



TexASTA

**American String Teacher's Association
Texas Chapter • Spring 17**



President's Column

Dear Friends,

Welcome to the Spring 2017 edition of our TexASTA Newsletter! I hope that your school year has been productive and that contests and solo festivals have been useful and fulfilling.

Several exciting things have happened since we last visited. At the TMEA Convention in February TexASTA was featured in two meetings: On Thursday, our 2016 Young Solo Competition Junior Division Winner, Yong-ha Jung, was featured in performance at the TMEA Orchestra Division Business Meeting. Yong-ha is a student of Ronald Houston. On Saturday at our Annual TexASTA Business Meeting, the Solo Competition Senior Division Winner, Hao Miao, performed- he is a student of Julia Bushkova. In addition, Dr. Lynn Ledbetter (Texas State University) received the 2016 "Phyllis Young" Outstanding Studio Teacher award and Mr. Matty Saltibus (Northside ISD) received the 2016 "Marjorie Keller" Outstanding Young Teacher of the Year award. Dr. Ledbetter will guide the use of a \$500 stipend to enhance her studio teaching and Mr. Saltibus will present a clinic for TexASTA at the TODA Convention this summer.

Our brief Business Meeting at TODA will be held on Thursday, July 20th, at 4:00pm. Please plan join us to support the work of TexASTA and to hear Mr. Saltibus' clinic: *Concert Prep, UIL, Recruitment, Oh My!*

At the TexASTA Board Meeting the 2017 winners were selected and I am happy to announce that Dr. Susan Dubois (University of North Texas) has been named the "Phyllis Young" Outstanding Studio Teacher and Amanda Su (Allen ISD) has been named the 2017 "Marjorie Keller" Outstanding Young Teacher of the Year. Both of these outstanding teachers will receive their awards at the General Business meeting at TMEA in 2018.

The ASTA National Conference was held in Pittsburgh, PA this year with a number of Texas teachers presenting clinics and concerts:

- Michael Alexander – *The Status of Orchestra Programs in the United States*
- Stephanie Meyer – *Starting a Student ASTA Chapter*
- Martha Walvoord – *Release the Grip: Memorable and Effective Strategies for Teaching the Bow Hold*
- Tanner Ledford and Lacey Thwing – Klein Oak High School Orchestra
1st-Runner up - National Orchestra Festival

MARK YOUR CALENDARS: the ASTA National Conference 2018 will be held in Atlanta, GA March 7-10.

2018 TexASTA Officer Elections: In even-numbered years we are required by our charter to elect both a President-Elect and a Secretary for the TexASTA Board. If you are interested in running for the 2018 elections, please let me know; I would be happy to send you timelines and job descriptions.

Best wishes for a great close to your school year and for a restful and musical summer!

Michael Alexander,
TexASTA Chapter President

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Please feel free to make copies of the application and pass onto to other potential members.

TexASTA



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Next deadline is 9/1/17 for the Fall17 issue.

2018 ASTA Conference
March 7-10, 2018
Atlanta Gorgia
Check astastrings.org for more information

TODA 2017 Convention
July 20-22,2017
Henry B. Gonzalez Convention Center
San Antonio, Texas

TexASTA Business meeting / Session for new teachers.
Go to their website for more information:
<http://www.todaweb.org/convention-info>

Pre-Registration is now OPEN and will remain open through July 1st.
High School Student Day will be offered during convention
on Saturday, July 22nd.

Website Update

Greetings, TexASTA!

Please visit www.texasta.org for a new and improved website! At the website you will find a complete list of our current board members, information on upcoming ASTACAP events, Solo Competition news, and downloadable forms to nominate for the Phyllis Young and Marjorie Keller Awards. We are also working towards an archive of past TexASTA Newsletters. Please feel free to contact me with questions and ideas for the website or newsletter- our first aim is always to serve the membership.

Eliza Jeffords
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Congratulations to 2016 Phyllis Young Award Winner Lynn Ledbetter



Phyllis Young Award Winner, Lynn Ledbetter with Michael Alexander

Congratulations to 2016 Marjorie Keller Award Winner Matthew Saltibus



Marjorie Keller Award Winner, Matty Saltibus with Michael Alexander

What you can do TODAY!

