



# GEORGIA MUSIC TEACHERS ASSOCIATION



SUMMER NEWSLETTER 2024

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## 2024 GMTA STATE CONFERENCE



**Michelle Cann,  
Conference Recitalist**



**Victor Labenske,  
Pedagogy Headliner**



**James A. Devor,  
Commissioned  
Composer**

**Join us November 7-9 at Georgia State University,  
Perimeter College, Clarkston Campus**



**Conference registration will open September 1.  
The deadline to pre-register is October 14.  
Hotel information is on page 4.**



## FROM THE PRESIDENT

CATHY THACKER, NCTM, GMTA PRESIDENT

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Georgia Music Teachers Association is flourishing with 630 members, seventeen local associations, and eight collegiate chapters. There is excellent camaraderie among GMTA colleagues throughout the state.

Thank you to all GMTA Auditions staff and volunteers, under the direction of Dr. Vicente Della Tonia, Jr., for making Auditions successful. State Auditions were held on April 12-13 at Piedmont University. Thank you to Dr. Jeri-Mae Astolfi and her incredible student team at Piedmont for hosting us. GMTA appreciates the extra time and effort it takes to support these events. The judges for Pre-College Piano State Auditions were very complimentary about how well-organized the event was and the high level of performances.

The 2024 MTNA Competitions will take place on October 25-26 under the direction of Dr. Yanni Chan, VP of Competitions. Congratulations to GMTA teachers and their students who were winners or alternates in Southern Division this year; Georgia even had two national winners: Piano – Kimiko Darcy, piano, student of Dr. Elena Cholakova; and Stephanie Kim, woodwinds, student of Christina Smith. Best wishes to all who enter in 2024!

Plans for the 2024 GMTA State Conference are progressing well, due to the efforts of VP of Programs, Dr. Jeri-Mae Astolfi, and her committee. Mark your calendar for November 7-9 to attend the conference, held at Georgia State University-Clarkston Campus in the Atlanta Metroplex. We are looking forward to hearing composer/arranger Dr. Victor Labenske, the pedagogy headliner, and Michelle Cann, the conference recitalist. Attending the conference is a wonderful way to “recharge your batteries.”

Thank you to every teacher who is a good representative on behalf of GMTA. We are the best ambassadors to other teachers who are indecisive about joining our group. Thank you to every member who is willing to serve your local association or state association in any capacity. I appreciate your leadership! Thank you to Mandy Reynolds, GMTA’s Executive Director, for your energy and efficiency, and for your ongoing great attitude.

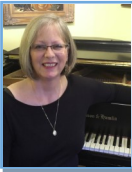
June 30 is quickly approaching, so be sure to renew your MTNA/GMTA membership before then. Encourage your colleagues to renew or to join for the first time. GMTA offers many wonderful opportunities for both you and your students, and we look forward to welcoming new members!

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## FROM THE PRESIDENT-ELECT

KRISTI HELFEN, NCTM, GMTA PRESIDENT-ELECT

Our last local association presidents’ meeting was held via Zoom on April 13, 2024. This was the same day as our State Pre-College Piano Auditions, and two of our LAP’s were busy working there. However, even without them we still had 12 out of 17 local associations represented.

As always, many of our local associations keep active with many meaningful opportunities for students and teachers. Congrats to our members for the seemingly endless and creative ideas you come up with to share the gift of music with your communities.

A special congratulations to Middle Georgia MTA (formerly Macon MTA) and their President Chenny Gan on being named “MTNA Local Association of the Year”. This honor was bestowed upon them at the MTNA National Conference in Atlanta on March 19, 2024, and several of their teachers and students drove up from Macon to witness the announcement. We are so proud of you, Middle Georgia teachers! You set a great example for us all.

A huge thanks to all of you who work hard to keep your associations active and thriving in Georgia. We appreciate each and every one of you!

