

***West Virginia Music
Teachers Association***
Affiliated with Music
Teachers National Association



www.wvmta.org **WVMTA News Volume 61, Issue 1, February 2026**

Notes from the President

Happy New Year, fellow WVMTA members!

Thanks to all the board of directors and district chairs who served for the 2023-2025 term, you are the ones who keep WVMTA up and running smoothly.

Officers for November 2025 – November 2027:

Immediate Past President – Yuhsuan Liao

President – Johan Botes/Yuhsuan Liao (finishing out Daniel Bellamy's term).

President Elect – Rayme Pullen

First VP – Henning Vauth

Second VP – Jerry Lee

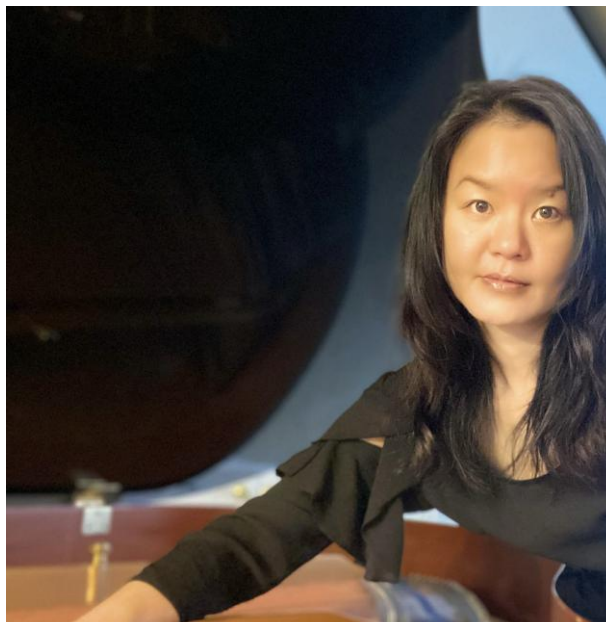
Treasurer – Trevor Pullen

Secretary – Jerry Lee

Please consider attending the MTNA Conference in Chicago, March 21-25, 2026-a landmark occasion as we celebrate 150 years of excellence in music teaching!

I wish all of you a musically fulfilling year and look forward to seeing you soon!

Dr. Yuhsuan Liao, NCTM



Notes from President--Elect, Rayme Pullen

The 2026 State Conference will be held in-person at West Virginia University. Hooi Yin Boey is doing excellent work as the site coordinator in securing the date and space for the conference. As soon as the university confirms logistics, we will let WVMTA members know. Many thanks as well to Henning Vauth for his work this year as competition chair. Both of these jobs require many hours of work behind the scenes, and a successful state conference could not happen without their diligent work.

From the bottom of my heart – thank you!

I have begun the process of booking presenters, and I will have more information to share in the next newsletter as I receive confirmations and presentation proposals. I am excited to take this new role with our board and invest in the future of WVMTA. I believe in the value of what we do, and I am grateful for the excellent examples set by my colleagues over the years. You all inspire me to be a better teacher and a better board member.

Gratefully submitted,

Rayme Pullen

WVMTA Treasurer's Report

The most recent available report from June 2025: Total bank account balance is \$30,090.75. From President Yuhsuan Liao: Trevor Pullen will be the new treasurer. We are still working on the process to transition the bank accounts/materials. Thanks for your patience, hopefully we can get everything set up in the next few weeks.

WVMTA Teacher of the Year Award

August 31st is the deadline to submit nominations for the 2025 WVMTA Teacher of the Year. According to rules as set up by the WVMTA Administrative Board on October 25, 1996: "Nominations will be limited to three." Also according to rules, the qualifications are:

- Demonstrates innovative teaching and creative musicianship and,

- Has held membership in WVMTA for at least five (5) years.

Past Teacher of the Year Awards Recipients:

1991 Peggy Johnston, NCTM	1992 Christine Kefferstan, NCTM
1993 Carol Beall, NTCM	1994 Linda Seime, NCTM
1995 Lena Lim, NCTM	1996 Mary Wilson
1997 Ray Martin, NCTM	1998 Leslie Petteys, NCTM
1999 Ruth Carder, NCTM	2000 Catherine Crotty, NTCM
2001 Bonnie Miltenberger	2002 No award given
2003 Lya Cartwright	2004 Olive Meyer, NCTM
2005 Mila Markun, NCTM	2006 Scott Beard, NCTM
2007 Elaine Tutt	2008 Vicki B. Cavendish
2009 Harriet Tucker, NCTM	2010 Jan Jemison Smith, NCTM
2011 Mary Ellen Morrison, NCTM	2012 Hooi Yin Boeey
2013 Christene Kefferstan, NCTM	2014 Carole Kriewaldt
2015 No award given	2016 James Miltenberger
2017 Henning Vauth, NCTM	2018 Mary Wilson
2019 Jacob Womack, NCTM	2020 John Morrison
2021 Ian Jessee	2022 Dr. Gerald (Jerry) Lee
2023 Robert Ellis	2024 No Award Given

