



Letter from the President, Dr. Dianna Anderson, NCTM

Happy Spring to all of you, and best wishes as you finish up the school year. The milestones reached during this time of year with senior recitals and graduations are some of the most gratifying and bittersweet moments of teaching, and I hope you all take the time to savor them.



In this issue of our newsletter, you will find details about our fast-approaching state conference, held June 1-3 in Fargo. FMMTA has worked hard to organize this event and has some wonderful presenters and performances lined up. I can't wait to see so many friends and colleagues in person, finally! Please plan to attend this great educational event for teachers in our state, and register soon.

As always, thank you to our membership for all that you do every day to further our profession and support NDMTA!

Dr. Dianna Anderson, NCTM
President, NDMTA

Conference Presenter - Melody Bober

As a composer, Melody Bober enjoys creating motivational piano pieces that foster her students' understanding and love of music.

Melody graduated summa cum laude from the University of Illinois at Champaign-Urbana with a bachelor's degree in music education. She later received a Master of Arts degree in piano performance from Minnesota State University, Moorhead. Melody credits much of her success to her influential teachers who include Joel Shapiro and Andrew Froelich (piano), Mary Hoffman (music education), and Tony Caramia (jazz).



An active church pianist and accompanist, Melody has also held the position of church music director. In addition to teaching piano in her private studio, Melody's music-teaching experience includes 20 years of public school and two years at the university level.

A with hdynamic clinician and innovative composer, Melody is in great demand at conventions and workshops for piano teachers across North America. She resides in Minnesota with her husband Jeff.

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5:30 pm Banquet
 Reineke Atrium
 Tyler Nagel, Banquet Dinner Music

7:30 pm Concert: Excelsior Trio, public invited
 Beckwith Recital Hall
 Reception to follow, provided by Schmitt Music

Friday, June 3, 2022

8:30 am Registration
 Reineke Atrium

9:00-10:15 am Session IV: - Melody Bober
 New Music Showcase
 Beckwith Recital Hall

10:15-10:45 am Break with refreshments
 Silent Auction closes at 10:45

10:45 am -12:00 pm Session V - Amy Mercer
 Interpreting Musical Styles
 in Elementary through Intermediate Piano Repertoire
 Beckwith Recital Hall

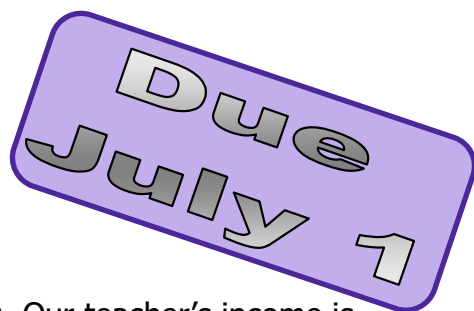
12:00-12:30 pm Closing Remarks
 Door Prizes
 Silent Auction Results

Membership Dues

By Lisa Schuler, Membership Chair

The MTNA/NDMTA fiscal year runs from July 1st to June 30th every year. This is your friendly reminder that memberships are to be paid by July 1st. Your paid membership allows you to be active in programs such as Music Rallies and Competitions. A paid membership allows you to be an officer at the local and state level. Paid memberships provide you with the many benefits that MTNA has to offer. You can find those benefits at mtna.org. An up-to-date membership keeps your name and contact information in the NDMTA Directory and NDMTA website. Overall, it keeps NDMTA running smoothly. We still have a few

months before the July 1st deadline, so now is the time to be thinking about renewing. Our teacher's income is still steady, so funds are available to get this "thing to do" off our list. If for some reason, you cannot pay by July 1st, the deadline for being included in the directory and website is Oct. 1st. Thank you in advance for your support of this great organization!