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## 2023 GMTA STATE CONFERENCE HOTEL

JERI-MAE ASTOLFI, NCTM, GMTA VP OF PROGRAMS

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### Hampton Inn Atlanta-Northlake



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# MTNA CONFERENCE REPORT

CATHY THACKER, NCTM, GMTA PRESIDENT



**GMTA President Cathy Thacker with MNTA Foundation Fellows David Watkins & Joey Hokayem**

The MTNA Conference held in Atlanta was one of the finest conferences I can recall. Thank you for allowing me to serve as your representative at the Southern Division meeting, the State Presidents’ meeting, and the annual business meeting. At the opening session Saturday night, I gave a welcome speech on behalf of GMTA, and my friend, Pam Asberry, performed her own arrangement of “Georgia on My Mind.” At the Gala, Joey Hokayem, NCTM, of Athens MTA, and David Watkins, NCTM, of Cobb County MTA, were honored as MTNA Foundation Fellows. At the annual business meeting, Middle Georgia MTA was recognized as the MTNA 2024 Local Association of the Year.



**Middle Georgia MTA with MTNA President Peter Mack & MTNA Executive Director Gary Ingle**

I always enjoy the master classes presented at the conference, and this year was no exception. Sean Chen, Alex and Marcy McDonald, and Kevin Olson were the clinicians



**Alex & Marcy McDonald with Intermediate Master Class performers**

for the advanced, intermediate, and elementary levels, respectively. MTNA added a technique master class this year with Theresa Bogard, focusing on problematic sections within repertoire rather than the entire piece. Students of GMTA teachers performed in every master class, and they all played beautifully.



[www.ndmta.net](http://www.ndmta.net)

## NORTH DEKALB MUSIC TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

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[NDMTA.music@gmail.com](mailto:NDMTA.music@gmail.com)

Derek Vann, VP of Membership  
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Georgia was well-represented with many presentations. Dr. Peter Jutras, NCTM, University of Georgia, and Cedrice Young of Fancy Fingers Publishing were both featured speakers in the Young

Professionals Track on Pedagogy Saturday. Dr. Yingzhou Hu, NCTM, along with students from the Clark Atlanta University Collegiate Chapter spoke about “The Creative Entrepreneurship of African American Piano Students in the HBCU School of Music.” Asia Passmore, DMA student at the University of Georgia, presented “How to Teach Negro Spirituals to the Piano Student.” Dr. Geoffrey Haydon of Georgia State University spoke on “The Importance of Piano Proficiency.” Dr. Grace Huang, NCTM, the University of Georgia, entertained and informed with her session on “The ‘Joy of Toy’: Bringing Non-Traditional Instruments into the



**Dr. Yingzhou Hu with students from the Clark Atlanta University MTNA Collegiate Chapter**

Studio.” Finally, the University of Georgia Collegiate Chapter presented its program on “Chamber Music for Intermediate and Early-Advanced Students.”

I attended Christopher Goldston’s tribute to his mother, Margaret Goldston, and learned much about this beloved composer and her music. Jane Bastien’s daughters, Lisa and Lori, gave a Kjos Music Company showcase that featured teaching tone and technique to beginning piano students.

The Exhibit Hall had a plethora of exhibitors: piano manufacturers with their popular models, major music publishing companies with discounted and free music, other companies selling their apps and programs, music-related products (games, jewelry, socks, stationery, etc.), university schools of music, and various music festivals across the country.



**GMTA President Cathy Thacker with Margaret Liu at the ABRSM Booth in the exhibit hall**

The 2025 MTNA Conference will be held in Minneapolis on March 15-19, and I encourage you to attend. You will enjoy the wonderful programs, recitals, and opportunities to connect with other music professionals!





