

# Student Chapter Newsletter

Fall 2011

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## **Message from the Chair:**

Hello, Future String Teachers!

My name is Joanne May, and I am the orchestra conductor and chair of the string department at Elmhurst College in Elmhurst, Illinois. As ASTA Student Chapter Committee chair, I am pleased to be able to collect, organize, and share with you some of the activities and photos sent to me by chapters around the nation. I hope you will enjoy reading these submissions, and perhaps you will find a great idea that you can adapt for your own chapter!

There will be two sessions dedicated to student chapter members at the **National Conference next March, 2012 in Atlanta, Georgia**; one for all student chapter members where awards will be presented and ideas will be brought for discussion, and a second session just for the leadership of each chapter to meet and begin developing an action plan to accomplish the goals of the student chapter members. Please plan to attend ASTA national for these and many, many other sessions – you won't want to miss the great presentations, learning experiences, and networking opportunities!

Nominations are now being taken for the **ASTA Student Chapter Awards**. The deadline is **Friday, Nov. 18, 2011** for **Outstanding Student Chapter, Most Improved Student Chapter**, and for a new award, the **Student Exemplary Service Award**. You will find the application forms in this newsletter. If you are committed to the goals of the American String Teachers Association and are successfully impacting students' lives, we want you to be recognized. Please take a few minutes to fill out an application and submit it so you may be recognized for your great work at the national conference in Atlanta!

Sincerely,  
Joanne May  
Asst. Professor, Elmhurst College, Elmhurst, IL  
[mayj@elmhurst.edu](mailto:mayj@elmhurst.edu)



### **Student Exemplary Service Award:**

The ASTA Student Exemplary Service Award is a program designed to recognize and reward college string students who distinguish themselves as active members and supporters of ASTA while in college. In order to be eligible for the award, a student must complete each of the following activities:

#### **ASTA Membership**

- Be an active member of ASTA for four years while enrolled in college.
- Have at least one year of demonstrated leadership within that university's student ASTA chapter. Examples of demonstrated leadership include such things as being a chapter officer or chairing a committee within the student ASTA chapter.
- Attend at a least one National ASTA Conference as a college student.

#### **Participation**

- Attend at least 75% of the string related activities (i.e., concerts, masterclasses, workshops, etc.) at your university.

#### **Assistance**

- Provide some form of assistance to your university's string program at least four times. Examples of such assistance can include such things as performing in string ensembles beyond the minimum requirements, volunteering to help at a recruiting event, helping to maintain the orchestra library, contributing to the string department's web page, etc.

#### **Outreach**

- Participate in an outreach program at least four times at a local school program. Outreach programs can include such things as performing or presenting on a string-related topic for school children, helping a school string program to recruit new students, or helping with a solo & ensemble day.

#### **Service to the State ASTA Chapter**

- Directly assist the State ASTA Chapter at least once. Direct assistance can include contributing to the state chapter's newsletter or web page or helping to run a state ASTA event.

Upon completion of the above tasks, the student must fill out the Student Exemplary Service Award form, including obtaining any necessary signatures or documentation, and submit it to [asta@astaweb.com](mailto:asta@astaweb.com). Successful applicants will be awarded a certificate at the National Conference and will be listed in the AST Journal. For complete details and to receive the nomination form, click [here](#). Deadline for nominations is **November 18, 2011**. Applications must be postmarked no later than that date.

### **Student Chapter Awards:**

Please remember to nominate your Student Chapter for Outstanding Student Chapter or Most Improved Student Chapter. These awards are your chance to shine and get wonderful recognition for your school and all the hard work done all year. All active student chapters are eligible to apply for one of these awards. The application can be found by clicking [here](#). The deadline for the nominations has been extended to November 18, 2011—so please send in your nominations!