NDMTA Annual Conference
 Wednesday-Friday, June 1-3, 2022
 Reineke Hall, NDSU, Fargo, ND

Name _____
 Address _____
 City _____ State _____ Zip _____
 Telephone: Home _____ Work _____ Cell _____
 E-mail _____
 NDMTA Member: Yes No Local Association _____

Registration Fees:

Full Conference – member	\$115 _____
Full Conference – non-member	\$135 _____
Full Conference - First Time Attendee	\$65 _____
Full Conference - Student	\$50 _____
One Day Only (member)	\$65 _____
One Day – non-member	\$75 _____
Thursday _____ Friday _____	\$60 _____

Online Processing Fee (DO NOT INCLUDE IF PAYING BY CHECK) \$3.64 _____

IMTF Luncheon, Build your own sandwich bar	\$15 _____
Banquet, Bourbon Glazed Chicken	\$26 _____
Let us know if you have any dietary needs _____	
Late Registration Fee: (Postmarked after May 13)	\$15 _____
Total Enclosed:	\$ _____

Payment Options:

1. Complete this registration form online and use PayPal to pay online at www.ndmta.org ***OR***
2. Mail completed form and send check, payable to NDMTA to:
 Michelle Kallod
 668 17th Ave. E
 West Fargo, ND 58708
 mkallod@hotmail.com

Refunds: Registration fees are nonrefundable except for emergencies and illness. Should such a conflict arise, the registration fee, minus all food costs, will be refunded. Please contact Corinne Nustad (701) 388-9790 and send a written request to Michelle Kallod, 668 17th Ave. East, West Fargo, ND 58078.

Hotel accommodations: Expressway Suites, 4303 17th Ave S, Fargo. Double Queen Suite \$92.95. Single King \$79.95, 877-239-4303. Ask for NDMTA Rate. Check in 3PM. Check out 11AM. Free continental breakfast.

News from your NDMTA Foundation

By Vangie Johnson Parker, Foundation Chair

Introducing our NDMTA Foundation Fellow Nominee for 2023... Darla Sheldon!

Darla was raised in a musical family in rural Bowden, ND where her love of music began at an early age. She began her teaching career after graduating from Valley City State University in 1967 with a BS Degree/Composite Major in Music. She taught instrumental and vocal music grades 1-12 in North Dakota Schools. She has taught private piano for over 40 years!



Darla is an NDMTA certified teacher of music and was awarded the NDMTA Teacher of the year in 2012. She has served on the NDMTA state board as well as the UVMTA board. She retired to Fargo, ND in 2014 where she is an FMMTA member and presently serves on their board of directors.

Darla's has dedicated her life to furthering Arts and Education in schools in several ND/MN communities. She has composed vocal/instrumental arrangements for special groups her entire career. She served on the Board of Directors for the Park Rapids Community Theater and was also musical director and pianist for 12 major summer musical productions.

Darla has done extensive accompanying for her church music worship team, church choir/cantatas, school concerts, music contests, weddings, and funerals. She adjudicates music contests, rallies, talent shows and pageants. Since her move to Fargo, she has been an accompanist for Carl Ben Eielson Middle School, South High School and Davies High School for their music contests and concerts. She finds great joy in working with students of all ages and sharing her love of music and the piano.

Darla has been married to her husband Claude for 56 years and together they raised 3 children and are blessed with 6 grandchildren.

As of the publication of this newsletter, \$515.00 has been raised toward Darla becoming our NDMTA Foundation Fellow.

You may give at the NDMTA June conference, online via the MTNA website, or mail a check to MTNA. Be sure to request your donation to go directly to Darla as Foundation Fellow nominee,. If giving by check, please be sure to note Darla Sheldon in the memo section.

