

# OhioMTA Central East District

*Affiliated with Music Teachers National Association and Ohio Music Teachers Association*

Newsletter  
June 13, 2016

## **President's Message**

Greetings! I am looking forward to serving as your district president over the next two years. Many thanks to the teachers and volunteers who ran our 2015-2016 events, and to our new officers who will be serving in the coming year. Special thanks to Laura Benson for her dedication as District President over the last four years!

Welcome to new board member: **Janice Cahill, Irma Khouw, Elizabeth Kloes, Rose Zuber, Kenneth Williams, Andrea Keil, and Jessica Heitmeyer.** Your time and talents will be much appreciated!

As with last year, the printed Directory will be reduced in size as a summary of all of our events and a listing of our officers and members who have renewed by June 30. All event information, applications, and bylaws are available at <http://www.ceomta.org>

The online membership list is updated monthly to reflect changes during the year. In addition, the online membership roster is searchable by name, area of teaching and zip code.

This newsletter will wrap up some remaining news from the spring as well as give you a couple of dates for your fall calendar. Please pay special attention to the **Scale Olympics** information – preparation for this very large event begins now! The rest of the 2016-17 information will be published in the late summer.

--Rachel Mauricio Mills, NCTM  
[www.RachelMillsPiano.com](http://www.RachelMillsPiano.com)

## **Time to Renew!**

Now is the time to renew your membership! Visit <http://www.mtna.org> to renew today. Members must have their renewals in by June 30 to be listed in the printed Directory.

## **Save the Dates**

Fall Executive Board Meeting – Monday, September 12<sup>th</sup>. Time & location TBD.

Fall District Conference - Friday, September 16<sup>th</sup>. 10:00am at Graves.

[OhioMTA State Conference](#) – November 3-5, 2016 at Kent State University.

## **Scale Olympics**

DATE CHANGE – Due to an internal scheduling conflict, Otterbein has changed Scale Olympics to **Saturday October 22, 2016** (NOT October 15).

Registration opens on June 15. Student scheduling is done first-come, first-served.

The 2016 Scale Olympics Handbook and Registration form were updated on June 9.

Scale Olympics Workshops: Do you have questions about preparing your students for this huge event? Are you interested in learning more about the newest event, Ear Training?

- General Information Workshop: The first workshop was held on June 10, and the second workshop will be held on **Friday, June 17**, 12:30pm at Graves.
- Lead Sheet Harmonization Workshop: This workshop focuses on the lead sheet harmonization track. It will be held on **Thursday, June 30**, 10:30am at Graves. Please register with Liz Atkinson: [liz.piano2@gmail.com](mailto:liz.piano2@gmail.com)

Please visit the [Scale Olympics web page](#) for further details and to download the handbook and registration form.

## **Summer Study Scholarships**

Here is a list of Summer Study Scholarship recipients:

<http://www.ceomta.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/Sum-Schol-Winner-2016.pdf>

Congratulations!!!!

## **Grants for Professional Development**

Congratulations to Miriam Brown and Elizabeth Kloes for receiving grant money to help defer costs toward professional development.

Grants are awarded to teachers, both members and non-members, to aid in improving the applicant's teaching skills by attending a music seminar or workshop, studying with a master teacher or any other activity relevant to the improvement of teaching. Applications are due April 15<sup>th</sup> of each year. Please see Central East OhioMTA Membership Directory or [www.ceomta.org](http://www.ceomta.org) for more information.

