

WINTER 2023-2024 NEWSLETTER

President's Message

Greetings Members!

I'm thrilled to be writing my first newsletter to you as President of SDMTA. For those who don't know me, I'm the Director of Piano Studies at SDSU in Brookings, where I have taught since the Fall of 2020. I moved from my home state of Washington, where I previously taught at Washington State University. I'm enjoying getting to know South Dakota and loving the community in Brookings! When I'm not busy teaching, practicing, or performing, I spend my time cooking, exercising (swimming is my new favorite), and working on my 125 year old Victorian home. I have two wonderful kids and a 9 year old Brittany Spaniel named Petey. You can [learn more](#) about my musical background in my professional bio.



I have spent my life participating in MTNA activities. As a student, I grew up enjoying the festivals, adjudications, competitions, and conference activities made possible by the hard work of our members and volunteers. And, ever since I taught my first student 24 years ago, I've taken advantage of the opportunities for growth that MTNA gives all of us who devote our lives to teaching. One thing I have learned is

that, while our national and state organizations offer us a bounty of resources, experiences, and opportunities, the heart of our MTNA experience is our local chapter. Our local groups can offer both activities for our students *and* enrichment for us as teachers. So, as we enter a new year, I ask you to consider two questions. First, what is one new way that you can contribute to your local chapter? And second, what is one new way your local chapter can support your growth as a teacher? I'll be visiting each chapter in the coming year and I can't wait to hear how SDMTA can support you.

Finally, on behalf of the SDMTA board, I wish to offer Symeon Waseen our sincere gratitude for his years of service as president and a hearty congratulations on moving into the role of past president. Thank you Symeon!!

-Dr. Mark Stevens

2023 Conference Recap

This year's SDMTA conference took place at South Dakota State University from November 2-4. Attendees enjoyed a workshop, a lecture recital, seven separate masterclasses, and two evening concerts. If you missed out on the fun, make plans now to join us at Black Hills State University from November 7-9, 2024!

SDMTA partnered with Mark Stevens to co-commission a new piece for the 2023 Conference, [Quinn Mason's New Era Bagatelles](#), which was premiered at the conference. SDMTA members can [listen](#) to the premiere, and the score is available [for purchase](#) directly from the composer.

A new slate of state officers was nominated at the general membership meeting. These included Mark Stevens (president), Mary Ermel (1st VP), Melanie Timmerman (2nd VP), Susan Keith Gray (secretary), and Deb Kalsbeck (treasurer). Symeon Waseen moved into the role of past president.

MTNA Foundation Fellow

Diane Ketel

[Click Here](#) to support Diane with your tax deductible contribution. Deadline is January 4th!



Diane Ketel has a B.A from Dakota Wesleyan and a Master of Music Degree from the University of Oregon. She has been a certified member of the Music Teachers National Association for more than fifty years. She has served as President of the South Dakota MTA as well as the Black Hill Area Music Teachers Association.

Diane is a much sought-after professional accompanist in Rapid City, performing with all-state choruses, the Black Hills Symphony, and countless soloists. She is a highly respected piano teacher who has had many state competition winners over the years. She is also a respected competition judge.

In addition to her piano skills, Diane is an accomplished organist who plays regular church services and mentors young organists.

The MTNA Foundation Fellow program recognizes accomplished members while simultaneously enriching the MTNA experience through the Foundation Fund.