



the Score

A PUBLICATION OF LMTA

Playathon News

Local affiliates from around the state host playathons to support the SOS Fund

Pioneer Award

LMTA unveils a new Pioneer Award honoring the Delphin & Romain Piano Duo

Teacher Forum

Don't miss this chance to connect and get your mind right before summer

Conference Photo Album (2025)

MARDI GRAS 2026



**Stay
focused!**

Enjoy the SCORE.

the Score

A PUBLICATION OF LMTA



The SCORE is a publication of the Louisiana Music Teachers Association, an affiliate of Music Teachers National Association. We aim to inform and educate our members about state and national association news, events, and the latest in education and pedagogy, while building a sense of community and camaraderie.

All members are invited to submit local association news, articles, resources, new research, announcements, kudos, events, dates, photos, etc. for consideration. Visit LMTA.org/the-score and use the "Score Submissions Form" button to upload your submission materials.

Email questions, suggestions, and comments regarding the Score to LouisianaMusicTA@gmail.com.

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Your Executive Board



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Michelle Strain

MEMBER AT LARGE



Tamera Gunter

MEMBER AT LARGE



From the President

Greetings LMTA Members,

I am looking forward to being President for the next two years! The past two years as President-Elect was kind of crazy, but also fun, and I feel fortunate to have had the opportunity to get to know so many of you better through that experience. Now as President, I hope I can continue to give the kind of support and energy LMTA deserves.

Our state conference at the University of New Orleans in October was well attended with many terrific sessions. I cannot thank everyone enough for all the help in organizing things behind the scenes. The Guest Artist recital by Anton Nel was just fabulous, and the sessions by Noa Kageyama provided the attendees with some useful insights into developing successful performance strategies. We had presenters from both in and out of state, and there was something for everyone.

There were some notable awards presented at the conference! Many of you know Michelle Strain and how much she has given to our organization over the years. It was time to honor her dedication and LMTA awarded her the 2025 Distinguished Service Award. It came as a complete surprise, and her son, Eli Strain, even came home from college to celebrate with her. Congratulations Michelle!!

We presented Wilfred Delphin with our inaugural Pioneer Award honoring the significant contributions of the Wilfred Delphin and Edwin Romain Piano Duo. Be sure to read the article about his remarkable achievements in this issue of the SCORE. Also notably, our Past-President, David Easley, was named a Foundation Fellow and he will be honored at the MTNA National Conference Gala event. The conference will be held in Chicago March 20-25. It's not too late to attend and you will be glad you did. Details are at www.mtna.org.

For those who have not attended our state conference before, it is a wonderful time to visit with friends around the state and also to make new ones. As we look forward to the conference next fall, October 8-9, in Natchitoches at Northwestern State University, I hope you will make plans even now to attend.

For my part, there are a few goals I have set for myself that I hope will encourage members around the state to do the same. I have become much more active contacting teachers who are not currently members encouraging them to join. As members we know how our events help keep us focused, and also encourage our students to achieve their best. We know students practice more when they have something specific they are preparing to perform. This can become a selling point for teachers not currently members. Besides growing friendships among teachers, we offer events throughout the year that keep students moving forward. I think this can help encourage nonmembers to join.

Spring is a busy time when we prepare students for competitions, festivals and recitals, but it is also a time when we start to realize the fruits of our labors. We get to experience first-hand our students moving forward in their musical journeys. I wish all of you much joy and success as we move towards the completion of the school year.

Please feel free to contact me at any time. I want to hear from members. I want to know the kinds of activities and ideas you would like our state to pursue. With the ease of online interactions, I can envision us becoming more and more easily connected.

Robin Williams, NCTM

PRESIDENT

Louisiana Music Teachers Association

Conference Photos



Conference Photos



Congratulations to Michelle Strain, LMTA Distinguished Service Award Recipient

Michelle Strain has been a devoted member of LMTA and her local Northshore affiliate for decades. She has been there to serve LMTA in many capacities, most recently as Vice President of Rallies, where she oversaw the many moving parts of rally events and coordinated the annual Torgrimson/Swanzy Competition, a massive job indeed.

Those that have worked with Michelle know her as a smart, capable, kind, and dedicated person. She is completely deserving of this award and we were proud to present it to her at the state conference in October.



Immediate Past President David Easley presents Michelle Strain with the LMTA Service Award



Michelle's son, Eli, surprised her at the state conference to help celebrate this honor.