## GMTA TEACHERS AND STUDENTS



## CONFERENCE BANQUET



## MASTER CLASSES WITH KEVIN OLSON AND SEAN CHEN





## GMTA AUDITIONS

VICENTE DELLA TONIA, NCTM, GMTA VP OF GMTA AUDITIONS

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We would like to give our most sincere thanks to everyone who worked tirelessly on all levels of the GMTA Auditions! A special thank you to Jeri-Mae Astolfi, Mandy Reynolds, Cathy Thacker, Joy Poole, Kristi Helfen, the state audition chairs, Piedmont student workers, and all teachers for helping with the auditions. We received many compliments for the level of professionalism and organization. Thank you to everyone!

Another special thank you to all the GMTA Auditions staff for facilitating the implementation of Tenuto. Even though there is still much to learn from the process, we could not have done it without the help of all local association presidents and audition chairs, the regional coordinators and chairs, and GMTA's Executive Director Mandy Reynolds.

Finally, congratulations to all teachers for preparing their students and for supporting the GMTA auditions.

This year, Local Auditions had 464 entrants, Regional Auditions had 335 participants, and State Auditions had 383 participants. State Auditions were held on April 12 and April 13 at Piedmont University's Conservatory of Music. We were honored to have the following judges this year:

Voice: Dr. Ginger Jones-Robinson

College Piano/Piano Concerto: Dr. Irina Pevzner

Strings I: Paul Warner

Strings II: Dr. Rachael Fischer

Instrumental Concerto: Dr. Pyeongkang Park

Pre-College Piano Concerto and Duet: Dr. Svetozar Ivanov

Piano Grade 4: Dr. Kevin Chance

Piano Grade 5: Dr. Ghadeer Abeidoh

Piano Grade 6: Dr. Joao Paulo Casarotti

Piano Grade 7: Dr. Amanda Montgomery

Piano Grade 8: Dr. Eun-Hee Park

Piano Grade 9: Dr. Tatiana Kasman

Piano Grade 10: Dr. Yakov Kasman

Piano Grade 11: Dr. David Gross

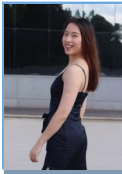
Piano Grade 12: Dr. Derek Parsons



Congratulations to all our 2024 winners. The full list is available by [clicking here](#).

We look forward to the next year's auditions!





Congratulations to all our 2023-2024 MTNA Competition winners from Georgia!

### Georgia Southern Division Competition Winners

#### Piano Performance

Winner: Ryan Lee, Junior Piano, student of Gina Myung

Winner: Kimiko Darcy, Senior Piano, student of Elena Cholakova

#### String Performance

Winner: Eugenie Lim, Senior String, Violin, student of Sonja Foster

Alternate: Philip Jeong, Junior String, Cello, student of Jesus Castro-Balbi

#### Woodwind Performance

Winner: Stephanie Kim, Senior Woodwind, Flute, student of Christina Smith

Alternate: Dominic Bernard, Young Artist Woodwind, Oboe, student of Susan Tomkiewicz

Alternate: Ellie Ahn, Junior Woodwind, Flute, student of Christina Smith

#### Voice Performance

Alternate: Grace Rivord, Young Artist Voice, student of Joshua May

Alternate: Maria Maghiar, Senior Voice, student of Allen Henderson

#### Composition

Honorable Mention: Brody McLaughlin, Young Artist Composition, student of Martin Jones

### MTNA Competition National Winners

Senior Piano Performance: Kimiko Darcy, student of Elena Cholakova

Senior Woodwind Performance: Stephanie Kim, student of Christina Smith

Chamber Music (Second Place): Atlas Trio from Columbus State University

Samuel Vargas, violin

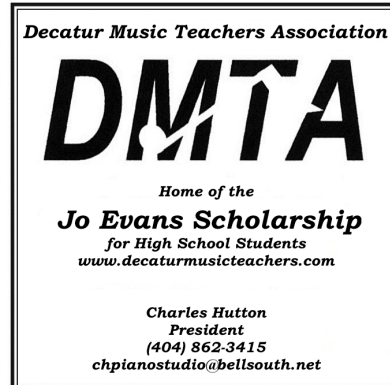
Jihoon Kim, cello

Jungmin Park, piano

Coached by Sergiu Schwartz

### 2024 Fall Competition Reminder

The 2024 MTNA Competitions are scheduled for October 25th and 26th at Piedmont University.