### **Plan on joining us at the 2012 ASTA National Conference in Atlanta, Georgia:**

Join us for another exciting Annual Conference! This year we are thrilled to be back in Atlanta, Georgia for our 2012 Conference. Over 180 sessions will be offered at the conference including: Chamber Music Sessions, Classroom Teacher Sessions, Studio Sessions, Alternative Styles Sessions, and many more. We have a wide variety of exhibitors and student performances throughout the event. Eric Booth will give the keynote address. Eric is a teaching artist, an acclaimed actor, author, businessman, and arts advocate. There

will be evening performances by the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra, the National High School Honors Orchestra, and Barrage. Every day of the conference will prove to be an adventure in string music and education! For more detailed information, please visit our website at [www.astaweb.com](http://www.astaweb.com) under the Conference section. DON'T FORGET: student chapter awards will be handed out at the Conference—be sure to nominate by November 18 for the Student Awards!

### **Stretch and Enhance Your Musicality--The Eclectic Strings Festival**

The ESF, including the new competition and comment element, is filled with boundless opportunities to stretch and enhance your musical abilities. Students and individuals will reap the benefits of the new format that will add the spirit of competition along with concrete written comments to take home and study. As an added bonus, competitive groups and individuals will compete for the Grand Prize- a chance to serve as the opening act for the internationally renowned [Barrage](#) during the Saturday evening concert on March 24th.

**Groups and individuals must apply by December 15th.** Don't miss this opportunity to participate in a competitive atmosphere or work on eclectic strings techniques with renowned adjudicators and clinicians. Our ESF package includes the following:

- **PARTICIPATE** competitive or comments track with informative feedback!
- **EXCLUSIVE** clinics with Adjudicators and members of Barrage!
- **EXPLORE** other exciting sessions as part of the National Conference!
- **VISIT** the ASTA strings-only exhibit hall and experience instruments and products in a hands-on environment!
- **JOIN** on stage the hip young cast of Barrage for one of their songs during the Saturday evening concert!

Check out [www.astaweb.com/eclectic](http://www.astaweb.com/eclectic) for more information. For questions contact, please contact Libby at [libby@astaweb.com](mailto:libby@astaweb.com).

### **Don't Wait Register Today:**

The registration brochure for the 2012 ASTA National Conference is now available on the ASTA website in PDF format. The online registration process is also up and running so there is no reason not to register early and save money! Click [here](#) for a registration form and to view the brochure. The brochure offers complete lists of sessions, pre-conference workshop, performances and more. Our interactive website shows you sessions with full description, presenters and is organized by category or by date and time of presentation. Click [here](#) to login and register online. See you in Atlanta, Georgia! **Register early for the Early-Bird Discount Rate (by December 15, 2011).**

### **Chapter News:**

**James Madison University  
(Harrisonburg, Virginia)**

James Madison University ASTA Joins the Allegheny Mountain String Project!

On October 8, 2011, members of the James Madison University Chapter of the American String Teachers Association caravanned from Harrisonburg to Hot Springs for a day of collaborative artistry with the Allegheny Mountain String Project. The Project, "led by veteran teachers Jamie Letourneau and Gretta Sandberg" was created to bring "comprehensive string instrument education to the Alleghany Highlands" ([garthnewel.org](http://garthnewel.org): "Allegheny Mountain String Project"). We, the members of JMU ASTA, had no idea that we were in for such a treat.

The entire experience was a busy day full of laughs and smiles. We began by conducting a sample rehearsal in front of the kids, during which our small JMU chamber ensemble played American folk songs. The idea was to give these young string players the unique opportunity to have an interactive musical experience so that by being active audience members they became a part of the performance process. The rest of the day was spent in rehearsals, sectionals, and private lessons. We ended with a master class, which was for some of the Allegheny students, their first solo performance. JMU ASTA is so thankful to all the willing participants in the weekend experience, especially Gretta Sandberg who inspired JMU ASTA's President, Anna Kobylski, to follow in her educational footsteps.

After all the musical learning was said and done, the only question the kids had for us at the end of the day was "When are you coming back?!" (David Musick, age 9).

