to work on; a finished piece is better than no piece. Try to have an optimistic and positive attitude, don't get bogged down by perfectionism or feelings of inferiority; remember that the ability to create art at all is already a blessing. Maintain good relationships with other musicians who will actively inspire and motivate you—not just for future commissioning and collaboration opportunities, but it will also enrich your social life.

Now that your GMTA/MTNA commission has been created, what's next?

I'm fortunate to have several commissions and collaborations on the way, including a commissioned art song and a three-movement duet for bassoon and percussion. Larger upcoming projects include my debut album of original art songs and a potential chamber opera or musical. My broader compositional goals include writing larger scale theatre works and recording more albums of my original pieces.



We are committed to supporting piano teachers and students on their musical journeys!



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9

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GMTA President: Cathy Thacker, NCTM, is currently the President-Elect of Georgia Music Teachers Association and the current President of Gwinnett County MTA, as well as their 2018 Teacher of the Year. Cathy has been a member of GMTA for 20 years, where she served as VP of Newsletters and two terms as VP of Auditions before serving in her current position. She presented her “Middle Movement Syndrome” program at the 2018 GMTA conference, and “A Day in the Life of a Piano Teacher” at the 2010 GMTA conference. She is an adjudicator for Piano Guild, NFMC Festivals and other piano events throughout Georgia. She holds a B.S. in Education, *cum laude*, from Bob Jones University, Greenville, South Carolina.

Cathy’s private studio in Snellville, GA, has over 40 students of all ages. Her students participate in recitals, NFMC Festivals, local competitions, master classes, and Piano Guild. Cathy enjoys accompanying at church; she has also accompanied wind students at Solo & Ensemble, a GMEA event, as well as flute students in recitals. Several of her students have had winning music composition entries in PTSA Reflections contests.



GMTA President-Elect: Kristi Helfen, NCTM, is the VP of Programs for GMTA. She has also served as Decatur MTA President, GMTA Region IV Auditions Coordinator, and MTNA Senior Performance Competitions State Coordinator. Other positions include Georgia Federation of Music Clubs Secretary and Decatur Festival Area Chair. Kristi teaches applied piano at Oxford College of Emory and holds a B.S. degree in music education/piano from Asbury University and an MM in piano pedagogy from Georgia State University, where she studied with Sergio Gallo.

Kristi teaches students of all ages at her home studio and is a staff accompanist at Crossroads Presbyterian Church in Stone Mountain. She also adjudicates for GMTA and GFMC as well as other organizations. She enjoys performing collaboratively with Pam Martin (4-hands) and Pam Asberry (2 pianos), and was a member of Redeemer Piano Ensemble for 17 years. Kristi has also had two articles published in Clavier Companion Magazine (Mar/Apr 2011; May/June 2013).



GMTA Secretary: Fernando Ramos began formal training in piano at the late age of 15. He won first place at the Josephine Evans Piano Competition while also accompanying his high school Men’s Choir during the day, teaching piano lessons after school, and playing at local restaurants at night. Fernando continued his education at Clayton College & State University after receiving the Spivey Hall Full Scholarship Award, studying Piano Performance, Pedagogy, and Composition. For two consecutive years, his compositions were selected to be performed by members of the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra in a Masterclass setting.

As a teacher, Fernando offers over 25 years of professional experience to his students, many of which have won awards and special recognitions. He has also taught and accompanied at Riverdale High School and Saint John the Evangelist Catholic School. He is an active member of the Coweta-Fayette Music Teachers Association (CFMTA), where he served as 2nd Vice-President and Student Activities Chair for two years and is currently serving his second term as President. Fernando has also created over 200 arrangements catering to his students' musical tastes and level of playing, from rock and pop to video games and favorite movie soundtracks—because having fun is equally as important as the accolades!

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10

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GMTA VP of Membership: Hailing from a family of teachers, **Dr. Beibei Lin** is first and foremost dedicated to the development, growth, and success of her students and considers teaching her highest calling and greatest privilege. She was awarded the Steinway & Sons Top Teacher Award in 2017 in recognition of her teaching. Her students regularly win recognition at competitions and conferences for their performances and scholarship.

Dr. Lin is currently the Vice President of Membership with Georgia Music Teachers Association and hosts the GMTA Podcast, available on Apple Podcast, Spotify, Google Podcast, Stitcher, and Soundcloud. Prior to her appointment at Valdosta State University, Dr. Lin taught at Columbus State University.

Dr. Lin completed her Doctor of Music in Piano Performance and Master of Music in Piano Pedagogy and Performance from Florida State University. She completed her Bachelor of Music, *Summa Cum Laude*, in Piano Performance at Arizona State University. Her piano mentors include Heidi Louise Williams and Walter Cosand. Beibei Lin lives in Valdosta, GA with her faithful and loving cat, Zhazha. They are both avid gardeners.