By Matthew Saltibus, Northside ISD, San Antonio, Texas
2016 Marjorie Keller Award Winner

One of the most important music events of the year is the UIL Concert/Sight-Reading Evaluation. While this evaluation is significant, it may not always achieve the positive commentary from participants for whom it is intended. Many comments relate to the amount of stress on teachers and students: confusion about the division rating process, and the appropriate level or choice of musical pieces to name a few examples. The UIL event provides feedback about what teachers need to focus on to improve the musical performance of their students. Thus, the purpose of the UIL event is to use the judges' critiques as a tool to positively influence what and how you teach for future concerts/performances. To make the UIL Concert/Sight-Reading Evaluation a healthy experience for me, my students, and the parents, I have developed a simple chart that will help me focus on having better performances throughout the year.

To prepare for each concert, I refer to the chart below, which helps remind me of the most important elements in music performance and concert preparations. The first and most important tier level is "What you can do TODAY!" This foundational tier consists of issues that need to be addressed on a daily basis to improve student performance or foundational core; such as, tuning, scales, shadow bowing, finger placements, bow directions, posture, and vocabulary. Addressing these issues everyday will allow teachers to move to the next tier quickly for future concerts. Some issues may take longer to control than others so DO NOT WAIT! Focus now on having better prepared concerts throughout the year.

When I visit middle school performances throughout the year, it is obvious that what happens on stage is exactly what is happening in the classroom. While most of the performances are amazing demonstrations of effective techniques acquired in the classroom, there are always examples of performances that lack the acquisition of foundational skills; such as, cohesion, confidence, and sometimes the basic structure of a piece. If teachers can address any potential issues, such as improper posture or different bow directions, before they become a problem on stage, then their focus and attention will allow their students to have higher level performances.

One simple task that I use daily is the shadow bowing method. Since I already know the UIL event allows me to use this method in the sight-reading room, I want my students to fully understand how to use it and its relevancy to the performance/UIL Evaluation. When students begin shadow bowing, their basic understanding for its purpose is immediately effective. Students are not able to hear the notes, so they have to rely on the motion to help develop skills; such as, bow directions and finger placements. For example, during class, my focus may be on the lower strings for a couple of measures, at the same time, the violins and violas should be shadow bowing. This allows two things to happen in your classroom:

- (1) all students are focused on the task and cannot disrupt, which creates better classroom management, and
 - (2) the students who are shadow bowing can hear what is happening in the music without the teacher pointing it out, creating individual learning and connections between parts in the music.
- When preparing for the UIL event, shadow bowing is a great instructional tool!

For more information and more details on the What you can do TODAY! chart, attend the new teacher clinic held at the 2017 Texas Orchestra Directors Association (TODA) Convention on July 20th-22nd, in the Henry B. Gonzales Convention Center in Downtown San Antonio.

Confessions Of A String Teacher

by Dr. Lynn F. Ledbetter, Professor of Violin, Texas State University San Marcos, TX
2016 Phyllis Young Award Winner

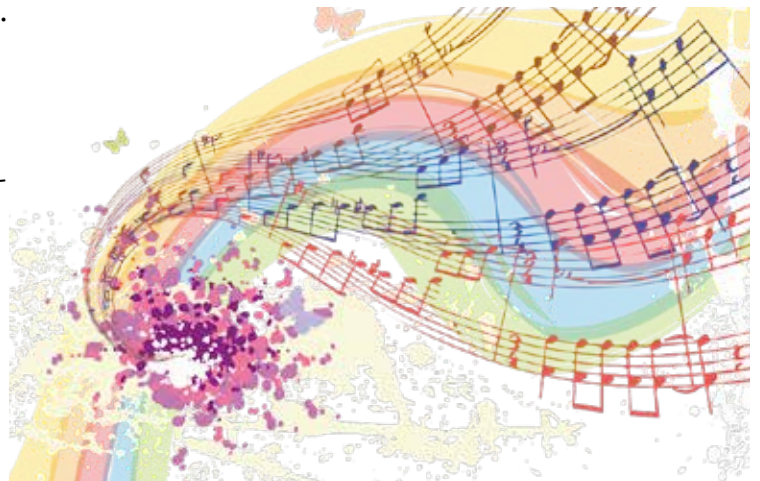
Okay, I confess that when I was given the TexASTA Phyllis Young Outstanding Studio Teacher Award for 2016 and then asked to write an article for this newsletter that has a readership of public and private string teachers at all levels, I stumbled around for awhile wondering what I could possibly say that would have value. After all, I am a studio teacher at a university where I mostly teach one-on-one lessons to college students who are majoring in performance or music education. Except for visiting public school string programs throughout the country and doing master classes or clinics or other presentations, what do I really have in common with public school string music educators?