WVMTA Distinguished Leader of the Year

- This award is based on accumulated years of leadership and service contributed to the organization, over and above 10 years.
- This award will be based on whether the award was or was not already received by a particular member previously. The award CAN be granted to the same individual more than once.
- This award will be based on the recommendation, every year, of the current committees' research and records (If you are interested in becoming a future member of the Awards Committee, please notify Dr. Yu-Hsuan Liao at yliao@shepherd.edu). The Distinguished Leader of the Year Award was begun in 2006 and replaced the "Member of the year Award."

Member of the Year Honorees

1991 Mary Shep Mann, NCTM	1992 Bobby Loftis, NCTM
1993 Judy Lambert, NCTM	1994 Jane Mangus, NCTM; Sandra

	Hastings
1995 Mila Markun	1996 Marija Sommer, NCTM
1997 Marguerite Bostonia, NCTM	1998 Jean Douglass, NCTM
1999 Connie Arrau Sturm, NCTM	2000 Olive Meyer, NCTM
2001 No Award given	2002 No Award given
2003 James Miltenberger	2004-05 No Awards given

Distinguished Leader of the Year Honorees

2006 Barbara Heckert	2007 Carol Beall, NCTM
2008 Mary Wilson	2009 Karen Taddie, NCTM
2010 Gary Mullenax, NCTM	2011 Janna Kisner, NCTM
2012 Scott Beard, NCTM	2013 Mary Lynne Bennett, NCTM
2014 No award given	2015 Mary Ellen Morrison, NCTM
2016 Laura Hamm, NCTM	2017 Gerald (Jerry) Lee
2018 No award given	2019 Hooi Yin Boey
2020 Vicki Cavendish	2021 Dr. Jacob Womack, NCTM
2022 John Morrison	2023 Dr. Henning Vauth, NCTM
2024 Dr. Johan Botes, NCTM	2025 No Award Given

WVMTA Scholarship for an African American Applied Music Student (AAAMS Scholarship)

- ***WVMTA has proudly awarded the AAAMS 2025 scholarship to two qualified students. We divided the scholarship into two and awarded these students: Elijah Coleman, student of Robert Ellis and Harper Stephenson, student of Jenny Anderson. Congratulations and keep up the good work!***

Below is information on the AAAMS Scholarship:

- WVMTA will provide a \$500 scholarship for an African American applied music student.
- The scholarship will be awarded annually, if the WVMTA Budget Committee determines there are sufficient funds in the general WVMTA budget.
- Students cannot receive the scholarship in two successive years unless there are no other competitors.
- All African American students shall be eligible, regardless of age and performance level, including pre-college, college, and adult students, and regardless of instrument or voice type.

- Eligible students must be students of a WVMTA member (“dues paid”) at the time of application or start lessons with a WVMTA member by the week after Labor Day.
 - A call for applications shall be included in the June Newsletter by the President.
 - Applications shall be due on or before August 8, and selections will be made by the WVMTA Budget Committee by August 15. Applications should be submitted electronically by email attachment to the President.
 - There is no application fee.
 - Selections will be made based on need and/or merit.
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- The student or legal guardians shall receive the scholarship in form of a one-time payment from the WVMTA Treasurer, postmarked on or before September 1.
 - If there are no applicants, the earmarked money shall go back into the general WVMTA budget.

Application:

- A formless one-page letter written by the student’s applied teacher, speaking to a need and/or merit of the student, b) stating that the student either has already been studying with the teacher, or will start lessons with the teacher by the first week after Labor Day, and c) confirming that the teacher has paid WVMTA dues for the current fiscal year.
- Proof of the teacher’s dues payment to MTNA/WVMTA for the current fiscal year.

Notes form the Competition Chair, Gary Mullenax

WVMTA will have four representatives in the Eastern Division Competitions this year. They are:

Junior Performance Piano: Xinxi Xu (Boey)
 Senior Performance String: Pavan Subramani (Heinecke)
 Young Artist Performance Piano: Mohan Zhang (Amstutz)
 Young Artist Performance String: Shairah Sanchez (Johnson)

Due to not having a convention, the WVMTA Mountain State Competitions were held on line. The Mountain State Composition Competition had ten entries this year:

Elementary A : 1
 Elementary B: 4
 Junior High: 4
 Senior High: 1

Adjudicator for the Composition Competition was Li-ly Chang of Silver Spring, MD.

