



Letter from the President

One of our joys is to encourage youth to discover and develop their musical talents, and that's the focus of our April newsletter.

Some articles you'll find in this issue highlighting youth and music include: 2023 Piano Festival & Competition Honors Recital, Rising Stars Concert, Golden Girls Award Fund, Student Music Awards, and Spring House Benefit Concert (which funds our student music awards).

I recently stumbled upon an article by the Childrens Music Workshop on the topic of *music and the young mind*. It deals with the fundamental question: Why is music important for youth?

That's a interesting question for us, given our long history of support of music education in the community. Other than the joy of developing and showcasing youth talent, is there a stronger case to be made?

According to the article, recent university studies suggest that music literally boosts young brains. It stimulates academic achievement and leads to improved reading and math skills. Second graders who were given music lessons scored 27% higher in math than children who received no special instruction, according to University of California researchers. Other studies demonstrate that music and art enhance creativity and critical thinking skills.

Moreover, we see among young performers during our student recitals and concerts how music builds confidence and discipline – undeniable benefits that will help them throughout their lives.

Our heartfelt thanks to the many members, friends and generous supporters of DGMC who share our passion and have helped make transformative musical experiences for students in our community.

Tom Ewing
DGMC president

Spring House Benefit Concert

House concerts offer a intimate and inspiring environment for music lovers and musicians alike to share an unforgettable experience. Since our first house concert and benefit on November 17th of 2017, the Downers Grove Music Club has been using house concerts held biannually in the spring and fall as an efficient way to raise money for DGMC's student award funds. 100% of the proceeds from these benefit concerts go to funding the DGMC Rising Stars and College Music Awards.

Our Spring House Concert was held on Friday, March 17th and featured the artistry of (from top, left to right): Pierre Hanlet, piano; Carolyn May, flute; Jen Leckie, violin and Chris Garofalo, piano. Pierre is a high school



senior and recipient of DGMC Piano Competition Cash Awards in both 2022 and 2023.

The event again sold out to an appreciative audience of DGMC friends and members. To cap off a lovely evening, a wine reception was held after the concert.

We are very grateful to our wonderful artists who donated their time and talent, as well as our generous supporters – many of whom are regulars at these benefits. Thank you so much for truly making our student music awards program possible! 🎵



Pierre Hanlet in concert

Come to United Methodist Church, Naperville at 2pm on July 16th for a full program of classical music. Pierre Hanlet, one of the artists featured in the Spring Benefit Concert and 2nd place winner of the DGMC Piano Competition in 2022 & 2023, will be performing his senior recital before he embarks on his college journey. From Bach to Chopin and even some ragtime, the pieces capture both intensity and beauty. The recital is free of charge and open to everyone. Hope to see you there!

2023 Piano Festival & Competition Honors Recital

The music club sponsored its first Student Piano Festival and Competition in 1943 to challenge and encourage area student musicians. Over the years, the Festival and Competition has become a major event in the music community. This year's Honors Recital was held on Sunday, March 12, 2023 at First United Methodist Church in Downers Grove. **View the video performances and program on our website here <https://downersgrovemusicclub.org/2023HonorsRecital.html>.**

It has also been a tradition for top-ranked participants to perform at the annual honors recital. In 1965 a competition level was added to the Piano Festival to provide



Junior Competition	
Anna Polkowski	First Place, \$300 Award, Beatrice L. Chiswick Scholarship Fund
Yimo Wang	Second Place, \$150.00 Award, DGMC Music Award Fund
Bowen Gao	Third Place, \$75.00 Award, DGMC Music Award Fund
Senior Competition	
Micah Chan	First Place, \$600.00 Award, Rotary Club of Downers Grove
Pierre Hanlet	Second Place, \$250.00 Award, DGMC Music Award Fund
Callie Wu	Third Place, \$125.00 Award, DGMC Music Award Fund

cash awards. The past two years has also featured remote participants from as far away as Singapore via pre-recorded video.

Congratulations to all the students who participated for all your hard work, and to your teachers and parents for their strong encouragement and support! Also, many thanks to all the volunteers and judges who worked diligently to make this year's Piano Festival & Competition a success.