Well, actually a lot. We all share our love of teaching and our dedication to the educational process, at whatever level and regardless of group or individual classes. Our individual and collective teaching experiences are what make us a very special group of people. We definitely work hard, and we certainly play hard. With all of that as a preamble, for this article I have chosen to talk about a pet topic of mine which I will address to string teachers of all kinds.

I am fond of telling my students several things, chief among them: Try to make fewer mistakes, smaller mistakes, and quicker adjustments. We certainly realize that playing a musical instrument, much like life, is fraught with potential mistakes. If we make a big mistake, it should be our goal to start fixing it by making the mistake smaller the next time, and then as undetectable as possible.

What we do as teachers is problem solve. Actually, what we attempt to teach is problem solving of the highest order...diagnosing what is not going well in a particular passage and how to fix the problem. And it is not just fixing the problem once; it is fixing it and making sure that the solution has stabilized and can be accessed any time and any place. If we do this, it will transfer itself to other situations. Again, like life, we make the best decision we can at the time with the information and resources available to us. Would we fix the problem differently at a time when we know more? Of course. That is the point. The more we know, the more we know we don't know! It is important to embrace what you know and what you still have to learn. This is true at any age. In fact, there is not a day that goes by that I don't learn something new, and that comes often from my students...some unique way of looking at a problem or some piece that has never crossed my path before.

So for string teachers everywhere, keep learning... continue looking for the best teaching strategy... keep choosing the best piece or technical study for a student. In other words, keep being the amazing professionals that you already are: showing up early, prepared for the tasks at hand, and always maintaining a positive attitude. To sum it up, all I really know is that I still have a lot to learn, and I certainly am looking forward to the challenge.



TEXASTA Young Artists Solo Competition

The Texas Division of American String Teachers Association holds the TexASTA Young Artists Solo Competition every two years. Entrants compete via anonymous recorded auditions and are adjudicated by an esteemed panel of professionals, university professors, and string educators. The competition consists of a junior and a senior division and is open to performers on violin, viola, cello, bass, harp, and guitar. Winners of the junior and senior divisions are awarded cash prizes and perform before professional music educators at the TMEA Convention clinic in San Antonio in February.

The competition, chaired by Dr. Eric Fried of the faculty of the School of Music at Texas Tech University, was graciously hosted by our own TexASTA president Dr. Michael Alexander at Baylor University. The string faculty of the Baylor School of Music served as our distinguished panel of judges, including Michael Alexander, Bruce Berg, Eka Gogichashvillii, Sandor Ostlund, and Kathryn Steely.



Solo Competition Junior Division
Winner, **Yong-Ha Jung**
with *Eric Fried*

This year's competition junior division winner is violist **Yong-Ha Jung** of Flower Mound. Beginning his violin studies at 8 years old, he has been studying under Ronald Houston for the past 8 years. During this time, he has participated in numerous different competitions, including the Vernell Gregg Young Artists Competition, where he earned 2nd Place in the Junior Division, he was also a finalist in the Juanita Miller Concerto Competition, a National finalist in the MTNA Competition, finalist in the Lynn Harrell Concerto competition, 2nd place in the Dallas Music Festival, and First Place in the Greater Dallas Youth Orchestra Concerto Competition. In addition, Yong-Ha placed 3rd as a freshman and 1st chair as a sophomore at TMEA All State. Not only is he a talented musician but also a well-rounded student, ranking among the top 10% of his class at Flower Mound High School.

the age of four. He later moved to Shanghai, where he studied in the Shanghai Music School under the auspices of the Shanghai Conservatory from 2001 to 2008

In 2008, Hao Miao moved to Kharkov, Ukraine to continue his studies at the Kharkov National University of Arts. He performed several solo recitals and played as soloist with Kharkov Youth Symphony Orchestra every year in Kharkov, Kiev and other several other cities in Ukraine. He won the Grand Prize at the "Zolotaya Lira" Competition and received a silver medal at the Kiev's "Twenty-first Century Art" Competition.