GMTA VP of Newsletters: **Amy Meppen Neal, NCTM**, is Assistant Professor of Piano Pedagogy and Class Piano at Shorter University. Mrs. Neal moved to Georgia from California, where she served as Assistant Director of the Santa Monica Academy of Music and taught group piano classes at Cerritos College. Prior to her time on the west coast, she taught class piano, pedagogy, and private piano lessons at East Texas Baptist University.

Amy Neal has taught private piano lessons in Texas, California, and Georgia, and she has maintained an active private studio since 1998. She is a member of the Music Teachers National Association, the American College of Musicians, and the National Federation of Music Clubs. She is a past president of her local Music Teachers Association and currently serves as Vice President of Newsletters for Georgia MTA.

Mrs. Neal graduated *Summa Cum Laude* from Baylor University with a Bachelor of Music degree in Piano Pedagogy. She completed her Master of Music degree in Piano Pedagogy and Performance at the University of Oklahoma under the noted pedagogue Dr. Jane Magrath. Amy Neal lives in Rome, GA with her husband and two sons.



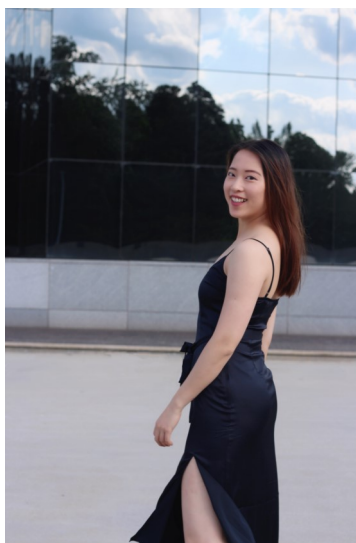
GMTA VP of Programs: **Jeri-Mae G. Astolfi, NCTM**, is a Canadian-born pianist whose playing has been lauded as “brilliant” (New Music Connoisseur), “persuasive” (Sequenza21), and “beautiful” (American Record Guide). Her repertoire, ranging from the Renaissance era through the present, clearly affirms her keen interest in new music, which has led her to commission and premiere many new solo and collaborative works—music that has been featured on live radio broadcasts and released by Albany Records, Innova Recordings, Ravello Records’ Capstone Collection, Ravello Records, and various recordings for the Society of Composers Inc. Performers Recording Series.

The recipient of numerous performance and research awards and grants, Astolfi's passion for new music has been recognized by invitations to many regional, national, and international music forums, where she has premiered and spoken about new piano music. An enthusiastic educator, she frequently serves as an adjudicator, clinician, coach, and master-class instructor and is an active member in various local, state, and national music associations including her service as VP for Programs for GMTA and as a governing board member of PianoArts. As a chamber musician, Dr. Astolfi is a founding member of duoARTia with pianist Holly Roadfeldt, and of Piedmont Camerata, the resident chamber ensemble of Piedmont University, where she is an Artist-in-Residence.

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11

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GMTA VP of MTNA Competitions: Ngan Nei Chan (Yanni) holds the Doctor of Musical Arts degree in Piano Performance from the University of Georgia, the Master of Music degree in piano performance from the University of South Carolina and the Bachelor of Music degree from the University of Texas at Austin.

As a dedicated teacher and pedagogue, Dr. Chan taught class piano at Georgia College in 2021 and the University of Georgia from 2019-2021. In 2021, Dr. Chan was awarded the Outstanding Teaching Assistant Award from UGA. As an active member of the Music Teachers National Association, Dr. Chan has held various leadership roles within the community. She was the president of the MTNA Collegiate Chapter at the University of Georgia from 2019-2021, and had presented in the MTNA conferences at both the collegiate and state level. Other professional experiences include serving as a young jury in the Arthur Fraser International Piano Competition in 2018, an associate in the Southeastern Piano Festival in Columbia, South Carolina, and several internship positions at Chamber Music Athens in 2019 and Brevard Music Festival in 2015. Dr. Chan now runs a private piano studio in Suwanee, Georgia.



GMTA VP of GMTA Auditions: Praised for his “impeccable interpretation” and “highly refined technique, imagination and musical taste” (Jornal da Cidade Bauru, Brazil), pianist **Vicente Della Tonia** has performed in concert halls throughout Europe, the United States, and his native country, Brazil. Vicente has been recently featured as a guest artist at the Dame Myra Hess Memorial Concert Series (Chicago, IL), WFMT and WXVS/Wabe public radio stations, *Universidade Estadual de São Paulo, Faculdade e Conservatório Souza Lima, Conservatório Baurense* (in Brazil), the *VII Coloquio do Seminario Permanente de História y Música* (Mexico City), as well as a soloist with the DeKalb Symphony Orchestra (Atlanta, GA). He has been highly involved with the Music Teacher National Association’s national and state conferences, presenting lectures and recitals in multiple states.