## MTNA CERTIFICATION

ROBIN ENGLEMAN, NCTM, GMTA CERTIFICATION CHAIR

As of May 31, 2024, GMTA had a membership of 630. Of those, 85 are nationally certified.

Why should you choose to earn MTNA certification? Read an MTNA member’s explanation:

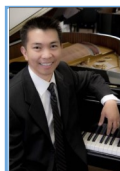


*I have three degrees in piano performance and am tenured at a public university, but I chose to become certified because I wanted the credential granted by one of this country’s oldest and foremost music teaching organizations. Obtaining MTNA Professional Certification publicly acknowledges my years of training and experience and demonstrates my commitment to continued excellence in teaching.*

*Erin Bennett, NCTM*

*Florida Certification Chair*

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](#) or clicking on the logo above. Feel free to contact me with your certification questions at [robinengleman@gmail.com](mailto:robinengleman@gmail.com) or 404-819-5450.



## COLLEGE FACULTY REPORT

JERICO VASQUEZ, GMTA COLLEGE FACULTY CHAIR

The upcoming 2024-2025 Collegiate Faculty Recital Exchange boasts participation from nine institutions in Georgia and Alabama. Participating institutions include:

- Georgia
  - Reinhardt University
  - Shorter University
  - Toccoa Falls College
  - University of North Georgia
  - Valdosta State University
  
- Alabama
  - Jacksonville State University
  - Samford University
  - Shelton State Community College



PAMELA MARTIN, NCTM, ACTING PRESIDENT

Striving to keep student activities and teacher enrichment as the focus of our chapter in spite of the ongoing challenges of active participation and leadership, Decatur MTA has had a successful year.

As usual, our kick-off meeting and social in August gave members the opportunity to share their summer activities. During the year, members stepped up to present two very informative roundtable presentations: “Music as a Business” and “Teaching Music Theory: Approach and Available Resources.”

In November we were treated to an extraordinary piano recital given by Caroline Owen, a recent DMA recipient and former student of longtime DMTA member Jody Parrish. The varied program included compositions by Mozart, Debussy, Lili Boulanger, Mendelssohn and Rachmaninoff.

Rounding out our year, Pamela Asberry presented the program “Teaching the Transfer Student.”



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## Audition Dates

- Friday, November 10, 2023
- Saturday, February 24, 2024
- Friday, March 8, 2024
- Saturday, March 23, 2024
- Friday, April 12, 2024



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## GLORIA PARK, PRESIDENT

GCMTA had a wonderful year, with helpful sessions for our teachers at our monthly meetings and a variety of events and scholarships for our students.

Our president-elect, Kimber Kwiatkowski, planned the following sessions for us: In September, our very own Cathy Thacker, NCTM, gave an informative presentation on “GMTA Auditions: An Overview.” In October, Dr. Francis Leach shared “Practice Strategies that Lead to Performance Confidence.” In November, Dr. Vicente Della Tonia, Jr. gave an excellent talk on “Effective Practice: A Shorter Road to Stronger Results.”

In January, we had our fellowship brunch to kick off the new year. In February, Dr. Alan Woo spoke on “The Road to Chopin Etudes: A Case for the Czerny Tradition.” In March, we enjoyed our March Masterclass with Dr. Joe Chapman, who put the students at ease and gave helpful comments. Several of our members also enjoyed participating in the MTNA conference in Atlanta. On May 15, we celebrated the end of the year with our luncheon and presented our Teacher of the Year award to our very deserving Pam Asberry, who inspires all of us.

