

What An Amazing Three Years It's Been!



President's Message:

Dear DAMTA, This edition of Lyrics, May 2024, I present you with my final President's Message. Can you believe three years have passed? I sure can't. It feels like the blink of an eye, yet as I have been composing this message, I'm in awe of the work we have accomplished together. Our local association has not only earned 2022 Local Association of the Year, but we were nationally recognized for our work twice in the American Music Teachers (AMT) Magazine, and I had the honor to present a session at the MTNA Conference about DAMTA's DEI work. As we conclude this chapter of our work together, I share heartfelt congratulations and appreciation to our board members, members, students & families, supporters & community, for your loyalty to our association.



DAMTA is awarded CSMTA's 2022 Local Association of the Year

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DAMTA Board Members 2022-23

Ben Raznick	President
Joshua Zabatta	Vice President (Programs)
David House	Vice President (Newsletter)
Annette Karges	Vice President (Membership)
Dr. Thomas White	Vice President (Student Musicales)
(Vacant)	Vice President (Diversity, Equity & Inclusion)
Chandrika Prem	Secretary
Carolyn Angelier	Treasurer
Kristin Jordheim	Parliamentarian
Nazila Nekoorad	Historian
Vince Madison	Past President

Submissions

- DAMTA issues the Lyrics Newsletter monthly from September through May, with a double edition in December/ January.
- Submit all flyers, announcements, or news items as an email attachment to David House, at davidhouse1@comcast.net no later than the 20th of each month. Please give emails the heading "Lyrics Submission".

Passalongs

DAMTA's closed Google group for members:

- Notices in addition to official DAMTA business.
- Announcements and passalong emails that may be of interest to DAMTA members.
- News of workshops, competitions, special sales, instruments for sale privately, auditions, concerts, recitals, etc.

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I often reflect on how I first learned about our association. About 8 years ago I moved to a new neighborhood and opened my piano studio. I decided to make a post on NextDoor to share the news. A friendly lady named Kristin Jordheim contacted me, offering to meet me for coffee to share about ... "DAMTA". My journey of becoming a piano teacher and running my own studio was a bit off the beaten path, so this brilliant network of independent music teachers was not on my radar. However, growing up in Boulder, I participated with my childhood piano teacher, Judy Lambert, in events like "Multiple Piano Festival" where up to a dozen pianos and 24 students play onstage together at the same time. Apparently, this was the workings of... BAMTA (Boulder Area)! So, this network of teachers wasn't so foreign to me after all. Sure enough, a short time later I joined DAMTA as a member and from that moment forward, I never looked back. I found a warm and nurturing home in this organization that provided me access to a wealth of esteemed educators and performers, student activities and events, and a support system I leaned on heavily.

Having previously worked in public education and educational nonprofits, I felt I'd be a good fit to join the Board of Directors. (Also, then President Vince Madison nudged me enough times!) Once elected as Vice President of Newsletter, I had a great time collecting information from our membership to publish in our Lyrics newsletter. I also prided myself on developing a new template. I transitioned our newsletter from black and white text to include colors, photos and our DAMTA logo. When it was time for Vince Madison to step down from his presidency, I felt ready to continue serving by running for the President role, and I am so glad I did. DAMTA not only has been wonderful to me as

an educator, but also supportive in my growth in leadership. Our association has been encouraging as I developed leadership skills, and as our association spearheaded important work such as our commitment to Diversity, Equity & Inclusion.

I'm so proud of our association's achievements during my 6 year tenure on our board Here are some of the highlights:

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DEI)

It was an honor to work with our bylaws committee to draft amendments and elect our first VP of DEI in October 2020. DAMTA is proud to be the first association in our entire MTNA network to develop this VP position, providing guidance and support in the development of MTNA and CSMTA's same role. I was so appreciative to give a session at the 2024 MTNA Conference in Atlanta titled "Grassroots DEI: How Local Associations Can Be a Force For Change". My presentation highlighted DAMTA's journey towards DEI work and how we have intended to implement



Ben presents about DAMTA's DEI work at the 2024 MTNA convention in Atlanta.

leadership work through a DEI lens. I received such special feedback from Dr. William

Chapman Nyaho, MTNA VP of DEI: "This is so impressive, it's just brilliant... incredible, methodical. [DAMTA has] been able to create something that is quite universal." This praise is proof that our hard work is paying off. I am elated that this work will continue forward as we welcome to our board our newly elected VP of DEI, Jerome Síbulo. Welcome, Jerome!

