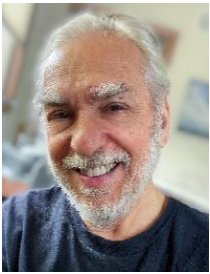


A note from the outgoing President



The DGMC was founded in 1927, which means we are 2 years shy of being 100 years old! As my presidency has come to an end, the honor for presiding over the club on our 100th anniversary will fall to our incoming president Gloria Salazar.

It's interesting to think about all that has happened during the span of our existence as a club. In 1927, Calvin Coolidge was president. Model T Fords were on the road everywhere. And the venerable Victrola portable record player, with a hand crank, was replaced with a new model: the first automatic record changer. This undoubtedly accelerated America's move from live to recorded music. And, that year DGMC was also formed.

The technology to play recorded music has certainly changed over the years – many now get their music through earbuds and a smartphone – but DGMC's passion for live music performances hasn't wavered.

For nearly a century now, we've been supporting the music arts development in our local community. Our passion is to connect people to live music that showcases talented local artists through free public concerts, with partner Downers Grove Public Library. We also make investments that promote music arts development in our schools and community, such as the beautiful grand piano that we donated to the Library.

Last but not least, is our passion for developing the next generation of musicians, through our student music education programs that encourage, challenge, and provide support to music students in our local schools. I want to personally thank our many DGMC members, friends and

generous supporters who share our passion for student music education. We know from conversations with students, their parents and music teachers that the DGMC youth music education programs are highly prized by students for both the encouragement and recognition they provide. We are pleased to feature in this issue the highlights of the 2025 Piano Festival & Competition Honors Recital, the Rising Stars Concert, plus the announcement of the 2025 Student Music Awards.

I encourage you to tell your friends about our free concerts at the Downers Grove Public Library, and encourage them to check us out online at <https://downersgrovemusicclub.org>, where they can learn more about us, watch video performances of past concerts and see our schedule of upcoming concerts.

On a personal note, many of you know I lost my wife, Charlotte Ewing, to cancer earlier this year. Charlotte was a gifted pianist who was deeply involved in this music club for as long as I can remember. For many years, she was VP of Artistic Development on the DGMC board in charge of developing public concerts; and she also frequently performed at our public venues.

I wanted to personally thank everyone for the huge outpouring of support to our family following our loss. It really meant so much to us. I am also very grateful that many donations have been made to a memorial fund established in Charlotte's honor (see page 4). I know she would have been very pleased leaving this legacy as a meaningful way to ensure her passion for music and commitment to the music club live on.... 🎵



Spring House Benefit Concert

PERFORMED SATURDAY, MARCH 15, 2025 AT 7PM



Inspired by classic salon gatherings, *House Concerts* offer a uniquely intimate atmosphere and foster a deeper connection between the audience and performers than at a public event. Plus, our benefit house concert are for a great cause – 100% of proceeds support our annual Rising Star and College Music Student Awards we give to talented, local high school musicians!

This concert featured the artistry of Olga Saad, soprano, Mary Ann Covone, accordion,

Chris Garofalo, piano, and 2024 Rising Star recipient Kevin Hernandez, cello. The music was exceptional, beautifully showcasing the remarkable talent of our local artists.

To conclude the enchanting evening, guests enjoyed a delightful wine and dessert reception following the concert.

We are very grateful to our amazing 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! 🎵

2025 Piano Honors Recital

Since its inception in 1943, our Piano Festival and Competition has evolved into one of the community's most prestigious and celebrated events. The Honors Recital, which features the top-performing piano students from our 2025 Piano Festival & Competition, was held this year on Sunday, March 9, 2025 at the Downers Grove Public Library.

Congratulations to all the students selected to perform in the Honors Recital — your dedication and achievement are truly commendable. ([Click here for the list of performers.](#)) A heartfelt thank you as well to the teachers and parents whose guidance and support helped make this possible. Also, our deepest gratitude to the volunteers and judges whose tireless efforts made this



year's event such 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

Continued next page...

Competition Awards. Students awarded cash prizes are shown below. 🎵

Junior Competition Winners	
Isabelle Wu	1 st Place, \$300 Award, Beatrice L. Chiswick Scholarship Fund
Nova Weng	2 nd Place, \$150.00 Award, DGMC Music Award Fund
Christopher Nakamura	3 rd Place, \$75.00 Award, DGMC Music Award Fund
Senior Competition Winners	
Emily Hu	1 st Place, \$700.00 Award, Rotary Club of Downers Grove
Max Zheng	2 nd Place, \$300.00 Award, Rotary Club of Downers Grove

See hundreds of photos and view the video of the Piano Honors Recital at:

<https://downersgrovemusicclub.org/2025HonorsRecital.html>

Rising Stars Concert

FEATURING THE 2024 MUSIC AWARD RECIPIENTS & 2025 PIANO COMPETITION WINNERS

The annual Rising Stars Concert was held on Tuesday, 7:00 pm, April 8, 2025, at the Downers Grove Public Library. This event showcases the talent of previous year's DGMC student award winners and this year's Piano Festival Competition winners. It is also our tradition to highlight area student ensembles at the event. This year, the Cadenza String Octet performed at the concert.