Finally, we deeply appreciate The Family of Beatrice

L. Chiswick and the Rotary Club of Downers Grove for again funding the Junior and Senior Competition First Place Awards. Students awarded cash prizes are listed above. 🎵

Rising Stars Concert

FEATURING 2022 MUSIC AWARDS RECIPIENTS

The 2023 Rising Stars Concert was held on Tuesday, April 4, 2023 at 7:00 pm at the First United Methodist Church of Downers Grove. It featured the 2022 DGMC Rising Star recipients, a first place 2023 DGMC Piano Competition winner,

one DGMC String Lesson Award winner, a string ensemble and a Downers Grove South High School jazz combo. See the figure and caption at right.

We were blown away by the amazing talent of these young performers, but don't take our word for it! **View the concert here: <https://downersgrovemusicclub.org/webconcert-2023RisingStarsConcert.html>.**



Rising Stars Concert performers

From top, left to right: Anna Polkowski, piano, 2023 Piano Festival 1st place junior competition winner; Andre Cheng, violin, 2022 Private Lesson Award recipient; The Herrick Chamber Strings, director Ms. Madelyn Fiene; Anny Koshy, violin, 2022 Rising Star Music Award recipient; Gavin Schnall, drum set, 2022 Rising Star Music Award Recipient (with DGS Jazz Combo); and Erika Andreshak, viola, 2022 Rising Star Music Award recipient.

The concert was opened by the Herrick Chamber Strings ensemble led by Ms. Madelyn Fiene. A poignant moment was the father and son duet featuring Gavin Schnall on drum with his father, Steve Schnall playing flute. Steve is a professional musician who has been successful as a solo artist and working with other luminaries and well-known bands in the Chicago music scene for over 25 years.

Congratulations to all the participating students – your performances were all truly amazing! 🎵

DGMC Season draws to a close in May

The DGMC is presenting its final program ***We're Bach!*** on Mother's Day: Sunday, May 14th at 2:00 pm at the Downers Grove Library. This concert features performances by Sejeong Jeong, piano; Micah Chan, piano; Emily Fallert, flute; Christina Schulte, soprano accompanied by Chris Garofalo, piano; Grace Lee, piano; a piano duet by Noelle and Louise Kelly and a piano duet by Charlotte Ewing and Chris Garofalo. See our tentative concert program on page 6 of this newsletter.

Finally, our last board meeting of the season will be held on Monday, May 22nd at 10:30 am via Zoom. Traditionally, this meeting is open to all members. If you are a member of the Downers Grove Music Club and interested in participating, please contact Tom Ewing. 🎵

Golden Girls Award

This spring, the Downers Grove Music Club was given a very generous donation of \$2000 to be used as a tribute to four ladies who shared their gift of music with those in their close-knit Downers Grove neighborhood. They called themselves the "Golden Girls" and, at their beautiful vintage piano, neighbors gathered for many joyous times.

Due to health issues, the Golden Girls were forced to move to an appropriate health care facility, leaving a void in their neighborhood and leaving their piano behind with their neighbors Tom and Letty Nolan. To honor these musical ladies and the joy they brought to their community, the Nolans have made a gift of three "Golden Girls" scholarship awards. These will be used to fund a \$1000 College Award and two \$500 Rising Stars Student Awards during this year.

The Downers Grove Music Club is profoundly appreciative to Tom and Letty Nolan for this generous gift in support of our student music awards program. 🎵

Student Music Awards

One of our great joys is to encourage and support youth musicians in our community. Each spring, DGMC presents a number of Rising Stars Awards and College Music Awards to deserving music students in their senior year at a District 99 high school who are planning to attend college in the fall following graduation. These monetary awards are given to students at each District 99 high school in the areas of Band, Choir and Orchestra. The recipients are selected based on the merit of their musical accomplishments.

The music award recognizes and rewards students who have worked hard and achieved a high level of accomplishment as a musician. This year's Rising Star and College Music Awards recipients have been chosen and will be announced at upcoming awards nights or concerts at the two District 99 high schools.