MTNA website <https://www.mtnafoundation.org/contribute/contribute-now/>

or send your check to:
Jennifer Thomason
MTNA Executive Assistant
600 Vine St Ste 1710
Cincinnati, OH 45202

Commissioned Composer - Christopher Gable

Christopher Gable is a composer, author, and music instructor based in Grand Forks, North Dakota, where he teaches Rock History, music technology, composition, and related courses at the University of North Dakota. His music has been performed across the United States and in Shanghai, China. His works frequently include references to and variations on all kinds of popular music. His commissions include works premiered by several UND ensembles, including the UND Trumpet Ensemble, the UND Concert Choir, Duo Cantabile, the Steel Pan Ensemble, and several student performers. Other organizations and ensembles that have commissioned works from Dr. Gable are the North Dakota Museum of Art, International Music Camp, the Minnesota Philharmonic, One Voice Mixed Chorus, Trio Carrefour, the dream songs project, Zeitgeist, and the Metropolitan Symphony Orchestra (Minneapolis). Dr. Gable's most recent opera is *The Ladysmith Story*, which celebrates the town of Ladysmith, Wisconsin and premiered in July 2010. He has taught composition at the International Music Camp since 2011, and has previously taught at Macalester College, the University of Minnesota and St. Olaf College. Gable studied at the University of Minnesota and UC Santa Barbara; his principal teachers were Dominick Argento, Judith Lang Zaimont, and Emma Lou Diemer. His music is published by Dorn Publications and Warwick Music. He has written two books about popular musicians, *The Words and Music of Sting* and *The Words and Music of Sheryl Crow*, which were both published by Praeger Publishers. He is a contributor to the encyclopedia *Music around the World* (ABC-CLIO). Dr. Gable was named a 2013 Artist Fellow from the North Dakota Council on the Arts. Upcoming projects in 2022 include a trombone octet written for the North Dakota Trombone Choir which will be performed at the International Trombone Festival in Arkansas, and a commission from the Music Teachers National Association, North Dakota chapter. FFI: <https://www.christophergable.com/>



Conference Recitalists - Excelsior! Trio



Excelsior! Trio performs an eclectic mix of classical, jazz, folk, and contemporary, progressive rock and even K-pop influenced chamber music. The unique combination of flute, saxophone, and piano results in an unusual variety of sound, timbre, and style. Flutist Debora Harris, pianist Jay Hershberger, and saxophonist Russell Peterson all teach on the music faculty of Concordia College, Moorhead, MN. They have been performing together for more than a decade and audiences have responded enthusiastically to their unique style and musical simpatico.

Conference Presenter - Amy Mercer

Amy Mercer earned her doctorate in piano performance at North Dakota State University, studying with Robert Groves, and her master's degree in piano performance and pedagogy at Ohio University where her principal teacher was Richard Syracuse. She completed her undergraduate degree at Concordia College under David Worth. She also studied under Antoinette Perry at the Aspen Music Festival and School. She is a founding member of the Lyra Trio.



Dr. Mercer is a nationally certified music teacher and is active in the National Federation of Music Clubs and Music Teachers' National Association. From 2004 to 2006, she was Visiting Professor of Music at Centre College in Danville, KY and has taught at North Dakota State University and Concordia College. Currently, Amy is Professor of Piano at MSUM, maintains a private studio, and is an independent accompanist. She resides in Fargo with her husband Shane and their three children.

MTNA Conference Session— Developing Independent Learners from the First Lesson

By Lisa Schuler

In this session, four teachers gathered on a recorded zoom call to discuss ways to encourage students to become independent learners. It was agreed that we should want our students to have the ability to learn pieces on their own and to play them musically. We should want them to be life-long musicians.

Here is a list of some of the activities they shared with each other:

- ♪ Have students learn an easier piece and then encourage them to add their own creative twist on it, such as a creative ending, an added ornament, etc.
- ♪ Tell the students to practice right after their lesson, the student should walk out of the studio to their home and play their assignment. If they do this, they will not need the help of a parent. They will be learning on their own. Parents will get the most out of their investment and students will love learning quickly.
- ♪ Ask the student, "What are you going to do with this piece?" (how are they going to practice it) and then write it down in the assignment book.
- ♪ Have students learn YOYO pieces, "You're On Your Own" pieces. Students could get a prize for each YOYO piece they play at their lesson.
- ♪ Resist the urge to write in their music, make them do it! They will remember it better.
- ♪ Assist the student in figuring out the piece but then have them listen to the piece. Make sure they know how it is to sound and that will help them at home.
- ♪ Have a box of music that students can dig through and take pieces to learn on their own. Once they learn it and play it at their lesson, they return it to the box and dig for another.