Performances were given by: Al Zoerb, percussion, 2024 DG Music Club Rising Star Music Award Recipient; Isabelle Wu, piano, 2025 DG Music Club Piano Festival First Place Junior Competition; Rachel Reynolds, violin, 2024 DG Music Club Private Lesson Award Recipient (accompanist Connie Lyda, piano); Gabriella Hsu, cello, 2024 DG Music Club Rising Star Music Award Recipient (accompanist Maggie Chen, piano); Varun Ganesh, percussion, 2024 DG Music Club Rising Star Music Award Recipient; Gabriel Deaton, voice, 2024 DG Music Club Rising Star Music Award Recipient (accompanist Valerie Lorimer, piano); Emily Hu, piano, 2025 DG Music Club Piano Festival First Place Senior Competition; Gretchen Haselhorst, french horn, 2024 DG Music Club Rising Star Music Award Recipient (accompanist Andy Davis, piano); and Kevin Hernandez, cello, 2024 DG Music Club Rising Star Music Award Recipient (accompanist Belford Hernandez, piano).



Performing for the Cadenza String Octet were: Neha Higa (violin), Sophia Pelayo (violin), Lena Baker (violin), Eleanor Shifley (violin), Erika Andreshak (viola), Eli Herbert Dojoles (viola), Kevin Hernandez (cello), Matthew Lin (cello) and Daniel Andreshak (cello).

See photos from the event here:

<https://downersgrovemusicclub.org/images/PhotoArchives/20250408/index.html>.

The the program with performer bios is here:

<https://downersgrovemusicclub.org/pdfs/Rising Stars Program 202025.pdf>.

Congratulations to all the participating students – you were amazing! 🎵

Charlotte Ewing Memorial Fund



Charlotte Ewing, who died from cancer earlier this year, was a long-time member of the Downers Grove Music Club. She was instrumental in so many aspects of DGMC, as the VP of Artistic Development in charge of developing public concerts for many years, as a performer at Sunday concerts, and as an accompanist. She maintained her passion for music throughout her life. Her husband Tom was the President of the Downers Grove Music Club for the past four years.

One of her family's wishes was that donations from Charlotte's friends and family be made to DGMC, which will be used to establish a Memorial Fund to support the mission of the music club. If you wish to make a donation in honor of Charlotte, use the donate link on our website: <https://downersgrovemusicclub.org/donate.html> and note that it is a memorial gift for Charlotte on the form. 🎵

Election of DGMC officers for the 2025-2027 term

Board members serve staggered, two-year terms so that approximately half of the board members are elected each year. The positions open for election for the 2025-2027 term were President, VP Business Development, Secretary and Member-At-Large. Our DGMC board for the 2025-26 season is shown at right, with new board members in bold.

Voting was conducted over the first 2 weeks of May via an electronic ballot sent to all DGMC members in good standing.

Members had the option to either accept the nominating committee's slate or write in a candidate of their choice. The slate was elected unanimously by DGMC members.

Gloria Salazar, who previously had the position of secretary, is our new president (replacing Tom Ewing, who served two consecutive 2-year terms), and Chris Garofalo returns as VP Business Development. We are also delighted to have three new board members: Molin Wang, newly elected Secretary; Nicolette Cheauré, newly elected Member-At-Large (replacing Angela Korbitz); and Chris Tang, who was appointed VP Artistic Development by the president, Tom Ewing, to fill the unexpired term vacated by Charlotte Ewing. The VP Artistic Development position will then be open for election in 2026.

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DGMC BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President – Gloria Salazar*

VP Artistic Development – Chris Tang**

VP Business Development* – Chris Garofalo

Secretary* – Molin Wang

Treasurer – Maureen Breaux

Member-At-Large – Rich Penner

Member-At-Large* – Nicolette Cheauré

*Newly elected

**Appointed to fill remaining 2024-26 term

We deeply appreciate our continuing and departing board members. Their dedication, expertise, and tireless support have played a vital role in the progress of our music club. We are also honored to welcome our talented new board members and deeply appreciate their willingness to serve and help shape our future. 🎵

DGMC 2024-25 SEASON CLOSES WITH

Spring Interlude Concert

Our final concert of the 2024-25 season featured a variety of wonderful, celebratory music to get everyone ready for summer. It was performed on Sunday, May 4, 2025, at 2 pm at the DG Library before a large and appreciative audience.