Vicente received the Doctor of Musical Arts degree from the University of South Carolina, where he studied piano under the guidance of Marina Lomazov and piano pedagogy under Scott Price. Two-time recipient of the *Steinway & Sons’s Top Teacher Award of the Year* (2017 and 2020), Dr. Vicente Della Tonia is Coordinator of Keyboard Studies and Assistant Professor of Piano at Georgia State University/Perimeter at Clarkston.

Dr. Judith S. Siegel, NCTM
Co-President
770-710-8537
yourpianostudio@me.com
www.yourpianostudio.net

George Mann, NCTM
Co-President
770-732-9600
georgemannga@aol.com



Lou Lyon, NCTM
Membership
770-993-5504
loulyon128@gmail.com

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THESE NEWLY NOMINATED OFFICERS WILL BE INSTALLED DURING THE CONFERENCE IN NOVEMBER.



GMTA Member at Large: David Watkins, NCTM, is Professor Emeritus of Piano at Kennesaw State University. He holds Master Teacher certification from MTNA, and degrees from the New England Conservatory of Music in Boston, Massachusetts. He has been an active member of MTNA since 1974. He was president of Georgia Music Teachers Association from 1994-1996, and was president of the American Matthey Association for Pianists 1994-1998. Mr. Watkins continues to teach, adjudicate and serve as clinician. His students have received recognition on state, national and international levels. Mr. Watkins has been active as a performer internationally and has performed on the national convention programs of Music Teachers National Association, American Matthey Association for Pianists, College Music Society, and International Conference on the Arts and Humanities. He made his solo recital debut in New York at Carnegie Recital Hall in May 1986, and has released three commercial recordings on the ACA Digital label.



GMTA Member at Large: Portia Shuler Hawkins, a native of Orangeburg, South Carolina, holds degrees from Fisk University and Yale University School of Music. Her private piano instructors include: Francis Wang, Ward Davenny, Virginia Hutchings, Betty Nolting, and Pulitzer Prize Winner George Walker.

Hawkins has taught at several colleges and universities—Claflin College, South Carolina State, Southern University, Norfolk State, Emory, DeKalb College (now Georgia State University), Spelman, and Agnes Scott College. Her CD, “African-American Sampler” (piano music of John Work, Samuel Coleridge-Taylor, William Grant Still, and Margaret Bonds) has been heard on several Public Broadcasting Radio stations across the country. Her performance of Florence Price’s *Fantastic Negro* was performed on NPR’s “Performance Today” at Morehouse College in 1996. She frequently performs as a solo and collaborative artist, including performances at Kennesaw State University, Spivey Hall at Clayton State University, and other prominent venues in the mero-Atlanta area.

Presently, Hawkins teaches privately in her Roswell, GA studio, presents lecture-recitals focused on piano music by African-American composers, and is a frequent adjudicator for Georgia Music Teachers Association, National Federation of Music Clubs, Mu Phi Epsilon and National Association of Negro Musicians. Hawkins was named “Teacher of the Year” by the Georgia Music Teachers Association in 2021.



**North Dekalb
Music Teachers Association**

Serene Lee, President
404-786-8932
smlig1348@gmail.com

Derek Vann, VP of Membership
678-332-7076
derek@pianoworks.com

www.ndmta.net



Dear Friends,

I am thinking back to the first day of school. It was exciting, chaotic, loud, and wonderful. There were shouts of friends finding one another after a summer apart, visits from students who have moved on but wanted to see their friends during the exhilaration of the first day of class, and cautious enthusiasm from freshman at college for the first time. The ‘coolness’ of seniors and second-year graduate students were evident as well; they walk around with a certain air of calmness in this familiar storm.

It made me realize that in many ways, we have these sensations too. Some of us are new GMTA members, and every new occurrence (An exam! An audition! A conference!) is exciting! Then some have been members for a lifetime; these members smile and embrace the warmth of familiarity.

As we sprint headlong into this new academic year, I hope you will all embrace new members into GMTA, as their eagerness and gusto can bring a breath of fresh air to our organization as a whole. But we also must value and treasure the earned and irreplaceable insights of our committed, long-time members. We each have a part to play in both our local and state organizations, and I thank you in advance for the role *you play!*

Welcome to our newest members: Giuliano Graniti, Claire Kuk, Christina Gosey, Eric Campbell, Florence Jackson, Heather Hancock, Karen Batten, Pamela Harris, Catherine Gosey, Daniel Wilkinson, Cameron Wood, Emily Grosch, James Dillard, and Ksenia Kurenysheva! We are honored to have you among us.

A shameless plug: If you haven’t already subscribed to the Georgia Music Teachers Association Podcast, please do! It is available on Spotify, Apple Podcast, Google Podcast, Stitcher, and SoundCloud. You’ll hear the inspirational stories and music-filled lives of our members and get to know each other in new ways.

Until next time, I wish you happy teaching and happy students.

P.S. Some of you haven’t renewed your membership yet...