**LMTA COLLEGE FACULTY &
INDEPENDENT TEACHERS
FORUM PRESENTS**

WELL-BEING FOR THE SUMMER AHEAD: FOR TEACHERS AND STUDENTS

MAY 1, 2026 | 7:00 PM

Zoom Meeting ID
931 7819 6122



MTNA Competitions – South Central Division

Results for Louisiana (2025)

Submitted by Chee Hyeon Choi, Louisiana Chair for MTNA Performance Competitions

Thank you to the following distinguished judges. We were honored to have you.

Dr. Ying-Shan Su (Nicholls State University) – Junior Piano and Young Artist Piano

Dr. Chan Kiat Lim (University of Louisiana at Lafayette) – Senior Piano

Dr. John Orfe (Alarm Will Sound) – Junior Composition



Junior Piano

Winner

Samuel Lin

Student of Chia-Ling Lien

Alternate

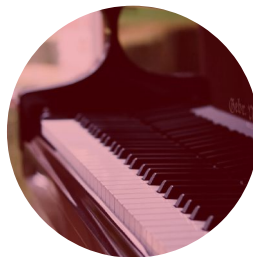
Zoey Wang

Student of Steele Moegle

Honorable Mention

Lucas Chen

Student of Steel Moegle



Senior Piano

Winner

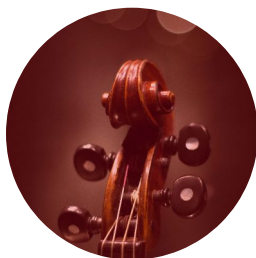
Xin Chen Wu

Student of Chia-Ling Lien

Alternate

Burklee Zanders

Student of Jinnan Liu



Junior Strings

Representative

Xiyuan Wu

Student of Laura Crawford

Honorable Mention

Beckett Waller

Student of Helen Myers



Young Artist Performace-Piano

Winner

Ruby Tu

Student of Michael Gurt

Alternate

Yuxi Zhang

Student of Yuling Huang-Davie



Junior Composition

Winner

Viraaj Reddy

Student of Wei Lee



Young Artist Performace-Woodwinds

Representative

Preston Hernandez

Student of Kendra Wheeler



Congratulations to the LMTA Pioneer Award Recipients Delphin & Romain Piano Duo!

Submitted by Pamela Pike

This is the first time that LMTA is presenting the LMTA Pioneer Award. We don't anticipate awarding it often, as it is reserved for musicians who have made deep and long-lasting impacts on our profession. It strikes me that inspiration and aspiration are among the reasons that we honor our colleagues. I think that we might each be inspired by the story, career, and work of tonight's recipients as we each try make a difference in our own little corners of Louisiana.

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Pamela Pike presents Wilfred Delphin, of the Delphin & Romain Piano Duo, the LMTA Pioneer Award.

The 2025 LMTA Pioneer Award recipients, the Delphin & Romain Piano Duo, forged new paths and paved the way for pianists throughout the south and across the country starting in the late 1970s and throughout their career (that ended shortly before the untimely death of Edwin Romain in 1995). I will add that Wilfred Delphin, who is with us this evening, has continued his pioneering work and continues to influence budding professional pianists from his perch on the Cane River in Natchez, Louisiana, even in his second retirement. That the Delphin & Romain Piano Duo's work has been highlighted recently by various scholars and artists (such as our own Susie Garcia) is a testament to the importance of the groundwork that Delphin & Romain laid more than 30 years ago.

Edwin Romain was from New Orleans and Wilfred grew up in El Dorado, Arkansas. In each of these places, numerous fine piano and music teachers (just like many of you) prepared them with the fundamentals they would need throughout their career. Edwin and Wilfred met as undergraduates at Xavier University in New Orleans, and although they honed solo piano skills there (and soaked up the culture, I am sure), they began playing duets and duos together with the encouragement of their professors and a future teacher. They both went on to earn master's degrees in performance & pedagogy from SIU-C, and DMA degrees in piano performance from the University of Southern Mississippi. They taught at institutions in the south and eventually landed as artists-in-residence at Southern Illinois University at Carbondale (SIU-C).

Continued on next page.

