

ASMTA Board Meeting Minutes
Saturday, January 10, 2026 at 10:00 a.m. via Zoom

Dr. Mary Chung, President of ASMTA, presiding

Attendees: Sharon Ard, Leisa Arnett, Dr. Mary Chung, Dr. Lauren Schack Clark, Kristin Duckworth, Alline Fulton, Dr. Gjergji Gaqi, Dr. Naoki Hakutani, Shiloh Jones, Trudy Kincade, Dr. Marika Kyriakos, Treese Müller, Miroslava Panayotova, Linda Rogers, Dr. Chris Thompson, Mary Trotter, Dr. Paul Whitley, Xiting Yang

CALL TO ORDER

The ASMTA meeting began at 10:00 a.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes for the June 2025 Board Meeting were approved with the pending correction from Sharon Ard, which she will send via email.

Correction to the minutes from email:

- Statement on the affiliate grant needs to be changed to: SAMTA received an MTNA Local Affiliate Grant for 2025-2026.

III. Reports

President – Mary Chung

Dr. Chung has been visiting with various members and independent piano teachers. She is enthusiastic about the upcoming recital. The Leadership Meeting attended in September proved to be beneficial, especially in connecting with leaders from the same size states. Though our membership is small, it is made of valuable, talented people who are focused on service.

First Vice President – Naoki Hakutani

Arts Advocacy & Awareness – Naoki Hakutani

The ASMTA Conference is June 5-6, 2026. Guest artist, Alan Chow is from the Eastman School of Music and was formerly on the music faculty at the University of Arkansas – Fayetteville. Guest clinician, Dr. Carla Davis Cash is Professor of Piano Pedagogy at Texas Tech University. Call for presentations will go out this month to membership. There was an inquiry regarding hotels used for conferences in northwest Arkansas. That information will be forthcoming online.

Second Vice President – Xiting Yang (no report)

Treasurer – Kristin Duckworth (traveling, but provided report via email)

Regions Bank Account #XXXXXX5614

\$20,156.18

Deposits	\$3,000.00	Festival Profits
	\$2,382.00	Membership Dues
	\$1,595.00	MTNA State Competition Rebate
	\$718.94	2025 Conference Registrations
	\$125.00	Petty Cash Return
	\$100.00	State Festival Registrations
	\$75.00	Booklet Ad
Total Deposits	\$7,995.94	
Expenses	\$3,000.00	2025 MTNA Conference – guest artist and clinician
	\$2,200.91	Conference Meals
	\$1,001.30	MTNA State Competition Judges
	\$906.60	Conference Clinician Travel Expenses
	\$575.00	Piano Tuning for conference and festival
	\$376.25	ASMTA Festival Judges
	\$309.71	Conference Awards and Supplies
	\$240.28	ASMTA Directory
	\$151.63	MTNA State Competition Expenses (hospitality)
	\$23.19	Website – domain renewal
	\$15.60	Office Supplies (stamps)
Total Expenses	\$8,800.47	
	\$20,960.71	Balance as of June 6, 2025
	\$7,995.94	Deposits
	(\$8,800.47)	Expenses
	\$20,156.18	Balance as of January 10, 2026

Certificate of Deposit #XXXXXX6788, Regions Bank (renewed on 6/18/2024 for 18 months at 0.03%; previous rate was 0.03%)

\$0.00

\$15,665.80	Value as of June 6, 2025
\$1.18	Interest earned – June 18, 2025
\$1.07	Interest earned – September 9, 2025
\$15,668.05	Value at Closing on September 9, 2025
(\$15,668.05)	Transfer to CD # XXXXXX2881
\$0.00	Balance as of January 10, 2026 (CD has been closed)

Certificate of Deposit #XXXXXX2881, Regions Bank (renewed on 8/31/2025 for 8 months at 4.00%)

\$31,034.87

\$15,000.00	Value as of June 6, 2025
\$366.82	Interest Earned – August 30, 2025
\$15,668.05	Transfer from CD #XXXXXX6788

\$31,034.87 Balance as of January 10, 2026

Certification SAMTA – Sharon Ard
MTNA Foundation Fund – Sharon Ard
SAMTA – Sharon Ard

Certification:

Two members are working on MTNA certification through Teacher Profile Projects.

MTNA Foundation Fund:

Mark Smidt is being named a Foundation Fellow at the MTNA Gala during the MTNA National Conference in Chicago in March 23, 2026. There was a vote to host a table for \$350 at the MTNA Gala to help celebrate Smidt's accomplishments.