Since 1952

Atlanta

Music Teachers Association
www.atlmta.org

Please visit our website for info on:

- Romantic Impressionistic Piano Competition
- Atlanta Piano Festival

President:
Vicente Della Tomia, Jr.
atlantamtna@gmail.com



As of July 31, 2022, GMTA has a membership of 433, and of those, 83 are nationally certified. In the last few certification articles, you have been introduced to some newly certified teachers. This time, you do not need an introduction to someone who served just a few years ago as GMTA President—our own Martha Thomas! See how she is now serving MTNA and Southern Division.

Greetings to GMTA from Martha Thomas!

Although I am a long-time member of GMTA (more than 30 years!), I am serving in a new role as the Southern Division Certification Commissioner. In this position, I have several responsibilities, including grading Teacher Profile Projects as part of the certification process and being an overall advocate for certification.

Certification denotes an elevated level of professional expertise and offers recognition to the professional teacher. Becoming a Nationally Certified Teacher of Music (NCTM) was important to me because this certification from MTNA acknowledged my many years of education and teaching. This certification also meant that I was committed to continued professional growth, education, and excellence.

I would like to highlight the Administrative Verification Process which is available for part- or full-time college faculty. This process is relatively painless and quick but still affords the recipient all the prestige and honor of certification. I would strongly urge all collegiate faculty to consider pursuing this certification process.

Dr. Martha Thomas, NCTM

MTNA Southern Division Certification Commissioner

mlthomas@uga.edu



One of my goals as your state certification chair is to see the number of certified music teachers in our state increase. My hope is that you will explore the possibility of becoming certified this year by visiting the [certification webpage](#) clicking on the logo. If you have additional certification questions, contact me at englemanr@bellsouth.net.





MTNA COMPETITIONS

CHRISTINA TOOLE, GMTA VP OF MTNA COMPETITIONS

15

Our 2022 state-level MTNA Competition will be held in-person at Columbus State University on October 21-22. Wednesday, September 15th is the registration deadline, with online registrations becoming available this month.

Please see the MTNA national website for information and applications. Please also be sure to add this email address to your contacts: mtnacompetitions.georgiamta@gmail.com



GMTA AUDITIONS

HUU MAI, NCTM, GMTA VP OF GMTA AUDITIONS

In the Spring of 2022, we returned to in-person auditions which were held at Piedmont University. This November, our GMTA In-State Auditions Winners will be featured in recitals and master-classes at Kennesaw State University.

Important Dates:

- January 15, 2023: Registration Deadline for Local Auditions and Pre-College Piano Concerto, Piano Grade 12, Piano Duet
- February 27, 2023: Registration Deadline for GMTA Regional Auditions – GATE Scores Due
- March 10, 2023: Regional Video Submissions Due
- March 13, 2023: GMTA State Auditions registration deadline for College Piano, Voice, and Instrumental
- March 15, 2023: Deadline for completed GMTA Theory Tests to be mailed to Trudi Norman
- April 14-15, 2023: GMTA State Auditions at Piedmont University



NORTH FULTON MUSIC TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

www.NFMTA.com

Check out our opportunities for your Students -- Fall Festival,
Celebrate With Music concert and Student Spotlight recital!

President
Amy VanderLugt, NCTM
NFMTA2224@gmail.com

2nd VP Membership
Grace Kim
gracekimpiano@yahoo.com

AMY VANDERLUGT, NCTM, PRESIDENT

North Fulton Music Teacher's Association had a wonderful May '22 luncheon where we introduced our new board and awarded Debra Ramsey Dickensheets a very deserved Teacher of the Year! Deb Dickensheets did an outstanding commendable job getting our group through the two-year pandemic. She made it all look so easy, moved us easily online, hosted all our meetings virtually, and did an incredible job during the uneasy months.

Going into the new school year, NFMTA is looking forward to a year full of in-person meetings and wonderful speakers. Our meetings have moved to Piano Works in Duluth, and we continue to meet the second Tuesday of every month. We are looking forward to hearing special presentations from Dr. Alex Wasserman, Eric Baumgartner, Dr. Carol Payne, and Jeri-Mae Astolfi. We've even planned one of our monthly meetings to be a roundtable discussion for members to share their favorite teaching ideas so that we can learn from each other!

NFMTA will host our yearly Fall Festival at Northbrook United Methodist Church on October 29. We expect to have 500+ entrants. Judges will select top performers, and these performers will earn scholarship monies. The GATE and GMTA theory exams will also take place at Fall Festival this year. North Point Mall will host our Celebrate with Music event December 2-4. This is our main fundraiser, and we always look forward to our students entertaining holiday shoppers!

NFMTA will be co-hosting **Catherine Rollin** next September 2023! We are so excited to invite all Georgia area music teachers. More to come regarding this special day of workshops!