They made their Carnegie Hall debut (performing the Poulenc Concerto in D Minor for Two Pianos with the Symphony of the New World) in 1977, they later performed a full program at the White House for a state dinner President Carter hosted for Kenyan President, Daniel Arap Moi, they performed on major concert stages around the world AND, as Baldwin concert artists and Southern Arts Federation artists and grant winners, they travelled the United States, often driving their two pianos and setting up in school auditoriums and other less-than-ideal venues throughout the country—bringing their music to those who would otherwise have not had access. They wrote grants, commissioned and performed new two-piano music from underrepresented composers, and brought the outstanding music of Thomas Kerr Jr., George Walker, and Adolphus Hailstork, among many, many others, to the concert stage where it deserved to be enjoyed by audiences of all stripes and backgrounds. They also gave back to the community, as they had been supported by others, and students in central Louisiana continue to benefit from Wilfred’s advice and the opportunities that he quietly provides for students when appropriate. Following Hurricane Katrina, Wilfred came out of retirement (back from his Peace Corps work in Senegal) to teach at Xavier as the university was reopening. He remained there for many years, until his current retirement, which is when many of you first met Wilfred and heard him collaborate with artistry and finesse on the stage.

I could go on and on about my dear mentor and friend, Wilfred, but I won’t embarrass him more than I already have. I would encourage you to read the Autumn 2025 feature article on Wilfred in the Piano Magazine, but I’ll end with a quote from Wilfred that sums up his life’s work and the importance of the duo. About a month ago, I was talking to him on the phone about the Piano Magazine article and he said, “now Pam, I want to be clear, my career (the performing, teaching, mentoring); none of it would have been possible without Edwin.” We know Wilfred. The duo had magic on stage, and off, because you were perfect complements for each other and we present this award to you for the pioneering work that you did as a duo and for the legacy that you have left for us, particularly here in the south and in Louisiana. Thank you for making our paths easier, because of those that Delphin & Romain forged for us!

Piano Illusions Show at NSU in Natchitoches



Northwestern State University is hosting Piano Illusions on Saturday, March 14 at 5:30 PM featuring Dr. Igor Lipinski, who will give a performance which mixes magic and music together. Dr. Lipinski has performed this concert/show nationally and internationally to rave reviews. It is sure to be a very fun performance!

We are also combining this with our NSU Piano Day which starts on Saturday, March 14 at 1:30 PM. Students who register for Piano Day will have the chance to learn a magic trick from Dr. Lipinski! Tickets for just the concert are \$15 in advance or at the door.

To register and see complete information about NSU Piano Day, visit www.nsula.edu/academics/colleges-and-schools/school-of-creative-and-performing-arts/music/piano-day/

Registration is open to any students middle-school age and older with at least one year of piano experience. The Registration Fee is \$50 and includes snacks, lunch, a raffle prize, two tickets to the concert, and a t-shirt.