SAMTA:

South Arkansas Music Teachers Association is growing in membership. Dr. Marina Bengoa has planned several wonderful sessions for us. Specifics will be shared with links via email.

SAMTA will be represented at the mini- conference for virtual associations on January 16. This is being organized by Music Teachers Online in Arizona. It is in celebration of MTNA's 150th birthday. Sharon Ard will be part of a discussion panel regarding the virtual association. Dr. Marina Bengoa will do a presentation on Sevilla by Isaac Albeniz. Leila Viss is the guest presenter. Links have been sent to everyone regarding this free event. All are welcome.

February 13 SAMTA will have Susan Ogilvy as a guest presenter. Her presentation is being sponsored by an MTNA Local Association Affiliate Grant.

Collaborative Performance – Tomoko Kashiwagi (no report)
College Faculty Forum – Tomoko Kashiwagi (no report)

Composer Commissioning – Miroslava Panayotova

The trio written by commissioned composer, Dr. Mark Olivieri, is for trumpet, trombone and piano. It is 7 minutes in length and a beautiful work. Dr. Olivieri needs to figure out how to

process the payment. The instrumentalists are secured. Dr. Hakutani requested information for the conference program. The performance will be during the day of June 5.

Collegiate Chapters – Lauren Schack Clark

MTNA Competitions Chair – Lauren Schack Clark

MTNA Junior Competitions – Lauren Schack Clark

MTNA Senior Competitions – Lauren Schack Clark

MTNA Young Artist Competitions – Lauren Schack Clark

MTNA Chamber Music Competitions – Lauren Schack Clark

Chamber Music Co-Chair – Lauren Schack Clark

Collegiate Chapters:

Dr. Clark inquired with Naoki Hakutani and Xiting Yang regarding their collegiate chapters' activities. The A-State Chapter might submit a proposal for a presentation for the ASMTA Conference, but that will be confirmed after an upcoming studio class.

MTNA Arkansas Competitions:

Thanks to the following for their efforts and support:

- Gjergji Gaqi, chair of the Composition Competitions
- Christine Franklin, host at University of Central Arkansas (UCA) for the November competitions
- Dr. Oliver Jia, new faculty member at UCA, assistant
- Dr. Danlei Yang, faculty member from Southern Arkansas University, assistant

Adjudicators:

- Scott Carrell, piano
- Brent Bristow, Carlos Feller, and Barry McVinney, Young Artist Woodwind
- Kelly Johnson, Senior Woodwind

See *VI. Good things are happening...* for competition details.

Festivals – Lisa Miller (no report)

Independent Music Teachers Forum – Lisa Miller (no report)

Historian – Linda Rogers

Please send pictures and/or news of events. Comment on treasurer's report: we are in a great situation, and that hasn't always been the case.

Membership – Shiloh Jones

There are now 128 members. Usually by conference time, there are about 131. It was suggested that each member invite one person. People want to feel connected. Personal involvement is key.

January is a great time to invite people: perhaps connect with those who haven't renewed their memberships or ask people to an activity without joining first. Good opportunities exist in social media. Offering to bring someone personally to an event is also effective.

Question from Trudy Kincade: Is there a way to help college students transition to full membership? Lauren Schack Clark thought there may be a possibility of college graduates joining at half the cost for the first year. Mary Chung will investigate.

MTNA Composition Competitions – Gjergji Gaqi

Nothing to report other than the recipient of Honorable Mention, Senior Composition: Lydia Wendell, student of Treese Müller.

Wellness – Mary Trotter

A PDF will be sent via email to Mary Chung to share with the membership. Resources she discovered include wellness in being at the instrument and approaching the instrument. Beyond that, especially in January, being cautious that nutrition, sleep and body awareness are all connected, is very important. Berkley has a few videos that are worthwhile on this bigger picture of awareness for us as well as our students.

Webmaster – Paul Whitley & Alline Fulton Phillips

IV. Business

- Survey Result – everyone received the results via email.
- Recognition of members (20 years and 30 years) – would like to discuss how to go about this.
- Restructuring Board positions – this proposal will be sent again. Bylaws may need to change. It would be preferable to add social media and communication. Also, the names of some titles could change. It would be good to include local association members. Some states have them as non-voting members. Sharon clarified: All local presidents are members of the board.
- Updating Board member job descriptions – these could use clarification.
- Level 11: Region and State Festival
- Proposal to remove age limits and add additional Keyboard Skills requirements for Primary A and B – Sharon clarified: lower age limit on Primary A (no older than 7) and Primary B (no older than 8). Theory tests are written for Kindergarteners, but some cannot read. The Keyboard Skills should require more than what currently exists for these 2 levels.