Winners

Elementary A:

1st Place: Aurora Mallawaarchichi (Anderson)

Elementary B:

1st Place: Rebecca Gilhooly (Anderson)

2nd Place (tie): Pippa Love (Anderson)

Morgan Cashman (Anderson)

Junior High:

1st Place: Cadence Edleblute (Anderson)

2nd Place: Autumn Gilhooly (Anderson)

Senior High:

1st Place: Cecelia White (Anderson)

The Mountain State Piano Competition had 22 entrants: 8 in Elementary; 9 in Junior High; and 5 in Senior High. There were no entries in strings, voice, or other instrumental categories.

Elementary Division Winners:

1st: Walker Boh Lin (Yap)

2nd: Wyatt Grayson Lin (Yap)

HM: Charlotte Harris (Cavendish)

Henry Hu (Boey)

Waverly Anne Lin (Yap)

Pippa Love (Anderson)

Nisha Silva (Yap)

Xinhe Xu (Boey)

Junior High Division Winners:

1st: Owen Lorimar (Yap)

2nd: Evelyn Nguyễn (Yap)

HM: Hope Wu (Cavendish)

Senior High Division Winners:

1st: Caden Yao (Liston)

2nd Jenna Gilhooly (Anderson)

Honorable Mention: Tali Bennett (Cavendish)

Adjudicator for the Piano Competitions was Dr. Junko Takahashi, past President of Maryland MTA, and a residents of Silver Spring, MD.

Comment sheets and Award certificates will be emailed to teachers, who can distribute them to the students.

MTNA Certification – WVMTA Challenge and Incentive

\$200 Reimbursement Check Available for Any Newly Certified NCTM!*

Yes, for anyone who successfully becomes a NEW NCTM! No stipulations. Receive a \$200 award from the WVMTA board for completing certification, which covers the entire fee! Find out the latest information on requirements for the National Certification Program at www.mtnacertification.org.

*This award does not apply to people who complete their renewals or their permanent professional certificates. This award is only for new certifications. Contact jwomack@concord.edu for more information.

Certification Drawing Value: \$200

Our Certification program has a drawing at each year's state conference to allow one person to win a free \$200 application fee for the MTNA certification. This year, any member (regular or collegiate) may enter your name in the drawing prior to the state conference and the winner will be drawn at the state conference. The winner does not need to be present to win, although we encourage all members to attend state conferences. Contact Jacob Womack, certification chair, to enter the drawing (jwomack@concord.edu). Find out the latest information on requirements for the National Certification Program at www.mtnacertification.org. The winner of the drawing must submit their official certification application to MTNA within one (1) year and complete the process within two (2) years.

Collegiate Members are eligible to enter the certification drawing.

Notes from the Membership Chair, Dr. Jerry Lee

With view to the 2025-2026 membership year, using the month of April 2025 as a starting point, according to dues paid during April 1, 2025 – December 31, 2025, WVMTA confirms 58 members, including 5 collegiate members.

Membership updates from June 1, 2025 – December 31, 2025:

- WVMTA welcomes Sr. Mary Irene Sorber, from Charleston, WV, as a new active member specializing in piano and church music.
- WVMTA welcomes back Robert Ellis, from Fairmont, WV, as a reinstating member specializing in piano, organ, and music theory.
- WVMTA welcomes Madeline Hoover, from Fairmont, WV, as a new collegiate member specializing in piano.
- WVMTA welcomes back Mary Johnson, from Morgantown, WV, as a reinstating member specializing in violin, viola, and chamber music.
- WVMTA welcomes Yiwen Zhang, from Marion, IL, as a transferring member from Alabama, specializing in piano and accompanying.
- WVMTA welcomes Mina Lee, from Dunbar, WV, as a new active member specializing in piano, accompanying, chamber music, church music, group piano, music history, piano pedagogy, and violin.
- WVMTA welcomes back Lorie A. Payne, from Harpers Ferry, WV, as a reinstating collegiate member specializing in organ.

Please encourage and recruit new members to join WVMTA so that our organization stays as strong and active as possible!

From now through June 30, 2026, active members joining for the first time will receive a 50% discount on national membership dues!