Our student events included our Music Day festival in November, Performance Day in December, local auditions and three federated festivals in February and March, and our Jr./Sr. Scholarship in April. We had 102 students registered for local auditions this year, which was a large increase from previous years. We were blessed to be able to award several scholarships to our students, including our MED/PED scholarship for high school seniors who are planning to study music education or pedagogy. While we do not receive applicants every year, this year we were happy to award this \$500 scholarship to a deserving student and future music educator.



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FOR A FULL LIST OF LOCAL ASSOCIATIONS, REFER TO PAGE 23



CHENNY GAN, PRESIDENT

Throughout the past year, we have tried to utilize various resources outside of local meetings to facilitate experiential learning opportunities and promote fellowship. For example, we organized a car-pool for the UGA Piano Pedagogy Symposium in January, which allowed members to chat and get to know each other over the day, in addition to experiencing the excellent content of the conference.

Our biannual signature event "A Grand Ensemble!" was successfully held on November 11th at Wesleyan College's Porter Auditorium. Four grand pianos were moved to the auditorium stage and up to 8 pianists at a time performed piano duets, trios and quartets together. Eighteen pieces were featured, and around 100 student and teacher performers participated in this "monster" piano recital, with students ranging from elementary to college age. The concert also featured a tribute to the United States Armed Forces to celebrate Veterans Day. An event of this scale, which became a successful fundraiser for us this year, took massive organization and volunteer hours from numerous teachers, parents and students.

Our 2024 NFMC Festival was held in March. The Macon Festival Senior Club (chaired by Denise West) held 8 events, including piano solo, hymns, piano concerto, vocal musical theater, vocal art song, violin and theory. We had 111 participants (including 1 adult) from 12 teachers, resulting in 93 superior ratings. It was a huge event and very successful from all accounts. Participants also included a dedicated group of teen runners, parent volunteers, and excellent judges (Karen Fulwood, Keaton Byrd, Owen Lovell, Maryann Thames, Wendy Shaw and our virtual judge Judith Barton). Our Theory test proctor was Ivy Giddens.

On Marcy 19<sup>th</sup>, our chapter was honored at the MTNA National Conference in Atlanta to receive the "Local Association of the Year" award. Several teachers and students carpooled from Macon to witness the announcement. Sunday that week, Susan Mincey and Chenny Gan used the funds saved on hotel costs reimbursed by MTNA to hold a celebration and reception in Macon for all teachers to attend. We could not be more proud of the collective work over many decades that has made this honor a reality!

In May, local member Charlotte Bearden organized a day-long improvisation workshop with 9 participants that was open to teachers, their private high school students, and collegiate members within our organization. The activity took place at Wesleyan College's Piano Lab and was led by Dr. Chenny Gan. The diversity in backgrounds and experiences of the participants really strengthened the workshop's purpose of addressing the topic of improvisation from many viewpoints: for teaching, in church and hymn-playing, in classical performance, in popular genres, and for building self-confidence. Committing an entire day also helped everyone have time to learn, try out, and absorb a lot of new information in an effective way.

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MIAO FEN LIN, PRESIDENT

North Dekalb Music Teachers Association had our kickoff meeting for the 2023-2024 year in August at Piano Works. In September, we joined the Atlanta and North Fulton chapters at Catherine Rollin's Workshop and Masterclass. In October, Pam Asberry was our guest speaker. She shared about the unique challenges and opportunities of teaching transfer students. We also hosted our Sonata/Sonata Competition at GSU in October. In November, Dr. Chenny Gan from Wesleyan College presented the topic "Spice it Up! Incorporating Improvisation into the Classical Repertoire." In December, we enjoyed a luncheon together instead of a meeting.

In January, Dr. Hsien-Ann Meng from Howard Community College presented her topic "Look Ahead and Be Ready: Rethinking Sight Reading in Lessons." We also hosted our Ensemble Olympics at Piano Works. In February, we enjoyed Dr. Alan Woo's Masterclass at Piano Works and hosted our GMTA Local Auditions at GSU. In March, some of our members were able to attend the MTNA Conference in Atlanta. In April, our teachers presented a "Teachers and Friends Spring Concert" at Piano Works. We finished the year in May with our annual luncheon.