It featured DGMC Artists: Robert Gordon, oboe; Angela Presutti Korbitz, soprano; Chris Garofalo, piano; Michael Aponte, guitar & voice; and Dan Moroz, saxophone.

We are incredibly grateful to these talented musicians who donated their time and artistry to make the afternoon event unforgettable.

Photos from the event are available here: <https://downersgrovemusicclub.org/images/PhotoArchives/20250504/index.html>.

The concert program is available here: https://downersgrovemusicclub.org/pdfs/DGMC_Program_May04-2025.pdf.

Thank you all for attending our public concerts. Your presence and energy make these performances meaningful. We hope the music moved you as much as your support moves us. 🎵



2025 Student Music Awards

Each spring, DGMC is pleased to present several 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.

Four Rising Stars and two College Music Awards were announced and presented to the recipients at



Kevin Hernandez, DGS, shown receiving a College Music Award.

school awards night or music ensemble events that are held at the two District 99 high schools.

DGMC also awards Private Lesson Awards to 5th-7th grade students enrolled in the District 58 Orchestra program. The award amount is approximately \$360 per award recipient, to cover the typical cost of 12 private lessons. They are generously funded by the Shelby Bulut Memorial Fund. Students apply for this award by submitting a written application. Award winners are selected based on their demonstration of hard work so far and their eagerness to challenge themselves going forward.

Eight students were selected this year. Our hope is that once these students have been introduced to private lessons, they will continue beyond the initial 12-week period and enjoy many years of music excellence.

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Rising Stars Awards (\$500 each)

Johanna Adjokatcher, Sophomore (band, flute) – Downers Grove North High School
 Alyssa Rawson, Junior (orchestra, viola) – Downers Grove North High School
 Liliana Ruiz, Freshman (band, flute) – Downers Grove North High School
 Claudia Meek, Freshman (orchestra, violin) – Downers Grove South High School

College Music Awards (\$1000 each)

Kevin Hernandez, Senior (cello) – Downers Grove South High School
 Caleb McCloud, Senior (violin) – Downers Grove North High School

Elementary and Middle School Private Lesson Awards

Graylend Starks (Bass) – 6th grade – Whittier
 Vyapti Thakkar (Violin) – 5th grade – Hillcrest
 Colette Wills (Cello) – 5th grade – Highland
 Mia Swiercz (Cello) – 7th grade – O'Neill
 Mara Sickler (Viola) – 5th grade – Fairmount
 Greta Hirthe (Bass) – 5th grade – Hillcrest
 Landon Miller (Cello) – 6th grade – Kingsley
 Shannon Mitchell (Violin) – 7th grade – O'Neill

This year's Rising Star and College Music Awards recipients, and the Private Lesson Award winners are listed at left.

Congratulations to all our talented students who received DGMC student music awards in 2025.

May each step in your musical journey bring new opportunities and unforgettable experiences. We look forward to learning where your talent and dedication take you next. 🎵



From left to right, Graylend Starks and Colette Wills receive private lesson awards.

Join/renew/donate

Except for our fundraiser music events, our programs are open to the public and free of charge. As part of our commitment to music education, DGMC holds an annual Piano Festival & Competition to encourage and challenge students. DGMC also awards music scholarships to deserving students each year, plus makes investments in our schools and community that foster musical arts development.

We can't accomplish our mission without you.

All our support comes from annual membership dues and generous donations. When you support DGMC, you're putting a violin into young hands, you're filling public spaces with live music, you're inspiring the next generation, and more!

For further information about joining and the benefits of membership please visit our website at downersgrovemusicclub.org/member.html or contact us at memberdir@downersgrovemusicclub.org.

Thanks for helping us keep music free, alive, and accessible!

Member Organization & 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. 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. To learn more, visit <http://www.grantstreetstringquartet.weebly.com>.

PianoForte Studios: Thomas Zoells, director, and owner of the PianoForte Chicago piano store. 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. For more information, please visit www.SinfoniettaBelCanto.org or call 630-384-5007.

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. Be sure to check their Facebook page @SolarisConcertSeries to get the latest info. 🎵

We're on summer break...

Our concert series has concluded for the season. Stay tuned for information about our 2025-2026 concert season, which opens this September.

In the meantime, be sure to explore photos and videos from our past event by browsing <https://downersgrovemusicclub.org/#ourevents>.