LOCAL ASSOCIATION HIGHLIGHT—NORTHEAST GEORGIA MTA

JOE CHAPMAN, PRESIDENT

NEGMTA is pleased to announce the reinstatement of the Sue Morris Memorial Piano Competition, which will be held at the University of North Georgia-Dahlonega on Saturday, October 22. Students of NEGMTA members will compete for monetary awards in Sonatina and Sonata categories.

Plans are also underway for a Spring 2023 pedagogy seminar featuring another nationally-recognized composer of elementary and intermediate piano repertoire. This event will be open to all GMTA members. Details are forthcoming!

CHRISTINA TOOLE, PRESIDENT

The Rome chapter looks forward to another busy calendar of events this upcoming year. We are hopeful that the ongoing pandemic situation does not become more intense once again.

We had our fall business meeting on August 28th, and our Honors Recital will be on October 2nd. Several of our members plan to attend the GMTA conference in early November, and then we anticipate another good turnout for our annual Jazz and Pop competition in mid-November. We plan to bring our “Christmas on the Keys” fundraising event back to the Spires at Berry Retirement Community on the first weekend of December. Our students always enjoy sharing Christmas music with the residents while raising funds for both the RMTA Scholarship Fund & the local hospital’s Pediatric Foundation.

In February, we are looking forward to a very special recital honoring composer June Montgomery, who now resides in Rome. June herself will be in attendance as students and teachers perform many of her works, to memorialize her wonderful contributions to the teaching repertoire. We will send out information on this event so that other teachers can attend if they wish.

In early March, Huu Mai will be giving a masterclass and a presentation entitled “Developing Artistry: Keys to Unlocking Musicality”. A few weeks later, we will have the final event of the year, our Romantic-themed Spring Competition, featuring monetary prizes in each division.

LOCAL ASSOCIATION HIGHLIGHT—WESTERN GEORGIA MTA

DAWN MCCORD, PRESIDENT

Western Georgia Music Teachers have started the new year with enthusiasm for engaging our students with opportunities to learn and perform.

Once again, our membership has grown, and we will prepare goodie bags for students at the local university and also provide goodie bags to potential new members.



Let's advocate the good work we GMTA teachers do! Every member can please sign up TODAY for free news from these groups:

Georgia Council for the Arts: <https://gaarts.org>

Georgians for the Arts: <https://georgiansforthearts.org>

Arts Georgia: <https://www.artsgeorgia.net>

Americans for the Arts: <https://americansforthearts.org>



THEORY REPORT

DIANE BOYD, NCTM, GMTA THEORY CHAIR

Be mindful of all the dates provided in the GMTA Calendar related to Theory and GATE Theory tests:

- October 1: Fall registration deadline for GMTA Theory Test/GATE
- January 15: Spring registration deadline for GMTA Theory Test/GATE

Remember that all piano students participating in GMTA Auditions (solo or concerto) must take either the Theory Test or GATE.

Inspiring Musical Achievements

We support music making, teaching and learning worldwide through our world-leading assessments, qualification, and resources since 1889.

Our "Practical Grade Exam" & diploma program are offered in 93 countries for piano, singing, band and orchestra instruments, and music theory.

The *NEW* addition of the "Performance Grade Exam" with video submission has become very popular since its launch in January 2021, as well as the online music theory exam which started in May 2021.

We are in partnership with the four Royal Schools of Music in UK.

Margaret Liu, ABRSM Representative, Georgia, Florida & South Carolina, USA
 (678) 523-6703 abrsmsga@gmail.com
www.abrsm.org






JUDGES LIST

19

SUSAN ANDREWS. NCTM, GMTA JUDGES LIST CHAIR

I'm pleased to announce that Leslie Kennedy and Dr. Vicente Della Tonia, Jr. have been added to the GMTA Judges List. To remain on the Judges List, GMTA membership dues must be paid. If you wish to remain on the list, but have not yet paid your MTNA/GMTA dues, please do so promptly.

Anyone who is interested in being included on the GMTA Judges List is strongly encouraged to apply. Additional voice and instrumental judges are needed. Applications and recommendations for applicants are [submitted online](#) or by clicking the button below.

GMTA JUDGES LIST



GEORGIA'S OWN

DEBRA HUGHES. NCTM, GMTA ARTS AWARENESS & ADVOCACY CHAIR

The Georgia's Own Directory has been updated. You will find a Heinz variety (57!!) of topics that your Programming Chair might select for this year. You can find the directory by going to the [GMTA website](#) or by clicking the button below. Invite our own GMTA teachers to help you make your MTA group even more educational and enriching!

If you would like to be added to the current Georgia's Own listing please contact Debra Hughes: bndhughes@comcast.net.

GEORGIA'S OWN



Rewarding students as excellent musicians is a key value of GMTA. Each local association as well as individual teachers can participate in congratulating students through financial donations to our General Award Fund and our named awards. Please consider how you and your local association can increase awareness of this aspect of our organization.