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Rewarding our outstanding young musicians is a key value of GMTA. We are able to do that with the help of donations from our members. If your association has not already done so, please consider adding a budget line item for GMTA Awards/MTNA Foundation. Together we enrich and reward our outstanding students.

## DONATE TO GMTA

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 from Cherokee MTA as well as the many members who bought raffle tickets at the GMTA Conference. **Awards were given totaling \$700 this 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. **Awards were given totaling \$300 this year.**

The **Broadhurst Award in Piano** was established in 1992 in commemoration of Joan Broadhurst by her family. 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. **Awards were given totaling \$400 this year.**

The **Betty H. White Award Fund** was established in 2019 in commemoration of Betty H. White by her family. This \$400 award is presented annually at the GMTA Conference to one of the GMTA Teacher Grant recipients for a student in financial need. This year GMTA received a donation to the Betty H. White Award Fund from Mary Barnes. **The award of \$400 was given this year.**

GMTA supports **MTNA Foundation** through donations that are received from the raffle of the hydraulic bench at the state conference. This year we also raised funds to name two Foundation Fellows. Joey Hokayem and David Watkins were honored as MTNA Foundation Fellows during the Gala at the National Conference. Congratulations to both gentlemen!



## THE NEW GMTA THEORY CURRICULUM IS COMING!

The GMTA Theory Committee has been hard at work developing a new Theory curriculum that will debut this fall. I will highlight the changes here.

The GMTA Theory test will now have 12 levels. The first three levels are designed for younger students and will not require handwriting. Students will answer questions by circling or drawing lines to answers. Questions may be True or False or multiple choice. After these levels, the format of the GMTA tests will be similar to the current tests. They will include ear-training, but the ear-training will be limited to no more than 10 points per test. Each level gradually adds material to what has been presented in earlier levels.

Levels do not have to be taken consecutively and levels do not necessarily correspond to grades. Teachers will be able to enter their students on any level in any year. A student may repeat a level or move to an earlier level if the teacher feels they are not ready to go to a later level. Students may take two tests in one school year by taking one in the fall and one in the spring. As before, students will be able to exempt GATE tests by passing certain levels of the GMTA tests. Tests taken in the fall will be graded and the exemption list updated in January.

The GATE test is the required test that students take to participate in Auditions. There are now **4 levels** of the GATE test:

**Fourth and Fifth grade** students must pass or exempt the GATE Level **A** test.

**Sixth and Seventh grade** students must pass or exempt the GATE Level **B** test.

**Eighth and Ninth grade** students must pass or exempt the GATE Level **C** test.

**Tenth, Eleventh and Twelfth grade** students must pass or exempt the GATE Level **D** test.

It is important to note that the GATE test may only be taken once in a school year. If a student takes and fails to pass the GATE test in the fall, they will not be able to retake it in the spring. If the student takes the GMTA test in the fall and fails to make a high enough grade to exempt the GATE, they may take the GATE test before Auditions in the spring.

*continued on next page*

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Current exemptions will be honored. For example, a ninth grade student with a current Level C exemption is ready to participate in Auditions in the Spring of 2025. There are currently no exemptions for Level D so **ALL 10th, 11th and 12th grade students must** either exempt Level D by passing **Level 10** of the GMTA test in the fall of 2024 or pass the GATE Level D test in the fall of 2024 or spring of 2025.

GATE A is exempted by passing the GMTA Theory Level 5 with a grade of 90 or above. GATE B is exempted by passing GMTA Theory Level 7 with a grade of 85 or above. GATE C is exempted by passing GMTA Theory Level 9 with a grade of 85 or above. GATE D is exempted by passing GMTA Theory Level 10 with a grade of 80 or above.