*by Anna Kobylski, JMU ASTA President*



## **Western Michigan University (Kalamazoo, Michigan)**

### **OUR MISSION:**

*"To further prepare music educators for future endeavors in string teaching through participation in community outreach programs."*

### **Activities**

- Send out college students as clinicians to coach sectionals at local schools
- Brainstorm creative answers to everyday teaching scenarios and dilemmas
- Skunk orchestra- Exposes undergraduate music education majors to a beginning orchestra situation where they are active in the lesson, both as a student and as an instructor.
- WMU String Day

### **Fundraising Events**

- Noodles & Company
- Mongolian barbeque
- Orchestra T- Shirts

## **Elmhurst College (Elmhurst, Illinois)**

Last Spring, two members of the Elmhurst College ASTA chapter submitted proposals for clinics at the national conference. John Vizintos offered a workshop on how to maintain interest in music at the college level, something quite relevant at Elmhurst College, as we have so many non-music majors in our ensembles. After taking a string techniques course, Allison Chambers saw many potential problems with string playing

at young ages. Her proposal, titled "Ouch! My instrument is too big!" focuses on fitting instruments to the growing string player. It is our hope to raise enough money for the whole chapter to make the trip to Atlanta this year.

Our chapter is now hard at work recruiting new members. Our faculty adviser, Professor Joanne May, has played a large role in laying the groundwork for our organization. This will be our second year working for the Illinois ASTA Teacher Enrichment Workshop at York High School. We are looking forward to another year of passion for strings!

### **Lawrence University (Appleton, Wisconsin)**

The Lawrence University ASTA chapter has a busy year in the works. Although it is only our second year of existence, we have a good sized group of active members. We are trying to find a good balance of outreach activities in the surrounding communities as well as hosting a number of guest speakers from diverse backgrounds.

Through Professor Janet Anthony, Lawrence already has a strong connection with summer music camps in Haiti. Our chapter is doing its part to support these camps. A few of our members have taught at them in past summers. We are organizing a collection of used strings in our conservatory that we will send to Haiti for them to use on their instruments. We will also have a booth at the upcoming "Alternative Giving Fair" that will raise money for these camps. People from the community come and buy "gifts" that they give to people during the holidays. Instead of receiving a physical gift, they get a notification that a new bow has been purchased for a student in Haiti, or something else like that. It's a good activity that Lawrence puts on every year and we are excited to be a part of it for such a good cause.

Other plans include organizing a weekend chamber music workshop for local high school students before they head to Solo and Ensemble festivals. Our chapter members are going to coach these groups and then we will end our day with a performance. We are also planning on having another large contingency at the ASTA conference in Atlanta in March. Another community activity we are hoping to put together is a relationship with Denmark Middle School. They currently don't have a strings program, but the current band teacher is hoping to start one soon. Our chapter wants to travel to the school on a weekend afternoon and hold a general strings open-house, where students can try all of the instruments, learn a little about each, and hear them play a variety of music. This will be a great experience for the students, as well as our members, because recruiting is an important part of being a studio or classroom teacher.

### **Illinois State University (Normal, Illinois)**

The Illinois State University ASTA student chapter is having a busy and productive fall. On October 29th they will host the 2nd annual Halloween Tune-or-Treat in Cook Hall. This historic music building, which looks remarkably like a castle, will be decorated for Halloween and children will be invited to knock on the studio doors to learn about different instruments. A bake sale will be held in conjunction with the event.

On November 7th ISU ASTA is hosting its first String Music Education Day. This is a great opportunity for high school students to learn more about studying music education at ISU. Students will be invited to meet with and work with ISU faculty and participate in a String Project class in addition to attending various music classes with current students.

In early October ISU ASTA invited Chicago-area based violin and viola teacher Rhona Reagen to give a talk

on setting up a private studio. Other enrichment activities are planned for the spring, including a clinic with Dr. Robert Jesselson on January 29th. For more information on ISU ASTA events, please contact chapter president Abbi Cash at ISUASTAchapter@gmail.com

*by Dr. Katherine Lewis, ISU ASTA faculty advisor*



Here's a great Picture from the Tune or Treat Event!