Student Musicales

In February 2021, our association developed our student musicale into a celebration for Black History Month. Four years later, working with our VP of Musicales Dr. Thomas White, our event blossomed in beautiful and unforeseen ways. We welcomed Dr. Leah Claiborne for our 4th Annual Musicale Celebrating Black History Month and were honored that she attended our recital as students performed works from her newly published series, *Piano Music of Black Composers*. We were thrilled to collaborate with Lamont School of Music Piano Preparatory Program to develop this special event. Our recital took place in Hamilton Hall at Denver University's Newman Center on a Steinway & Sons grand piano. DAMTA was the proud recipient of the Community Engagement Grant by Music Teachers National Association (MTNA), the Local Association Grant by Colorado State Music Teachers Association (CSMTA) and event sponsorship by Friends of Chamber Music. We were humbled that in our recital's fourth year, we grew our participation from 8 students of 4 teachers in 2021, to 28 students of 16 teachers in 2024! Our total funds raised for this event achieved \$1,600! Enjoy watching the replay of our event at damta.org or on [YouTube](https://www.youtube.com).

What's more exciting? We feel so inspired and want to continue the momentum! We are

already planning an exciting follow up event next year to celebrate Latin American music with a sheet music series compiled by Dr. Desireé González-Miller that will be published by Hal Leonard this summer. Please stay tuned!



Our February Student Musicale was an enormous success!

Programs

In these past few years, our VPs of Programs Marilyn Madsen and Joshua Zabatta worked to think outside the box for our professional development sessions, chairing our Programs Committee to develop our Fall Course themes such as "Meet Your Neighbors: Conversations with Local Artists", "Nurturing the Well-Rounded Musician" and "The Power



Joshua Zabatta with presenters Nazila Nekoerad and Fernanda Nieto

of Music: World Music & Its Influence on Social Justice Movements". We also worked to develop a new procedure for collecting information from our presenters, facilitating the creation of our marketing. As you have seen, Joshua is creating beautiful brochures and booking well in advance. Thinking back to one of my favorite memories, I will always remember when Marilyn and I took a field trip to DAMTA's Denver Public Library archives to shuffle through 3 boxes of information. We discovered that we had been offering a Fall Course for over 40 years, and began to proudly market this in our brochure.



Marilyn and Ben at the Denver Public Library Archives

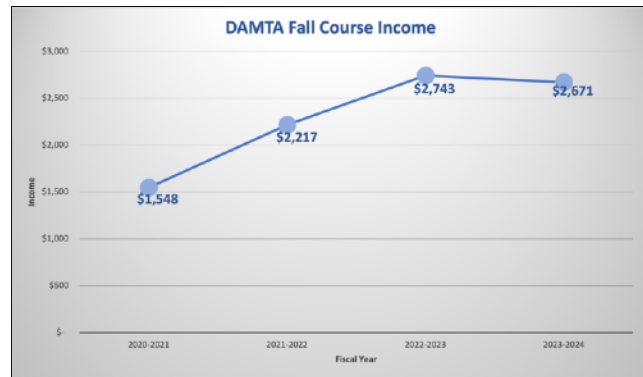
Finances

I have had the great privilege to work with our Treasurer, Carolyn Angelier. Carolyn digitized our finances and helped us analyze our income vs expenses and improve our cash flow. Carolyn has taught me invaluable lessons in finance, and perhaps the most important: If we would like to add a new expense line for spending in our budget, how do we expect to raise that money in our income? These conversations inspired by Carolyn have often

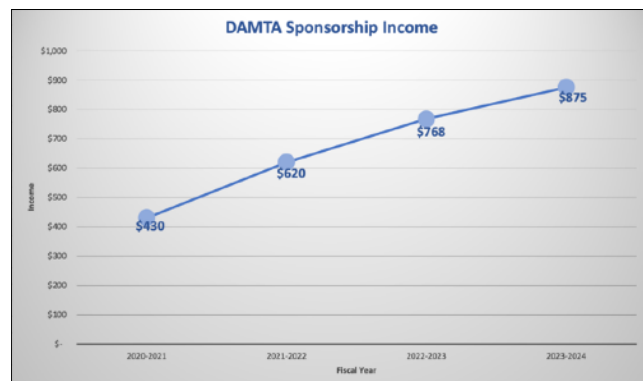
our creative ideas to become economically sound.

Carolyn and I developed the charts below to represent the great successes we've had in the past 3 years:

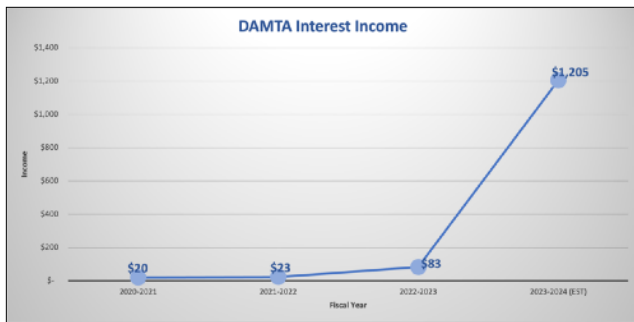
- We've seen a steady increase in our Fall Course income due to excellent speakers, our hybrid model and marketing.