Call for Nominations: 2026 LMTA Outstanding Teacher

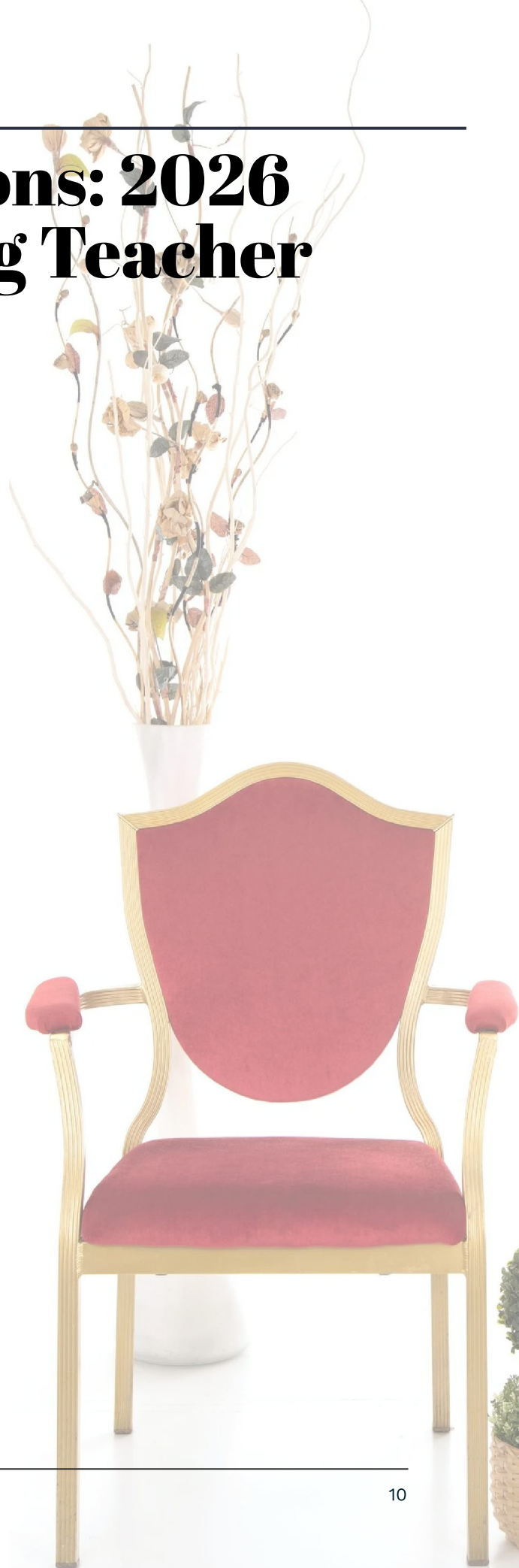
GUIDELINES FOR THE OUTSTANDING TEACHER AWARD

1. Any LMTA member or affiliate may make one nomination for the OUTSTANDING TEACHER AWARD. The nomination may be for an individual or a couple. The nominee(s) may teach any instrument.
2. Each nominee must be a member in good standing of LMTA, must have resided in the state of Louisiana for the past five years and must be currently teaching or recently retired. The nominee(s) need not be member(s) of an affiliate organization of LMTA.
3. The nominee(s) need not hold a university degree or be certified by LMTA. (However, see item 4C below.)
4. The nominating person or group must supply a maximum of four letters of recommendation. One must be from a student of the nominee(s), and one must be from a colleague. If more than four letters are submitted, only the first four received will be considered. Submissions may be made either by USPS or e-mail (preferably e-mail). Suggested areas for comment in the recommendations include:
 - a. Achievement of the students of the nominee(s) as shown by Rally, entrance in competitions, performance in studio and/or public recitals, Guild Auditions, LFMC events, etc.
 - b. Service to LMTA, the local affiliate, and the musical community.
 - c. Continuing education, such as working toward a degree or toward certification, attending or presenting workshops, etc.
 - d. Evidence of innovative teaching techniques. Writers of recommendations should be encouraged to be most thorough in their comments.
5. The person(s) nominated shall not be told of the nomination. If selected, the recipient(s) may be told of the award to ensure attendance at the October LMTA Convention banquet where the award will be announced.
6. The selection committee will consist of three former Outstanding Teacher Award recipients.

MATERIALS MUST BE RECEIVED BY FRIDAY, AUGUST 14, 2026

Send nominations to:

Charles Jones, Outstanding Teacher Chair
338 Bird Ave.
Natchitoches, LA 71457
cjones@lsmsa.edu





The S.O.S. (Save Our Students) Fund is one of the outreach programs of LMTA, serving our broader community in meaningful ways. This fund not only supports students whose families are facing financial hardship but who have a strong desire to learn music; it also assists teachers who need help rebuilding their studios after natural disasters.

On November 8, 2025, my piano studio hosted a fundraising recital for the LMTA S.O.S. Fund at St. James Nursing Home. The event was a great success, raising \$1,250 for the fund while sharing music with the residents and community.

I am also proud to recognize the efforts of the Lafayette Area Music Teachers Association (LAMTA). Eight local teachers collaborated to present student performances as part of their fundraising initiative. Their contributions included \$200 to the S.O.S. Fund, \$300 to the LMTA Teachers Fellowship, with the remaining funds designated to support LAMTA programs. This is a wonderful example of how music can be shared with the community and for the community.

My heartfelt thanks go to all the dedicated teachers for their generosity and commitment—especially to LAMTA President Zi Liang for her coordination and for sharing this information. I encourage fellow teachers to consider scheduling a performance-based fundraising event in their studio calendar this year to support the S.O.S. Fund. Together, we can continue to assist and uplift more students and teachers through the power of music.

Submitted by

Chia-Ling Lien, NCTM
SOS FUND CHAIRMAN
Louisiana Music Teachers Association



News from the Lafayette Area

The LAMTA Holiday Playathon was once again a heartwarming and successful community event, bringing together students, teachers, and music lovers at the Acadiana Center for the Arts in downtown Lafayette. With outstanding participation and joyful student performances, the event created a vibrant and welcoming atmosphere. The Playathon also raised money in support of the LMTA S.O.S. Fund, LMTA Teachers Enrichment Grant, and LAMTA programs, leaving a lasting positive impression and strengthening our shared commitment to music education. The teachers who attended and participated in this event were: Chee Hyeon Choi, Katherine Chung, Jennifer Horrigan, Nanette Leleux, Zi Liang, Chan Kiat Lim, Hannah Mayo, Lana Rhinehart, and Sue Turner.