2023 DGMC Private Lesson Awards			
STUDENT NAME	INSTRUMENT	GRADE	CURRENT SCHOOL
Madeline Frankie	Violin	6 th	Highland Elementary
Sophia Lofgren	Violin	5 th	Lester Elementary
Mira Spector	Cello	5 th	Whittier Elementary
Maclean Birch	Cello	6 th	Fairmount Elementary
Sean Casey	Cello	5 th	Kingsley Elementary
Ethan Smith	Cello	5 th	Hillcrest Elementary
Katherine Susmarski	Violin	5 th	Fairmount Elementary

Support for these music awards generally comes from the benefit house concerts. This year, however, an extra \$1000 College Award and two \$500 Rising Stars Student Awards were generously supported from the Golden Girls Award Fund. Moreover, having this extra support allowed us to increase all Rising Stars awards from \$400 to \$500 this year. See the article on page 3 entitled "Golden Girls Award" For more information.

DGMC also presents Private Lesson Awards to 5th – 7th grade students enrolled in the Orchestra program in District 58,

which are generously funded by the Shelby Bulut Memorial Fund. Eight students have been selected this year to receive the Private Lesson Music Award. Only seven of the students who have already received their awards are shown in the table; the identity of the eighth award recipient will be announced at his or her school award ceremony in May.



From left to right: DGMC VP Charlotte Ewing; Sophia Lofgren, Lester Elementary 5th grader and Mira Spector, Whittier Elementary 5th grader. Sophia and Mira will pursue violin and cello private music lessons, respectively.

The award amount is approximately \$360 per student, to cover the typical cost of 12 private lessons. Many deserving 5th, 6th and 7th grade string students applied by submitting their written application to indicate their interest in pursuing private lessons. The award winners were selected based on their demonstration of hard work so far and their eagerness to challenge themselves going forward. The hope is that once these students have been introduced to private lessons, they will continue beyond the initial 12-week period to enjoy many years of music excellence.

Congratulations to all the talented students who won DGMC student music awards. 🎵

Election of officers for the 2023-2025 term

DGMC holds elections annually in the spring to fill open positions on the board of directors. Board members serve staggered, two-year terms so that close to half of the board members are elected each year.

As noted in the January newsletter, the positions open for election for the upcoming 2023-2025 term are president, VP business development, secretary and member-at-large. The nominating committee (Charlotte Ewing, chair, Janice Sleeter and Rich Penner) has proposed that the current officers in these positions be nominated for re-election.

Voting will be conducted via an electronic ballot provided to all members in May. The online ballot will provide an opportunity to either accept the Nominating Committee's recommended slate or write in a candidate of choice. The proposed DGMC board with slated nominees in blue is shown at right.

DGMC BOARD OF OFFICERS

President* – Tom Ewing
 VP Artistic Development – Charlotte Ewing
 VP Business Development* – Chris Garofalo
 Secretary* – Gloria Salazar
 Treasurer – Janis Sleeter
 Member-At-Large – Rich Penner
 Member-At-Large* – Angela Presutti Korbitz

*Slated candidates

We are very grateful for the members that serve on our board, and contribute significant amounts of their time, talent, and energy to advance the mission of the organization. 🎵

Spring Show 2023: West Towns Chorus & The British Invasion

West Town Chorus will entertain you with songs from The Beatles, Elton John, The Monkees, Queen & more!

Join us and celebrate the music you know and love from the craze that swept America!

West Towns will be joined by Take Two Singers, as well as several pop-up quartets.

When:

Saturday May 13, 2023 @ 3pm

Where:

Benet Academy Auditorium
 St. Daniel Hall, 2200 Maple Ave, Lisle,
 IL 60532

Tickets on sale NOW at

<https://tinyurl.com/WTCSpring2023>

EARLY BIRD TICKETS until May 1 –
 General Admission \$18, Student
 Admission \$10 (plus fee)

Tickets after May 1 – General
 Admission \$20, Student Admission
 \$12 (plus fee)

Performances will be interspersed with trivia questions for audience members. Prizes will be awarded for the most correct answers at the end of the show. 🎵



We're Bach!

Sunday, May 14, 2023 at 2:00 p.m.