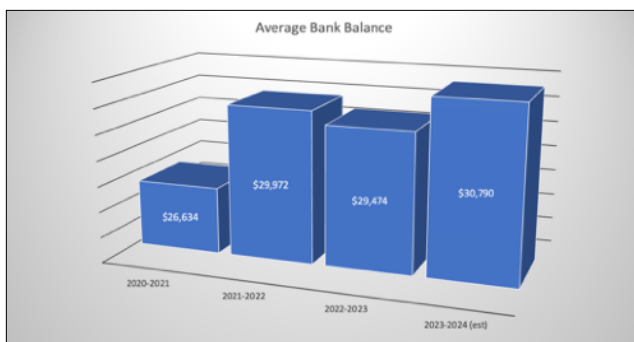
- We are proud to have steadily increased our sponsorship and continue to seek new partnerships.



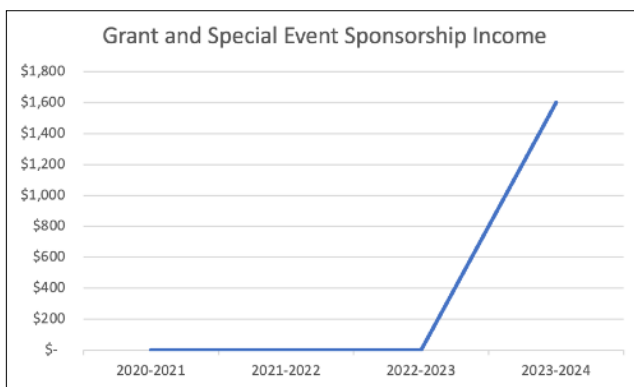
- DAMTA has a large savings due to a donated piano and then sold. We have approximately \$20,000 in our savings. This past year we began to invest these savings into a high-yield CD (Certificate of deposit - I know us music lovers are not accustomed to a CD as a banking term!) We are celebrating that this year, our interest is gaining DAMTA over \$1,200 annually!



- Our average bank account balance has increased steadily each year, even with our new technology investments.



- For the first year in recent years, DAMTA was awarded \$1,600 of additional funds in a combination of grants and event sponsorship. We are inspired to seek out more grants to facilitate our great work.



Technology

I am so proud of DAMTA's work with technology. We developed a Technology

Committee that researched and purchased equipment for DAMTA's successful hybrid model. Additionally, our website is updated to represent our current work at DAMTA and we have buzzing social media accounts on Instagram & Facebook. Thank you, David House, Kristin Jordheim, Annette Karges, Shana Kirk, Vince Madison and Joshua Zabatta.

Membership

In these past few years, I've enjoyed working with our membership VPs to brainstorm opportunities to increase our membership engagement. I'm so excited that next year you can expect fun membership mixers and opportunities to simply spend time together! This VP role also works hard to organize our DAMTA scholarship and sponsorship. Both are running so successfully and continue to increase in interest. Thank you, Evelyn Billberg, Sonya Clark and Annette Karges.

Secretary

I have loved witnessing the evolution of our secretary work. Chandrika has now developed email templates for all of our meeting agendas and keeps our minutes in one place. There is so much organizational work that happens behind the scenes, and often we may miss this because things run so effortlessly. I can confirm, none of this is possible without our secretary role. Thank you, Nazila Nekoora and Chandrika Prem.

Newsletter

Last but not least... Our Lyrics newsletter is

soaring! That is because our editor, David House, goes above and beyond for every single edition. In his three years as VP of Newsletter, David developed our monthly bulletin into a thoughtful artistic vision with a design aesthetic, editor's messages, member contributions, and his infamous cultural collages of musicians to celebrate diversity awareness.

I'm elated that David will now step into our President role! I remember the first time I had the opportunity to visit David's home, and was impressed by his walls (yes, walls) of CDs. As I



David with Augie (left) and Hugo in front of part of his impressive CD library.



Thank you to our DAMTA photographer, Lan Vo!

have reflected on this, I have learned that David's passion for listening not only applies to his music collection, but also to how he works with his colleagues. In fact, the first thing he did as President-Elect was to schedule a meeting with each VP to learn about their role. I am so impressed with how David has embraced this leadership transition. DAMTA you are in wonderful hands! David will be a fantastic President as a dedicated, witty and compassionate leader. I couldn't be happier with this transition and am so grateful David accepted the nominating committee's recommendation to run. Congratulations, David!

Elected to fill our VP of newsletter role is Nichole Young, welcome to our board, Nichole!

I would like to also thank everyone who I've called on for support these past years. Whether it be our Past Presidents and board members for their institutional knowledge and advice, my husband Shawn and my family, or any colleague or friend who has guided me in challenging times, I'm so very appreciate for your advice.

Thank you for a beautiful presidency, DAMTA. It's been truly an honor and I'm so thrilled for what's to come with our association!◆

Sincerely,

Ben Raznick

Ben Raznick
DAMTA President