In August 2013, Hao Miao started his Artist Certificate studies at the University of North Texas under the tutelage of Julia Bushkova. He won 3rd Prize in Mid-Texas Symphony Orchestra Competition and performed his first solo recital in US in Denton, Texas in November.

In 2015 Hao Miao won the Concerto Competition at the UNT College of Music and performed with the UNT Symphony Orchestra. In 2016 he won 2nd prize in the Naftzger Young Artists Audition in Kansas.

Hao Miao is currently pursuing Master of Music degree as a student of Julia Bushkova.



Solo Competition Senior Division
Winner, **Hao Miao** with *Eric Fried*

Private Teacher's Corner

by Stephanie Meyers

It was fantastic to see many of you at the ASTA Conference in Pittsburgh! Once again the Sun City Chapter traveled to the conference from UTEP and came away invigorated with many new ideas. It is always a joy to see college age students at the conference. They are the future of ASTA and it is so important that those of us in Professorships take some of our students or our entire Student Chapter along with us! My colleague at UTEP, Stephen Nordstrom, presented with me on creative ideas for a successful student chapter. We had a good turnout and were happy with the support offered to us by our peers as well as many college-aged students! As usual, the conference offered a great variety of topics and ideas.

In our private teaching we must constantly seek out and implement new ideas to utilize. New ideas or strategies can come from observation of our peers in lessons, research on great pedagogues and their teaching approaches, and presentations by our peers at conferences and master classes, to name a few. Of course we have the World Wide Web at our fingertips - a phenomenal tool that can stimulate new ideas and approaches as well. Encourage your students to discuss information they find on the web related to teaching since not all of it is sound. If you are getting into a rut in your teaching and feel as though your approach could be more uplifting, take action and do something about it right away. New approaches and strategies are the key to turning the tides in a more positive direction.

Recently I had some great conversations with peers about the merits of the unexpected in the teaching studio. Instead of going through the same routine the same way at each lesson, consider mixing things up by changing the order of business (try not starting with scales, for example) or make a conscientious effort to link the etude a student is working on to repertoire being studied. This can be done by choosing an etude that utilizes up-bow staccato if your student is working on repertoire that calls for this bow-stroke. It is important that we are mindful as teachers of making concepts come "full circle" rather than leaving our student with a lot of floating ideas that do not correlate with a specific goal / mastery of a concept.

In addition, we should focus on listening to our students practice for about five minutes every three or four lessons. This is one of my favorite things to do as a teacher because it is so beneficial to the student. After hearing the way a student practices, you can discuss what worked, what did not, what to incorporate, and why. After all, our goal as teachers should be to give our students enough valuable information and strategies so that they can not only teach themselves but also teach others.

In closing, I also recommend asking your students questions. A good lesson is not necessarily one in which your student stays quiet the entire time. Ask your college-aged student questions, for example why they played something in a certain part of the bow or ask them to explain a concept like vibrato (define it and offer tools and exercises to learn it.) It is valuable for our students to practice explaining these things and thinking more in the practice room - asking themselves questions while practicing, for example - so that they are comfortable and successful when they are assigned to a teaching position, for those in college. It is never too early to understand and explain ideas associated with playing our instruments, so if your students are younger take very small steps toward this goal. I look forward to communicating with you and welcome your ideas and comments, as always.

-Stephanie
smeyers@utep.edu
915-747-7810

TexASTA “Marjorie Keller” Outstanding Young Music Educator Award

The 2000 TexASTA Executive Board established the TexASTA Marjorie Keller Young Teacher of the Year Award in memory of Marjorie Murray Keller. This annual award recognizes a young Texas music educator for meritorious service and outstanding promise in string education grades K-12.

Nominees for this award should epitomize every facet of excellence in string teaching in Texas. The TexASTA Executive Board will select the award recipient(s) from the nominations submitted. More than one nominee may receive this award in a given year. The award(s) will be presented at the TexASTA membership meeting during the annual TMEA Convention in San Antonio.