Downers Grove Public Library, 1050 Curtiss Street, Downers Grove

PROGRAM

- Chromatic Fantasia in d minor, BWV 903** J. S. Bach
Sejeong Jeong, piano
- Sonata in c minor, Op. 13, No. 8 "Pathétique"** Ludwig van Beethoven
III. Rondo Allegro
Land of the Misty Giants Oscar Peterson
Micah Chan, piano
- Cantabile alla Moderna** Ernesto Kohler
Emily Fallert, flute
- Jazz Suite** Kevin Olson
I. A Swing Thing
II. A Little Latin
III. Ballad for Julia
IV. Blue Waltz
Noelle and Louise Kelly, piano duet
- Jewel Song from "Faust"** Charles Gounod
Quando me'n vo from "La Bohème" Giacomo Puccini
Er ist gekommen in Sturm und Regen Clara Schumann
Christina Schulte, soprano
Chris Garofalo, piano
- Folksong Revisited** Jean Ahn
I. Nil-lili
II. Song of Mongeumpo
III. Ongheya
Koeun Grace Lee, piano
- Divertimento** Leo Smit
I. Allegro ma non troppo
II. Lento
III. Allegro con fuoco
Charlotte Ewing and Chris Garofalo, piano duet

The concert is free, but reservations are highly recommended. You may register on the Events Page of the library website <http://dglibrary.org/events> or by calling the library at 630-960-1200.

MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS / EVENTS

Dan Moroz is a Chicago saxophonist, composer, and music educator. Dan's original music can be found on all major streaming services, including Spotify, iTunes, and Amazon. For more information about his performances or private instruction opportunities, visit <https://www.danmoroz.com/>.

Downers Grove Choral Society has been performing concerts in the western suburbs of Chicago since 1959. Please join DGCS for their next performance: Beethoven: Love and Strength United, Sunday, April 30, 2023 at 4 p.m. Pre-Concert Discussion at 3:15 p.m. First United Methodist Church, Downers Grove. Click here to purchase tickets: <https://dgcs.org/tickets/>. For more information about the Choral Society, visit www.dgcs.org.

Grant Street String Quartet: This quartet was formed in 2010 by four professional musicians in the western suburban area of Chicago. Upcoming events: May 11th: BEETHOVEN and SHOSTAKOVICH - Sounds of the South Loop and June 1st: JAZZ and STRINGS - Grant Street teams up with Jazz Pianist Ryan Cohan. To learn more, visit <http://www.grantstreetstringquartet.weebly.com>.

PianoForte Studios: Thomas Zoells, director and owner of the PianoForte Chicago piano store. Upcoming events in May: Makhtin/Siciliano Duo, May 4th at 7:30 pm - 9:00 pm; 시음 / si-úm / Jeeyoon Kim Piano Recital on May 9th at 7:30 pm - 9:00 pm; The Orion Ensemble, May 17th at 7:30 pm - 9:00 pm; and Chenxing Huang / Piano Recital, May 28th at 7:00 pm - 8:30 pm. For more information, call (312) 291-0000 or visit <https://pianofortechicago.com/concerts-events/>. PianoForte Studios, 1335 S. Michigan Ave., Chicago.

West Towns Chorus: Chartered in 1948, the group is one of the premier men's a cappella choruses in the Chicago area. More information is available at www.westtowns.org. See also information on their upcoming event on the previous page of this newsletter.

Sinfonietta Bel Canto: with Dan Pasquale D'Andrea, Artistic Director/Conductor. New venue: Ruggiero Leoncavallo's Pagliacci, Saturday, May 20th at 7 pm and Sunday, May 21st at 3 pm. For more information and tickets, please visit www.SinfoniettaBelCanto.org or call 630-384-5007.

Joyce Tumea: Here's a musical opportunity to support Ukraine by performing or sharing with others one or both of two songs written by Joyce and former DG Choral Society Director Bob Holst : "[Peace in Ukraine](#)" and "Noble Ukraine." Contact Joyce for the free music, JoyTumea@sbcglobal.net or call 630-621-5416.

Solaris Concert Season: Nicolette Cheauré is the founder and director of the new Solaris Concert Series that is housed at Divine Savior Catholic Church in Downers Grove. Solaris will feature solo and chamber music from students and performers who either live in the immediate Western-Chicago suburbs or music majors who study at schools in the Chicago area. The initial concerts have been excellent and have featured a few of our past DGMC High School Music Award winners – all who are pursuing music degrees or careers. Please be sure to check their Facebook page @SolarisConcertSeries to get the latest information about this exciting new group. 🎵