The curriculum of the GMTA tests and the GATE tests are now aligned. Each level of the tests includes the same categories. These include: Accidentals, Articulation, Cadences, Chords, Circle of Fifths, Dynamics, Form, Intervals, Keyboard, Key Signatures, Note-Naming, Note/Rest Values, Ornamentation, Rhythm, Scales/Modes, Staff, Tempo, Time Signatures and Transposition. New test material is added in subsequent levels for each category, building on previous levels. In addition to the curriculum requirements, each level of the GMTA tests includes vocabulary with definitions and a cumulative vocabulary.

The new curriculum will be uploaded to the GMTA website in July. In addition to the individual GMTA levels (1-12), there will be a “Category List” and an “Outline”. The Category List will show the progression of concepts. The Outline will provide a quick look at what is new for each level.

Members of the theory committee will be available to Local Associations for Zoom or in-person workshops to help members better understand the new program. To schedule a workshop or for questions, please contact me:

**Diane Boyd, NCTM, GMTA Theory Chairman: 912 414-5972 or [dianelboyd@comcast.net](mailto:dianelboyd@comcast.net)**



## NORTH FULTON MUSIC TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

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**Amy VanderLugt, NCTM**  
**NFMTA2224@gmail.com**

**1<sup>st</sup> VP Programs**  
**Nancy Elton, DMA**  
**nancyelton@yahoo.com**



## COMMISSIONED COMPOSER

DAVID PEOPLES, NCTM, GMTA COMMISSIONING CHAIR

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This year, GMTA is excited to welcome James A. Devor as our 2024 GMTA Commissioned Composer.

GMTA is pleased to invite composers who are living or working in the state of Georgia (or who have significant ties to the state of Georgia) to apply for the **2025 GMTA Commissioned Composer Award**.

More information about the award, including the guidelines and application, can be found [on the GMTA website](#). Please direct any questions to: [commissioning.georgiamta@gmail.com](mailto:commissioning.georgiamta@gmail.com).



**Application deadline: 11:59 p.m. SEPTEMBER 1, 2024.**



## GEORGIA'S OWN

CAMERON FUHRMAN, GMTA ARTS AWARENESS & ADVOCACY CHAIR

Georgia's Own is a list of GMTA members who are willing to present workshops and programs to GMTA local associations. Members provide their biography and information about their presentation topic. This list supplies local associations with opportunities to benefit from the immense expertise GMTA members possess, while at the same time providing individual GMTA members with outlets to share their knowledge and connect with others. To access this list—or for information on how to join the list—click the button below.

GEORGIA'S OWN

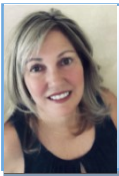
We are working to make Georgia's Own even more beneficial for GMTA members and associations, and we need your help! **Please consider taking the short survey linked below.** The survey gathers information about members' interest both in adding a presentation to the Georgia's Own list and in attending presentations on the list. It takes approximately 5-10 minutes to complete.

[Click this link to take the GMTA Georgia's Own survey](#)

Thank you so much for sharing your insights! They are an essential part of making Georgia's Own as fruitful as possible for GMTA and its members.

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This past April, Renee Fleming, along with Dr Sanjay Gupta and a panel of Emory researchers, presented Music + Mind at the Woodruff Performing Arts Center. This informative event explored the subject of the brain's complexity through Music. The program coincided with the release of a book edited by Renée Fleming called *Music and Mind: Harnessing the Arts for Health and Wellness*. The hardback recently became available on Amazon as well as Kindle and Audible Audiobooks. I was privileged to attend the book signing following her ASO concert of Strauss songs and highly recommend reading this book.



The National Endowment for the Arts and the National Institute of Health held a 2-day joint meeting at the Kennedy Center for the Arts this past December. Fortunately I was able to attend virtually. The purpose of the meeting was to compare scientific research findings and share information from the last 6 years about music and health. Sessions included research on the science of music, music therapy and music medicine, music education and health, future directions, networks and capacity building of an integrative health research community, and integration of music-based interventions into health care systems. Over 35 million dollars have been awarded in grants to many projects that explore the healing power of music. Keynote speakers were the renowned singer Renée Fleming and Dr. Francis Collins, MD, National Human Genome Research Institute and Former National Institute of Health (NIH) Director.