The requirements for entering a nominee:

- The nominator and/or the nominee must be a current member of TexASTA.
- The nominee must be actively teaching at the time of the award.
- The nominee must have completed a minimum of three years up to a maximum of seven years of teaching experience. (must be in 4th, 5th, 6th, or 7th year of teaching.)
- A candidate may receive the award only once.

If you wish to nominate more than one person, simply copy this page for additional nominations. You may nominate a teacher in a private studio and/or a teacher in a school setting.

Young Teacher of the Year Award Nomination

Nominee’s Name _____ School _____

Address _____ City _____

State _____ Zip Code _____ Phone _____ E-mail _____

Check the area(s) of teaching that applies to the nominee:

_____ Private Studio _____ School Teacher

Attach a short summary of the reason for the nomination. Specific criteria to address in your written summary may include, but not be limited to the following:

- *Evidence of teaching excellence
- *Quality of music-making
- *Evidence of program development
- *Impact on students
- *Evidence of professional growth and involvement

You are encouraged to submit an additional letter of recommendation(s) from another source.

Person Submitting Form:

Name _____ E-mail Address _____

Address _____ City _____

State _____ Zip Code _____ Phone _____

Mail form to: **Dr. Michael Alexander, Dept of Music /Baylor University**
One Bear Place #97048 • Waco TX 76798

Or mail electronically to: Michael_L_Alexander@baylor.edu

NOMINATIONS MUST BE POSTMARKED NO LATER THAN DECEMBER 15, 2017
Candidates will not be considered without all the necessary written documentation.

American String Teachers Association - Texas Chapter Phyllis Young Outstanding Studio Teacher of the Year Award

Begun in 2006, the TexASTA Outstanding Studio Teacher Award is given in recognition of excellence in and contribution to the area of private studio string teaching. Nominees for this award should epitomize every facet of excellence in string teaching in Texas. The TexASTA Executive Board will select one or more award recipient(s) from the nominations submitted .

The requirements for entering a nominee:

*The nominator and/or the nominee must be a current member of TexASTA .

*The nominee must be actively teaching at the time of the award.

*A candidate may receive the award only once.

Outstanding Studio Teacher of the Year Award Nomination

Name _____

Street Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Phone _____ Email Address _____

Attach a short summary of the reason for the nomination. Specific criteria to address in your written summary may include, but not be limited to the following:

- * Evidence of teaching excellence
- * Quality of music-making
- * Impact on students
- * Evidence of professional growth and involvement
- * Other contributions to the profession

You are encouraged to submit one or more additional letter of recommendation(s) from another source.

Person Submitting Form:

Name _____

Street Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Phone _____ Email Address _____

Mail form to: Dr. Michael Alexander

Department of Music

Baylor University

One Bear Place #97408

Waco TX 76798

Or mail electronically to: Michael_L_Alexander@baylor.edu

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Please complete all applicable fields on the registration form. If you have any questions, please contact Member Services. We look forward to welcoming you to the ASTA community.



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- Professional member
- Student member: full time undergraduate student
[Please provide expected Graduation Date (MM/YY)]
 _____ / _____
- Senior member: age 62 or older
- Dual: two professionals at same address
[Please complete two separate forms]

Contact Information

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- Dr. Prof. Other _____

What is your gender? Female Male Prefer not to answer

 FIRST NAME MIDDLE INITIAL LAST NAME

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Select a primary address where you will receive correspondence & if applicable, *AST Journal*. Home School/Work

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(Required for Professional & Student Members)

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 COUNTRY

Tell Us About You

(Required for professional/senior and dual members)

What is your primary profession?

- Higher Education
- K-12
- School (Multilevel)
- Private Studio
- Performer
- Conductor
- Retired
- Music Administrator
- String Enthusiast

How many years have you been teaching music? _____

What level do you teach? *(Select all that apply.)*

- Elementary [K-6]
- Middle [6-8]
- High School [9-12]
- Collegiate (Undergrad & Graduate)
- Adult

What primary instrument?

- Violin
- Viola
- Cello
- Double Bass
- Guitar
- Brass
- Percussion
- Harp
- Piano
- Woodwind

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