### **University of Texas at El Paso (El Paso, Texas)**

Sun-City ASTA Student Chapter at the University of Texas at El Paso held its 2nd annual All-Region clinic. This clinic was held on Saturday, September 24, 2011 at the Fox Fine Arts music building of the university. It was a free clinic open to all middle and high school students planning to audition for the TMEA Region 22 auditions. Our guest clinicians included our wonderful faculty members, Dr. Mark Schuppener on violin, Erick Unsworth on Bass, a local cellist and ASTA enthusiast, Michael Way, and TEXASTA's own-Dr. Stephanie Meyers on viola. This event was an absolute success. We were able to reach out to the community and provide professional instruction to students who may not have the resources to obtain this kind of assistance on their own. It was a wonderful opportunity for all students involved. They got to see the university, as well as professors and students in action. The students received instruction on their etudes and then the members of Sun-City ASTA held mock auditions to help them get a feel for the audition process. This was also a learning experience for the Sun-City members. We were able to see our professors instruct a group of students and enlighten them on a musical level. We all loved seeing the joyful, and grateful faces of the students. This has definitely become a tradition in the community. Parents and students are already excited for next year's clinic. We plan on continuing with this clinic and hope to add others throughout the year to help with various local competitions.

I attached a folder with pictures from the clinic and a group picture of the chapter at the nation conference in Kansas City, MO with Dr. Meyers at her lecture.

*by Leslee Herrer, Secretary*





### **Michigan State University, College of Music (East Lansing, Michigan)**

The MSU College of Music ASTA section is looking forward to many out-reach and fundraising events this year. This semester we are planning on selling “MSU, College of Music, STRINGS” t-shirts, having a bake sale, selling homemade pancakes and the return of the enchilada sale. We are hoping to raise enough money to help send students to the ASTA conference.

Many out-reach activities are being planned. Currently, ASTA members from MSU will be leading sectionals at MSBOA’s annual Alternative Styles Day this year on Nov. 12, going back to Cornerstone Elementary to participate in their “Strings Day”, and helping many of the local public school string teachers in our area during and after school. We are very excited about the events planned for this year!

### **Focus on a New Chapter: Western Kentucky University (Bowling Green, Kentucky)**

Establishing a Student ASTA Chapter at Western Kentucky University

What a wonderful feeling to see a group of students come together for a common cause! That is what I have experienced thus far in establishing a Student ASTA Chapter at Western Kentucky University. WKU is a mid-sized university with about 21,000 students located in Bowling Green, Kentucky. Our String Department at WKU has been growing exponentially over the past 8 years. An ASTA chapter is the type of unifying organization that our String Department needs. I have truly been amazed at the positive benefits that have already begun in this chapter in these first few months.

For the last, Dr. Bill Scott (formerly of Spartanburg High School in Spartanburg, South Carolina) and I have wanted to form a Student ASTA Chapter at WKU. It was not until this year that we got our act together and saw the true potential for a unique organization in our Music Department. I was fortunate enough to attend the 2011 ASTA National Conference in Kansas City. At the conference, there was a wonderful session about starting a student chapter. It was at this session that I gleaned valuable information to bring back to WKU to start an ASTA Student Chapter. At the beginning of this school year, I organized an information meeting

(which included pizza!) for students to come learn about ASTA. Throughout the meeting I was truly surprised at how many string students wanted to be involved this first year - totaling 10. I loved hearing a variety of wonderful ideas, as well as each student's willingness to give of their time. Over the past few weeks, I have had other students (other vocal and instrumental majors) who also expressed an interest in joining our chapter.

The focus of the WKU chapter is service. String education in the Bowling Green/Warren County area is exploding! There are more opportunities than ever before for us to assist local string teachers and volunteer with The Symphony at WKU. So far this semester, members of our Student ASTA Chapter have volunteered over 75 hours taking concert posters to local businesses, assisting public school string teachers and volunteering to prepare for our annual WKU String Invitational. Members have signed up to volunteer weekly at various public schools in our area. We are so excited about the impact we are making in our community through service.

Current events and projects that we are planning for this year are under way! We are hosting a workshop in professionalism which will be presented by the WKU Artist String Faculty. This workshop will address various aspects that are important in the professional world - things that are not necessarily taught in our required courses. We are also organizing a chapter recital to help raise funds. This will be the second year that our symphony will host a Student Concerto Competition and Concert. Our chapter will be responsible for publicity which will involve posters, programs, as well as TV and radio interviews. Dr. Bill Scott, our Chapter Advisor and Orchestra Director, will earmark all the proceeds to our ASTA chapter. With the funds that we hope to raise, it is our plan to establish four Pre-College Strings Scholarships for the 2012-2013 school year.