MTNA Conference Session—

Hack Your Practice: The Science Behind Interleaved (Random) Practicing

By Vangie Johnson Parker

How many times have we heard our students say "...but I played it just perfectly at home..." How many times did we say this to our teachers when we were young students?

Dr. Daniel Kuehler from Hillsdale College spoke about practice methods which can enhance performance under pressure.

Blocked practice -is defined as uninterrupted repetition on a specified task and is best for learning a specified skill.

Interleaved/Random Practice -is a switch from task to task without the opportunity to "get into the groove." It is spaced out with interruptions. As a result, the brain is forced to execute the task "on the Spot" and exercises our ability to play something on demand.

During one study, students were assigned different practice instructions. Some learned their music with the block method and the remainder learned their music using the random method. The results were fascinating. After the two days were up, students were asked which method they preferred and they unanimously believed that block practice was more efficient. However, the results after testing showed that the (random) interleaved group actually produced better results during both testing and performance. The performance criteria was judged by accuracy and performance speed.

Dr. Kuehler suggests practice with the following method to gain accuracy as well as long-term retention:

1. Solidify skills by beginning with blocked practice and necessary repetition.
2. Introduce controlled random practice by practicing section A, Section A prime, Section B, etc.
3. Next order of practice should be the Interleaved method and working each section in a random order.

Practical Applications you can use to make a game out of practicing:

Split the piece into structural chunks. Randomize the order of chunks in practice. Number the "chunks" on small pieces of paper and place in a hat. Draw from the hat and then begin at that measure and play forward.

Choose 3-5 problem spots in a piece. Set an interval timer and cycle through each problem spot randomly.

In Sonata form: Play the exposition and recap second themes back to back.

For those spots which you just "can't get", set an interval timer. Practice other things. When the timer rings, play the spot cold turkey. Then return to your first task. Do this multiple times in a session to practice retrieval.

By using a mixture of methods and focusing on interleaved or random practicing, your students can develop long term retention in performance mode!

MTNA Conference Session— Teach (Almost) Any Pop Song in 20 minutes

By Lisa Schuler

Students enjoy playing songs they know, but online sources such as musicnotes.com can sometimes be discouraging because of complicated rhythms and having all the melody and harmony notes together. It's a lot of reading for students. Guitar tabs don't offer a lot of guidance, and good lead sheets for pop songs are hard to find. The presenter of this session likes having her students create lead sheets instead.

Here are her 6 tips to help students create their own lead sheets:

Listen – listen to the original song, not a cover; find the key and once located, find the I, IV, V, and vi chords of the key. 90% of pop songs use these chords. Listen for the chord changes.

Confirm Chords – Google search on lyric sheet (Ultimate Guitar Tabs), highlight the chords

Comping – follow along with the recording to make sure the chords are correct and then experiment by playing the chords in different ways; bass notes only, open 5ths, root position chords, 4-note broken chords, inversions, octaves. Playing the root-5th-8th is a common LH pattern; play the progression smoothly

Structure – students can write out the chord symbols, time signature, etc. on staff paper

Melody – after chord structure is good, put in the melody pitches. There doesn't have to be a rhythm but just pitches in the measure to line up with the chords. Her students just wrote whole notes for the melody line. She had her students do this at home and bring it back to the next lesson.

Add Flair – add chord tones, change octaves, fill in gaps, passing notes in the bass, try different chords, add sus2, sus4, 7th, have fun with your instincts.

Honestly, I feel this would take far more than 20 minutes to accomplish but I like the process the presenter suggested, and I think students would too.

Upcoming Events

2022 Popplers Music Competition	June 1	NDSU, Fargo
2022 NDMTA Conference	June 1-3	NDSU, Fargo
2022 MTNA Competition Entry Deadline	Sept. 14, 3:00 pm Eastern Time	submit entries on MTNA site
2022 MTNA Competitions	October 22	VCSU, Valley City

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www.ndmta.org