The GMTA General Award Fund, established in 1993, includes honorary and memorial gifts and is awarded at the discretion of the GMTA Finance Advisory Committee. Awards from this fund are given to senior string, vocal, and brass/woodwind winners of GMTA auditions and MTNA Competitions. Donations not designated for a specific fund go into this fund.

This past year, GMTA received donations totaling \$785 towards the General Award Fund. Conference raffle donations totaled \$460. Additionally, the following local associations and individuals contributed: Cherokee MTA, Gwinnett MTA, Susan Andrews and James Hobbs. GMTA awarded \$1,000 to deserving students last year.

The Nolting Award in Composition was established in 1987 and initially funded by beloved GMTA member Betty Nolting. It is given at the GMTA Conference each year to first-place winners in the MTNA Student Composition Competitions for the state-level competitions in each age category: elementary, junior, senior, and young artist. Each student receives \$100.

The Broadhurst Award in Piano was established in 1992 by the Broadhurst family in commemoration of Joan Broadhurst. This award is presented annually at the GMTA conference to the winners of the MTNA Junior and Senior Piano Performance Competition. Each student receives \$200. Donations were made to this fund this year by Jeffery Broadhurst and Nancy Broadhurst Dellaria.

The Betty H. White Award Fund was established in 2019 by the White family in commemoration of Betty H. White. This \$400 award is presented annually at the GMTA Conference to one of the GMTA Teacher Grant recipients for a student in financial need.

Please consider making GMTA Awards/MTNA Foundation donations a line item of your local association budget. Together we enrich and reward our outstanding students.



As fall 2022 approaches, we will be nearly 3 years since Covid-19 first appeared. Thankfully, the seriousness of the illness Covid-19 causes has diminished, due to vaccine-induced and natural immunity. However, Covid-19 related concerns remain a large problem for all of us. The illness it causes can be complicated and affect work abilities, and longer-term consequences such as post-Covid complications are being investigated.

As of mid-August, Covid-19 infection rates, hospitalizations and deaths in Georgia and the US have plateaued at a moderate level, higher than the previous 2 summers. A late fall into winter peak has occurred in each of the past two seasons, and is possible again this year. So, an updated vaccine should be available later in the fall to help prevent us from a new surge.

Physical maneuvers to prevent transmission and acquisition of Covid-19 such as masking and distancing are being reviewed and vary with rates in the community and individual circumstances. However, frequent hand sanitizing and wiping of surfaces remains a recommended practice for many respiratory infections we see, including Covid-19. When possible, larger spaced rooms and improved ventilation have also been useful countermeasures to decrease the spread of Covid-19 infections. Stay well!

Submitted by David Dickensheets, MD

Medical Director of Epidemiology, Northside Hospital, Atlanta

Advertisement Index

Atlanta MTA: page 13

ABRSM: page 18

Cooper Piano: page 8

Greater Marietta MTA: page 11

Gwinnett County MTA: page 6

Kennesaw State University: page 3

North Dekalb MTA: page 12

North Fulton MTA: page 15

Wesleyan College: page 7

Young Harris College: page 5

September 2022

30 Student Membership Renewal Deadline (student membership runs October 1-September 30)

October 2022

1 Fall registration deadline for GMTA Theory Test/GATE

21-22 MTNA Competitions, Columbus State University

November 2022

3-5 GMTA Conference at Kennesaw State University

December 2022

1 Deadline for articles to be included in the GMTA Winter Newsletter

January 2023

15 GMTA State Auditions Registration Deadline for Pre-College Piano Concerto, Piano Grade 12, Piano Duet

15 Registration deadline for Local Auditions, GMTA Theory Test, and GATE

February 2023

27 Registration deadline for Regional Auditions. Local auditions ratings due. GATE scores due.

March 2023

10 GMTA Regional Auditions Video Submission Deadline

13 Registration Deadline for GMTA State Auditions (College Piano, Voice, and Instrumental)

15 Deadline for completed GMTA Theory Tests to be mailed to Trudi Norman

25-29 MTNA Conference 2023 in Reno, Nevada

27 GMTA State Auditions Volunteer Form/Fee Due

April 2023

14-15 GMTA State Auditions, Piedmont University

22 GMTA Executive Board Meeting (tentative)

May 2023

1 Graded GMTA Theory Achievement Tests (not GATE) & Certificates mailed to participating teachers

June 2023

1 Deadline for all GMTA Expense Reports to be submitted to the GMTA Executive Director for reimbursement

30 Membership Renewal Deadline: Membership year runs July 1-June 30

Executive Board:

GMTA President	Jan Adams, NCTM	president.georgiamta@gmail.com
President-Elect	Cathy Thacker, NCTM	presidentelect.georgiamta@gmail.com
VP of Programs	Kristi Helfen, NCTM	programs.georgiamta@gmail.com
VP of Membership	Beibei Lin	membership.georgiamta@gmail.com
VP of Newsletters	Amy Neal, NCTM	newsletters.georgiamta@gmail.com
VP of GMTA Auditions	Huu Mai, NCTM	auditions.georgiamta@gmail.com
VP of MTNA Competitions	Christina Toole	mtnacompitions.georgiamta@gmail.com
Secretary	Amy Phillips	secretary.georgiamta@gmail.com
Member-at-Large	Dawn McCord	dmccord@westga.edu
Member-at-Large	Mason Conklin, NCTM	nmc@reinhardt.edu
Immediate Past President	Joy Poole	FAC.georgiamta@gmail.com
Executive Director	Mandy Reynolds	georgiamta@gmail.com

Committee Chairs:

Arts Awareness & Advocacy	Debra Hughes, NCTM	bndhughes@comcast.net
Certification	Robin Engelman, NCTM	englemanr@bellsouth.net
Collaborative Performance	Donna Bailey	dbaileypiano@gmail.com
College Faculty	Tracy Xian	tracyxian9@gmail.com
Collegiate Chapters	Jerico Vasquez	jvasquez@shorter.edu
Commissioning	Jeri-Mae Astolfi, NCTM	commissioning.georgiamta@gmail.com
Finance/Advisory	Joy Poole	FAC.georgiamta@gmail.com
GMTA Awards	Mary Ann McTier	mam0609@comcast.net
Independent Music Teachers Forum	Eric Clay	ericcranstonclay@gmail.com
Judges List	Susan Andrews, NCTM	pianosusan@comcast.net
Theory	Diane Boyd, NCTM	dianelboyd@comcast.net
Wellness	Debra Ramsey Dickensheets	dickensheetsmusic@gmail.com

Local Association Presidents:

Athens	Grace Huang, NCTM	<u>grace.i.huang@gmail.com</u>
Atlanta	Vincent Della Tonia	<u>vdellatonia@gsu.edu</u>
Augusta	Colette Keogh	<u>cakeogh16@gmail.com</u>
Cherokee	Shelley Riddle	<u>shelleyriddle@gmail.com</u>
Cobb County	Joe Camillo	<u>jfcamillojr@gmail.com</u>
Columbus	Tracy Xian	<u>tracyxian9@gmail.com</u>
Coweta-Fayette	Fernando Ramos	<u>neverfall@peoplepc.com</u>
Decatur	Charles Hutton	<u>chpianostudio@bellsouth.net</u>
Golden Isles	Claudia Theise	<u>claudiatheise@juno.com</u>
Greater Marietta	Judith Siegel, NCTM & George Mann, NCTM	<u>yourpianostudio@me.com</u> <u>georgemannga@aol.com</u>
Gwinnett County	Cathy Thacker, NCTM	<u>csbt88@gmail.com</u>
Macon	Susan Mincey	<u>susanmincey@cox.net</u>
North DeKalb	Serene Lee	<u>smlig1348@gmail.com</u>
North Fulton	Amy VanderLugt	<u>vanderamy@yahoo.com</u>
Northeast Georgia	Joe Chapman	<u>joe.chapman@ung.edu</u>
Rome	Christina Toole	<u>ctoolepianostudio@gmail.com</u>
Savannah	Cameron Fuhrman	<u>88keys.cameron@gmail.com</u>
South Georgia	Angela Duncan	<u>angelawong844@gmail.com</u>
South Metro Atlanta	Robin Jones	<u>RSJmusic93@gmail.com</u>
Western Georgia	Dawn McCord	<u>dmccord@westga.edu</u>



GEORGIA MUSIC TEACHERS ASSOCIATION, INC.
COMPARATIVE STATEMENTS OF FINANCIAL POSITION
JUNE 30, 2022 and 2021

PREPARED BY
JUDY MCKAIN CPA, LLC
CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANTS

ASSETS

	<u>2022</u>	<u>2021</u>
ASSETS:		
Cash in bank	\$21,471	\$18,443
Cash in savings	\$55,765	\$61,156
Award reserve funds	\$47,352	\$48,396
Property and equipment, net of \$3,767 and \$2,922 accumulated depreciation	\$846	\$1,445
TOTAL ASSETS	<u>\$125,434</u>	<u>\$129,440</u>

LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS

LIABILITIES:		
Prepaid revenues	\$9,797	\$9,978
TOTAL LIABILITIES	<u>\$9,797</u>	<u>\$9,978</u>
NET ASSETS:		
Fund Balance	\$119,462	\$119,307
Net Income	\$(3,825)	\$155
TOTAL NET ASSETS	<u>\$115,637</u>	<u>\$119,462</u>
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS	<u>\$125,434</u>	<u>\$129,440</u>

These financial statements have not been subjected to an audit or review or compilation engagement, and no assurance is provided on them.