Paul Whitley:

Paul Whitley reported that the fundraising is completed for the MTNA Foundation Fellow (Mark Smidt) to attend the MTNA Foundation Gala \$350. The deadline is February 2nd for the table reservation. Shiloh Jones moved and Trudy Kincade seconded the motion. All were in favor. Ten

people can sit at one table for \$350. Mark Smidt's family will be attending. Currently, the table has 5 people currently. Those attending need to pay \$150 in addition to the \$350 for the table.

The vote on new officers happens this year. All who are currently serving will continue except President, Mary Chung. The Second Vice President position needs to be filled. It would be good to have someone who is a private piano teacher to keep a good blend on the board.

Theory: Recently added Level 11, which is the top level. All levels now do have the theory component. Naoki Hakutani pointed out that there are no pieces listed for Level 11. Paul Whitley said they could choose from Levels 9 and 10 or just leave that to teacher discretion.

Mary Chung expressed the need to begin a discussion regarding Level 11 this semester so that all will be in place by the fall. For this semester, Paul Whitley and Mary Chung came up with a solution. Dr. Chung will send the information via email to the members.

V. Announcements

Congratulations again to Mark Smidt who has been named newest MTNA Fellow from Arkansas and will be honored at the MTNA National Conference Gala.

VI. Good things are happening from our Local Association and States

Region 1- Director: Laura Wilkins

At the monthly meeting this month, there will be a program on reading challenges and tools for success.

A wonderful Christmas party took place at one of the member's homes last month. In November, the *Sonatina Celebration* had 265 students participating!

The new year brings many members attending the MTNA conference in Chicago in celebration of Mark Smidt being presented as a Fellow.

The ASMTA Region 1 festival is in April and all are thrilled to host the State conference in Fayetteville in June!

Region 2 – Director: Lauren Schack Clark

Events for this year for Music Teachers Association of the Delta (MTAD):
(Location – Arkansas State University)

- J. D. Kelly Competition, November 15, 2025
- Sunday Sampler Recitals: October 26, 2025 (Halloween Theme) and February 8, 2026
- MTAD Teachers Recital: January 25, 2026, 5:00 pm
- ASMTA Region 2 Festival: April 11, 2026

State Competition Winners:

State Winner List				
Place	Name	Instrument	Teacher(s)	Accompanist
Arkansas Junior Performance Piano - 2 entries				
Winner	Yosef Tam	Piano	Naoki Hakutani	
Alternate	Ryan Li	Piano	Naoki Hakutani	
Arkansas Senior Composition - 1 entry				
Representative	Lydia Wendell		Treese Muller	
Arkansas Senior Performance Piano - 3 entries				
Winner	Thomas Sinclair	Piano	Naoki Hakutani	
Alternate	Casia Keiser	Piano	Wei-Han Su	
Honorable mention	Erik Larsen	Piano	Xiting Yang	
Arkansas Senior Performance Woodwind - 2 entries				
Winner	Arissa Cholthitchanta	Clarinet	Nophachai Cholthitchanta	Kristin Harwell
Alternate Competing	Gabriel Garnier	Saxophone	Sarah Hetrick	Not yet determined
Arkansas Young Artist Performance Piano - 3 entries				
Winner	Calista Maurer	Piano	Xiting Yang	
Alternate	Xusen Lei	Piano	Xiting Yang	
Honorable mention	Brody Bennett	Piano	Lisa Auten	
Arkansas Young Artist Performance Woodwind - 9 entries				
Winner	Jillian Russell	Flute	Cristina Ballatori	Dr. Tomoko Kashiwagi
Alternate	Tyler Trickey	Saxophone	Sarah Hetrick	TBD
Honorable mention	Shelby Kook	Saxophone	Sarah Hetrick	
	Charlie Tullis	Flute	Cristina Ballatori	Kristin Harwell

Also, the South Central Division Competition Results were just announced. **Congratulations** to these Arkansas students and teachers who received honors:

- Alternate, Junior Piano: Yosef Tam, student of Naoki Hakutani
- Alternate, Senior Piano: Thomas Sinclair, student of Naoki Hakutani
- Honorable Mention, Senior Composition: Lydia Wendell, student of Treese Müller
- Alternate, Senior Woodwind: Gabriel Garnier, student of Sarah Hetrick

VII. Adjournment

Linda Rogers moved to adjourn. Paul Whitley seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 11:08 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Marika Kyriakos, Secretary