LAMTA proudly presented its second annual concert celebrating and showcasing music by historically underrepresented Black composers. The program featured performances by LAMTA members Chee Hyeon Choi, Susanna Garcia, Nanette Leleux, Zi Liang, Hannah Mayo, and Sue Turner, along with distinguished faculty from the ULL Music Department. This meaningful and inspiring recital was warmly received by the community and generated strong positive feedback, highlighting LAMTA's ongoing commitment to diversity, excellence, and music education.



Respectfully submitted,

ZI LIANG, NCTM
LOCAL PRESIDENT
Lafayette Area Music Teachers Association

THE LAFAYETTE AREA MUSIC
TEACHERS ASSOCIATION PRESENTS

MASTERCLASS
WITH
DR. SUSANNA
GARCIA

9:00-10:30AM
SATURDAY, MARCH 7

*Choral Room, Room 153
Angelle Hall, ULL*



RICHARD GOULA
DISTINGUISHED
Piano Series

Venue

Ducrest-Gilfry Auditorium, Angelle Hall
University of Louisiana at Lafayette



ANGELA CHENG
Sunday **NOVEMBER 2**
2025
7:00 pm

"Consistently praised for her brilliant technique, tonal beauty, and superb musicianship, Canadian pianist Angela Cheng is one of her country's national treasures."

- The Cliburn



SPENCER MYER
Monday **MARCH 9**
2026
7:00 pm

"...Myer displaying intelligent musicianship and excellent keyboard command. He gives the impression of playing music, not the piano..."

- The Washington Post

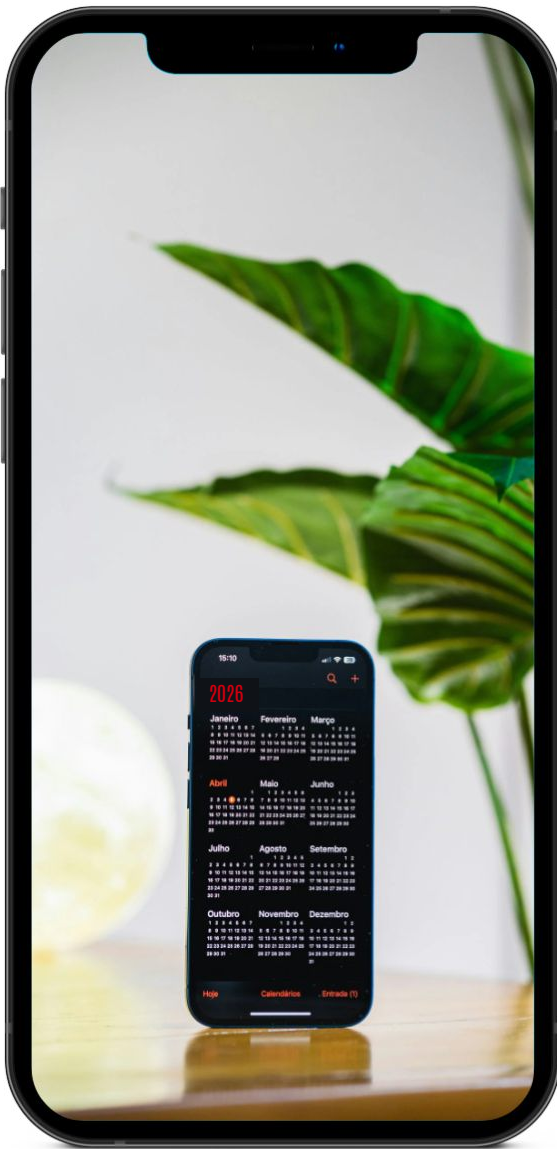


Free for ALL students,
and faculty/staff
with UL ID
\$20.00 for general public

Presented by
UL Lafayette School of Music
with the generous support of
The Thistlewood Foundation



Dates & Deadlines



Masterclass with Susanna Garcia (Hosted by LAMTA)

March 7, 2026. UL Lafayette - Angelle Hall Room 153

Richard Goula Concert Series presents Spencer Myer

March 9, 2026. UL Lafayette - Ducrest-Gilfry Auditorium

Piano Day and Piano Illusions

March 14, 2026. NSU - Natchitoches

Ursuline Academy Bach Contest (New Orleans)

March 21, 2026. Uptown campus, New Orleans

MTNA National Conference (Chicago)

March 21-25, 2026. Chicago, IL

Keyboard Olympics Test Dates

February 28 (AM), March 28 (AM)

Laissez les bon temp rouler!