Things we as musicians know intuitively are now being scientifically proven and are being (or will be) prescribed as treatment. Some scientific findings include that listening to relaxing music before surgery was found as effective as diazepam (Valium) in reducing stress and anxiety. One power point stated, "Music, more so than speech, engages emotional centers mediating reward and arousal, the same networks associated with eating chocolate, taking opium, and having sex." Treatment of Parkinson's disease and many other medical conditions with music therapy has also been proven successful. For full recordings of the meetings follow these links:

[December 14, 2023](#) and [December 15, 2023](#)

The GMTA Teacher of the Year Award is presented annually to a member of GMTA in recognition of lifetime achievement as a music teacher, with excellence in teaching, musicianship, professional activity, and service to the community and/or state. Any GMTA member may nominate any other GMTA member for the Teacher of the Year. The GMTA Teacher of the Year will be selected from nominated applicants and entered in the MTNA Teacher of the Year competition.

**The online submission form will require the following information:**

- Teaching/professional achievement
- Number of years of teaching experience
- Evidence of teaching excellence (i.e. students' successes)
- Accomplishments/contributions to MTNA
- Participation in local, state, and/or national MTNA programs
- Community involvement
- Former student and/or parent letter(s) of support
- Professional colleague letter(s) of support
- Nominating letter from the state organization

Nominations must be submitted by **Monday, September 9, 2024**. The online form is available [here](#). The winner will be recognized at the 2024 GMTA Conference Banquet. With so many excellent teachers in Georgia, please consider nominating one of your favorites!

For a list of past Teachers of the Year, and to read their Teaching Tips, visit the [GMTA Website](#).  
 Nomination questions? [presidentelect.georgiamta@gmail.com](mailto:presidentelect.georgiamta@gmail.com)



**GMTA President-Elect Kristi Helfen  
 with the 2023 Teacher of the Year  
 Dr. Joe Chapman**

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## June 2024

30 Membership renewal deadline: Membership year runs July 1-June 30

## August 2024

15 Deadline for articles to be included in the GMTA Fall Newsletter

## September 2024

- 1 Deadline to apply for GMTA Commissioned Composer Award
- 9 Application deadline for GMTA Teacher of the Year
- 9 Application deadline for GMTA Teacher Grants
- 11 MTNA Competitions registration deadline (3:00 PM)
- 30 Student Membership renewal deadline: Membership year runs October 1-September 30

## October 2024

- 1 Fall registration deadline for GMTA Theory Test/GATE
- 25-26 MTNA Competitions, Piedmont University

## November 2024

7-9 GMTA Conference, Georgia State University-Perimeter College (Clarkston Campus)

## December 2024

15 Deadline for articles to be included in the GMTA Fall Newsletter

## January 2025

- 15 Registration deadline for Local Auditions, GMTA Theory Test, and GATE
- 15 GMTA State Auditions registration deadline for Pre-College Concert, Piano Grade 12, Piano Duet

## February 2025

- 24 Deadline for local associations to submit local rating and GATE scores to GMTA Executive Director
- 26 Deadline to pay teacher/student Regional Audition fees

## March 2025

- 15-19 MTNA Conference: Minneapolis, MN
- 16 Postmark deadline to mail GMTA Theory Tests to Trudi Norman

## April 2025

4-5 GMTA State Auditions, Piedmont University

## Executive Board:

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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](http://www.mtna.org).

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## Submittals

GMTA publishes its online newsletter three times per year. Publication dates and their respective deadlines are as follows: January 15th (Deadline: December 15th) June 15th (Deadline: May 15th) September 15th (Deadline August 15th)

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