*By: Susan Abell Houghton; WKU Orchestra Graduate Assistant*

### **ASTA Benefits**

As part of our continuing goal to provide you with the best possible member benefits, ASTA is proud to be in a partnership with Forrest T. Jones & Company, Inc. (FTJ) - a leading group insurance administrator. You can find out more about FTJ by visiting their website [here](#).

Insurance Offerings Include:

Educators Professional Liability Insurance

Life Insurance

GEICO Car Insurance

Health Insurance Plans and more!

Please be sure to look into the benefits and take advantage of these great opportunities and rates! We continue to offer excellent instrument insurance coverage through Merz-Huber Company (MH) at a discounted rate exclusively for ASTA members. You can read more about MH insurance click [here](#).

### **Check out ASTA's New Website!**

Here at ASTA we are always trying to improve our website. This summer, our website went through a makeover that we hope you will find user friendly and helpful. Take a few minutes to review the website by visiting us at [www.astaweb.com](http://www.astaweb.com) to find out more about all the happenings within your association. There are lots of member resources listed on the site and helpful information about upcoming events and the National Conference. There's even a special section for student chapters with all the forms and information for updates you need for your student chapter. ASTA is just a click away!

## **ASTA Contact Information**

ASTA National Office  
4155 Chain Bridge Road  
Fairfax, VA 22030

Phone: 703-279-2113

Fax: 703-279-2114

Internet: [www.astaweb.com](http://www.astaweb.com)

Email: [asta@astaweb.com](mailto:asta@astaweb.com)

ASTA Student Chapters Committee

Joanne May, Chair: [mayj@elmhurst.edu](mailto:mayj@elmhurst.edu)

Benjamin Whitcomb, Board Liaison

Alex Meza, Student Representative

ASTA Student Chapter News is published twice annually, during the fall and spring. Please direct questions and/or comments about this publication to Joanne May, ASTA Student Chapter Committee Chair, at [mayj@elmhurst.edu](mailto:mayj@elmhurst.edu).



## ASTA Student Chapter Awards Application 2011-2012

The American String Teachers Association (ASTA) is pleased to announce that applications are being accepted for the annual Student Chapter Awards. This year, there will be two awards: **Most Improved Student Chapter** and **Outstanding Student Chapter**. All active student chapters are eligible to apply for one of these prestigious awards.

The presentation of the Student Chapter Awards will occur at the ASTA National Conference in Atlanta, Georgia, March 21–24, 2011. Winners will receive a commemorative plaque, and their photo will be published in the *American String Teacher* journal.

These awards are presented to two student chapters that are actively involved in promoting strings at their college/university and in the surrounding community. If you would like your chapter to be considered for an award, please complete this application and return it to the national office no later than **Friday, November 18, 2011**.

Please choose the award for which you are applying:

- Most Improved Student Chapter
- Outstanding Student Chapter

### Chapter Information

School/Chapter Name:

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Chapter President:

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Number of Active Members:

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Chapter Advisor:

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Address:

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City:

State:

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Zip Code:

Phone:

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Chapter President Email Address:

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Chapter Advisor Email Address:

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1. List three (3) activities your chapter has sponsored during the past two years, and tell us what impact these events have had on your school or community (*attach an additional page if necessary*):

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**ASTA**  
***Student Exemplary Service Award***  
***Application 2011-2012***

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- Have at least one year of demonstrated leadership within that university's student ASTA chapter.  
Examples of demonstrated leadership include such things as being a chapter officer or chairing a committee within the student ASTA chapter.
- Attend at a least one National ASTA Conference as a college student.

**Participation**

- Attend at least 75% of the string related activities (i.e., concerts, masterclasses, workshops, etc.) at your university.

**Assistance**

- Provide some form of assistance to your university's string program at least four times. Examples of such assistance can include such things as performing in string ensembles beyond the minimum requirements, volunteering to help at a recruiting event, helping to maintain the orchestra library, contributing to the string department's web page, etc.

**Outreach**

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