To join online and to learn more about specific member benefits, please visit the following website and click on the link towards the top of the page, “Join + Renew”:
www.mtna.org

The text below is from MTNA, describing the benefits of membership:

Choices for a More Musical Tomorrow

MTNA offers a number of membership types for teachers, students and those involved in the music industry.

For well over a century, MTNA has been the backbone for a collaborative community of music-teaching professionals, connecting both the seasoned educator and those at the beginning of their career.

Membership with MTNA does more than simply complement your career as a music professional—it supports, supplements and shapes it. It empowers music teachers nationwide to become better educators through networking, leadership, mentoring and educational opportunities.

MTNA Membership Delivers:

- Peer Connections—a network of outlets, forums and channels for like-minded individuals in the music profession to collaborate and communicate, both locally and nationally
- Ongoing Education—conferences, events and advice on teaching tips and pedagogy, technology and web trends, master classes and informational sessions
- Invaluable Resources—access to countless benefits, from Certification, publications and consultation services to competitions, teacher enrichment grants and insurance

District Reports

District I Report:

The District One Technique Test was held on Friday November 22, 2025, at the College of Creative Arts and Media, WVU. 30 students participated in the event and successfully passed the test.

Participating teachers include Mary Morrison, Natalia Liston, Tatyana Heis, and Hooi Yin Boey.

42 students participated in the Fall Festival, “Let’s get into Form-ation!” on Saturday, November 1, 2025 at the Grand Hall, WVU Museum Education Center. At this event, the students prepared and delivered an introductory speech, as well as performed literature. Participating teachers include Mary Morrison, Natalia Liston, Tatyana Heis, Yiwen Zhang, Savannah Wright, and Hooi Yin Boey.

The upcoming Spring events, Theory Test and Spring Adjudicated Performances are tentatively scheduled on Friday April 10, 2026, and Saturday May 9, 2026, respectively at the College of Creative Arts and Media, WVU.

Hooi Yin Boey, Chair

District 1 Fall Festival



District 1 Fall Festival



District II Report:

District 2 held the 2025 Fall Festival on Saturday November 22 at the Historic Waldomore in Clarksburg, WV. Our district is growing more than ever, and we nearly ran out of space to hold this event at the Waldomore. We had 26 students from 4 studios participating: 9 students from Eve Flint's studio, 2 students from John Morrison's studio, 1 student from Robert Ellis' studio, and 13 students from Rayme Pullen's studio. It was a delight to listen to the variety of repertoire from elementary through high school students.

We are preparing for Theory and Technic testing on Saturday March 21, and we are looking ahead to preparations for the Spring Adjudicated Performances in May.

Gratefully submitted,

Rayme Pullen, Chair

District 2 Fall Festival



District IV Report:

WVMTA Mid-Ohio Valley District 4 held two Fall Festival programs with 37 students on November 9. Retired music teacher Sandra Laird presented an introduction to the ukulele complete with enough instruments for students to play. Four teachers had students participating: Laura Hamm, Barbara Heckert, Amy Rice, and Karen Young.

Spring plans include Theory and Technique tests on March 14 and Spring Performances on May 9.

Laura Hamm, NCTM, Chair

District 4 Fall Festival



District 4 Fall Festival



District VI Report

6 students of Jenny Anderson participated in *the Mountain State Piano Performance competition*.

9 students of Jenny Anderson participated in *the Mountain State Composition competition*.

We held our *Fall Festival* on October 25, 2025, at the Ashbury Methodist Church, located in historic Charles Town, WV. We had 52 participants from studios of: Jenny Anderson, Gary Mullenax, Natalie Sigety, Mary Love and Melissa Rickman. The Fall Festival theme was "Folk Dances," presented by Mary Love.

District VI Report (Cont.)

Our ***Winter Recital*** (district 6 event) took place on December 13, 2025 at the Falling Waters Presbyterian Church, located in Hedgesville, WV. We had 3 recitals: 63 students of Jenny Anderson, Gary Mullenax, Melissa Rickman, and Donna Coyle participated.

The ***Dr. Scott Beard Ensemble*** festival (district 6 event) is scheduled at the Fellowship Bible Church in Shenandoah Junction, WV on February 28, 2026.

We are also planning to hold ***Theory and Technic Testing*** on March 21, 2026, ***Spring Recital*** (district 6 event) on April 25, 2026, and ***Spring Adjudication*** on May 16, 2026.

Yevgeniya Jenny Anderson, NCTM (Chair of District 6)

News is published quarterly online at www.wvmta.org and e-mailed to members. If you have a change of street address or e-mail address, contact MTNA at www.mtna.org or call 888-512-5278

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