**GEORGIA MUSIC TEACHERS ASSOCIATION, INC.
COMPARATIVE STATEMENTS OF ACTIVITIES
FOR THE YEARS ENDED JUNE 30, 2022 AND 2021**

	<u>2022</u>	<u>2021</u>
UNRESTRICTED NET ASSETS:		
SUPPORT, REVENUES, GAINS, AND RECLASSIFICATIONS		
GMTA Dues	\$24,073	\$22,894
Advertising – newsletter	\$4,400	\$3,670
Auditions and MTNA Competitions	\$36,527	\$34,676
Conference	\$7,463	\$949
Commissioned Work	\$750	\$750
Net investment return	\$25	\$31
TOTAL	\$73,238	\$62,970
EXPENSES		
Executive Director Compensation and taxes	\$25,878	\$26,374
Auditions	\$27,151	\$24,666
Conference	\$12,905	\$756
Commissioned work	\$2,010	\$1,900
Office	\$3,250	\$2,632
Website expense	\$566	\$717
GTMA Music teacher grants	\$1,300	\$2,350
Professional fees	\$1,750	\$1,700
Travel	\$600	\$195
Miscellaneous	\$50	\$30
Depreciation	\$599	\$599
TOTAL	<u>\$76,059</u>	<u>\$61,919</u>
Change in unrestricted net assets	<u>(\$2,821)</u>	<u>\$1,051</u>
TEMPORARILY RESTRICTED NET ASSETS		
Investment income, net of investment expenses	\$21	\$24
Contributions received	\$1,175	\$980
Awards paid	<u>(\$2,200)</u>	<u>(\$1,900)</u>
Change in temporarily restricted net assets	<u>(\$1,004)</u>	<u>(\$896)</u>
CHANGE IN NET ASSETS	<u>(\$3,825)</u>	<u>\$155</u>
NET ASSETS AT BEGINNING OF YEAR	<u>\$119,462</u>	<u>\$119,307</u>
NET ASSETS AT END OF YEAR	<u>\$115,637</u>	<u>\$119,462</u>

These financial statements have not been subjected to an audit or review or compilation engagement, and no assurance is provided on them.



**GEORGIA MUSIC TEACHERS ASSOCIATION, INC.
COMPARATIVE STATEMENTS OF CASH FLOWS
FOR THE YEARS ENDED JUNE 30, 2022 AND 2021**

	<u>2022</u>	<u>2021</u>
CASH FLOW PROVIDED BY OPERATING ACTIVITIES:		
Increase in net assets	(\$3,825)	\$155
Adjustments to reconcile increase in net assets to net cash provided by operating activities:		
Add: Depreciation, a non-cash expense	\$599	\$599
(Decrease)/increase in prepaid revenues	(\$181)	\$3,047
Net cash provided by operating activities	<u>(\$3,047)</u>	<u>\$3,801</u>
CASH FLOW USED BY INVESTING ACTIVITIES:		
Purchase equipment	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
Net cash used by investing activities	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
(DECREASE)/INCREASE IN CASH	(\$3,407)	\$3,801
CASH AT BEGINNING OF YEAR	<u>\$127,995</u>	<u>\$124,194</u>
CASH AT END OF YEAR	<u>\$124,588</u>	<u>\$127,995</u>
SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION		
Interest expense	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ -</u>
Income tax expense	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ -</u>

These financial statements have not been subjected to an audit or review or compilation engagement, and no assurance is provided on them.

The Georgia Music Teachers Association (GMTA) is a member of the Music Teachers National Association (MTNA) and memberships are jointly held in both organizations. Members receive subscriptions to *The American Music Teacher*. Membership is open to individuals professionally engaged in any field of musical activity and dues should be sent to MTNA, 1 W. 4th St., Ste. 1550 Cincinnati, OH 45202. MTNA is available toll-free at 1-888-512-5278 to answer your questions regarding membership dues or on the web at www.mtna.org.

Notice

The GMTA Newsletter is an information journal focusing on matters directly related to MTNA, GMTA and local associations only. It does not promote the studios of individual teachers or institutions by publishing articles regarding the accomplishments of teachers, students, or an institution's activities. Paid advertising is available for this purpose. GMTA expressly reserves the right to refuse publication of any article, photograph, or advertisement contrary to the objectives of MTNA or the Associations. All articles are subject to editing due to size or content.

Advertising

Limited advertising space is available for firms or individuals who have a product or service of specific interest or benefit to GMTA members. All correspondence regarding advertising should be sent to the Executive Director, Mandy Reynolds, by email (georgiamta@gmail.com) or by fax (770) 945-7504.

Submittals

GMTA publishes its online newsletter three times per year. Publication dates and their respective deadlines are as follows:

January 15th (Deadline: December 1st) June 15th (Deadline: May 1st) September 15th (Deadline August 1st)

Editors

Amy Neal, NCTM, VP of Newsletters newsletters.georgiamta@gmail.com

Jan Adams, NCTM, President president.georgiamta@gmail.com

Proofreaders

Joy Poole, Immediate Past President

Mandy Reynolds, GMTA Executive Director