-- Annette Suhovecky, NCTM

## **Buckeye Auditions**

The Buckeye Auditions 2016 for Central East District were held on Saturday, March 19 at Ohio Wesleyan University again. There were a total of 14 participants in 7 categories: 1 Elementary Piano, 5 Junior Piano, 2 Senior Piano, 2 Elementary Strings, 2 Junior Strings, 1 Senior Strings, and 1 Senior Woodwinds. The judges were: Jackson Leung, Yuka Nakayama for the Piano Division, Tom Sobieski, Dawn Wohn, for the Strings and Katie Kuvin for the Woodwinds. In spite of the small pool of applicants, the level of competition was high again and the judges were impressed by the quality of playing by the contestants. Below is a list of all the award recipients, including the teachers. I would like to thank volunteers Rose Zuber, who will take on the chairmanship next year, and students of Ohio Wesleyan University. The winners of this district will go on to compete in the State Finals on Saturday, June 11, at Malone University, Canton, OH. We wish them all the best!

-- Dr. Mariko Kaneda  
Buckeye Auditions District Chair

### Elementary Piano

Winner: Maxwell Li

Teacher: Vivian Ripley

### Junior Piano

Winner: Abhik Mazumder \*\*\*State Winner!!!\*\*\*

Teacher: Suzanne Newcomb

Alternate: Stanley Cao

Teacher: Nina Polonsky

Honorable Mention: Changning Xu

Teacher: Nina Polonsky

### Senior Piano

Winner: Minjue Wu

Teacher: Nina Polonsky

### Elementary Strings

Winner: Mathias Koo \*\*\*State Winner!!!\*\*\*

Teacher: Tatiana Hanna

Alternate: Cecilia Martin

Teacher: Tatiana Hanna

### Junior Strings

Winner: Christine Shih \*\*\*State Winner!!!\*\*\*

Teacher: David Niwa

Honorable Mention: Adryán Rojas

Teacher: Jim McCullough

### Senior Strings

Honorable Mention: Sanna Symer

Teacher: David Niwa

### Senior Woodwinds

Winner: Anne Zou

Teacher: Beth Owen

## **Certified Teacher of the Year**

Congratulations to **Laura Flowers Benson, NCTM**, who has been named as our 2016 Certified Teacher of the Year!

Laura Flowers Benson earned a Master of Music degree in Piano Performance from Towson University and a Bachelor of Arts in Music from Penn State University. She is Nationally Certified by the Music Teachers National Association (MTNA).

Laura moved to Columbus in 2002, from Baltimore, Maryland, where she had been treasurer of her local association. She wasted no time becoming involved in the music community of Central Ohio. Her first volunteer position in OhioMTA was as co-chair of the Central East Buckeye Auditions. She served in this position for two years. At that time, she also became a Board Member of the Central East District of OhioMTA.

In 2003, Laura agreed to be a conductor at Pianorama. She has now been involved in six Pianoramas, serving as a conductor and helping with Special Auditions. In 2004, Laura agreed to chair Grants for Professional Development. For four years, even while giving birth to two children, she assisted colleagues and advanced high school and college students to continue their education through grants from our organization.

In 2008, Laura Benson became State Membership Chairman for OhioMTA, and a member of the State Board. For the past four years, Laura has served as President of our Central East District. One of the people who nominated Laura said: "As president, Laura has been organized and has kept the district running smoothly. She has handled various issues with poise, tact, and efficiency. Our board meetings are efficient and respectful of board members' time. Laura has represented our district at State Conferences and has reported the activities of the state to our board. She recently helped to plan and present the OMTA State Conference that was held in Columbus." She has served in leadership capacities for other arts associations in Central Ohio, including Women in Music Columbus.

Laura has been a professional piano teacher since 1994. She maintains an active studio in the Northwest Columbus/Worthington area and recently had two scholarship winners and a winner in the OMTA/Graves competition. She has been selected as a Piano Guild adjudicator and is a certified Suzuki instructor. In addition to teaching and nurturing children, Laura enjoys working with adults and piano teachers. She is also active as a performer, in both solo and ensemble settings.

Laura exemplifies everything we would want in a Teacher of the Year: a truly excellent teacher, a leader in our profession, a dedicated volunteer and role model, and a fine performing musician. And – she has balanced all these things with caring for her two beautiful children. She would represent OMTA extraordinarily well as our teacher of the year.

--Janice Cook, NCTM  
Certification Chair