

## Tempo National Newsletter February 2026

### Text Only Version

#### United In Music: SAI Convention Webinars

We are excited to share an upcoming opportunity to reconnect, learn, and be inspired together through *United in Music: The Home Tour*. Beginning in February, we will be bringing select convention workshops directly to you through a series of engaging webinars designed for members across generations and regions.

Please note that space is limited for each session, so early registration is encouraged. Additional information can be found on the national website, and we ask that you please share these opportunities with your chapter members.

#### *The Advantages of Many Generations: SAI's Working in Harmony*

February 15th at 4pm ET

Registration Link: <https://bit.ly/3ZvjAIG>

#### *Empowering Women in Music*

April 19 at 7PM ET

Registration Link: <https://bit.ly/3O6a6Bh>

#### *Ladies First: A Perspective on Women in Hip-Hop*

May 16th at 2pm ET

Registration Link: <https://bit.ly/4aCYKNM>

## **SAIs Working in Harmony: The Advantages of Many Generations**

The best thing about alumnae chapter membership is getting to know members from many generations... and sometimes, this is also the hardest thing about alumnae chapters. Some of our chapters are fortunate enough to have members in their early 20s and also in their 90s; you may meet alumnae members, in the same chapter, from five generations. And that's the thing about generations, to quote the band Smash Mouth: "the years start coming, and they don't stop coming."

To illustrate the differences, here's a quick intro to each generation along with their typical preferred media.

- **Gen Z (1995-2009)** members live on their phones because it's always been that way; there's an app for everything and connectivity is vital.
- **Millennials (1980-1994)** grew up with cell phones, so texting and social media is very comfortable.
- **Gen X (1965-1979)** learned on Apple II computers and were early adopters of email.
- **Baby Boomers (1946-1964)** had party lines and telephones, and they often prefer a phone call or face-to-face meeting.
- **The Greatest Generation (1925-1945)** grew up during the Great Depression and World War II, and may not be as comfortable with technology, preferring face-to-face meetings and printed written communication.

With such a diverse mix of generations, chapters are constantly being asked to do something hard: reach and embrace every generation in the same chapter. How can our alumnae chapters provide SAI activities and communications that will resonate with members of all ages? Here are seven tips to level up your chapter's offerings to attract more active membership:

### **Lean on the strengths of your generations.**

Let's study the bright spots: your chapter will benefit when you identify and use generational strengths. For example, younger members may be more comfortable with technology and could help with new communication channels, while more experienced members may have more access to public meeting spaces or music libraries. Dedicate time to matching chapter volunteer positions to strengths and provide training to members who are willing to learn.

### **Expect more experienced members to stay involved longer.**

The research doesn't lie. Some generations are larger than others, and all of us are living longer average lives. Consider:

- According to the Pew Research Center, as of July 2019, Millennials have surpassed Baby Boomers as the nation's largest living adult generation.
- The U.S. centenarian population (age 100+) is projected to quadruple over the next 30 years (2024, Pew Research Center).
- Between 2015 and 2050, the proportion of the world's population over 60 years will nearly double from 12% to 22% (2025, World Health Organization).
- The U.S. Census projections from the 2023 National Population Project show a leveling out of the U.S. population, with a 0.0% increase in 2080 and annual decreases afterwards.

Based on these statistics, we can expect current alumnae of all ages to remain involved in SAI for many years. We can also anticipate continued population growth until 2080, after which it is expected to level off and then decline.

### **Promote your chapter's good work to inactive members, even if you don't feel like it's making a difference.**

Staying in regular communication with inactive members, and recruiting prospective Patronesses, is key to growing SAI's membership. Just remember, everyone is getting spammed with content 24/7—so if you don't stay in touch, you're invisible and easier to forget. Make them feel welcome any time, and when they're ready, they'll know who to contact.

### **Know when to keep an activity and when to make updates.**

In their book *The Power of Moments: Why Certain Experiences Have Extraordinary Impact* (2017), Chip and Dan Heath theorize that you remember moments, not every single minute of your life. The same can be said of your SAI experience, looking back: you likely remember the special moments. So, make more special moments!

When planning your annual schedule, it may be time to make significant changes to see a payoff from new members. Don't be afraid to change up your activities, offering a diverse list of events that will appeal to members of different age groups. For example, you may want to have a family-friendly event one month to entice younger members with children; the next could be a high tea; then try a craft night. Whatever you choose, remember to find your voice, promote what your chapter stands for, and stay true to it. Inactive SAI members loved us once, and they can do it again.

### **Pay attention to your data.**

Survey your current activities and gather the facts to decide where to spend your valuable time and which areas may be draining your energy. Data can be found everywhere, such as:

- What kinds of events and meetings get the most participation? Do you know why? How can you plan more events like these?

- Survey your inactive members. Ask them what keeps them from joining your chapter. Is there anything that would bring them back to you?

- Speaking of communications: What data do you have access to? For example, are your emails being opened? What type of social posts get the most engagement? What would you need to do to grow your audience?

### **Avoid burnout.**

SAI membership is for a lifetime, but life has a way of changing quickly. As a leader in your alumnae chapter, be aware of the emotional, physical and logistical demands that your members are facing. Sharing the work is key to keeping members involved and will help to avoid feelings of burnout.

## **Start observing Gen Alpha now.**

Our youngest collegiate members, Gen Alpha (born 2010-2024), will be joining our alumnae chapters in just a few years. Already, Gen Alpha has been recognized for their love of slang and low tolerance for anything inauthentic. These students are hearing mixed messages about the importance of higher education, and your chapter may have to find new ways to relate.

Your chapter can't do everything all at once, and this is a marathon, not a sprint. By understanding generational differences and making the case for a variety of activities, both small and large chapters can make a big impact.

*Kate Kirkpatrick was initiated in the Eta Omicron chapter at the University of Nevada, Reno, and is currently serving as Delta B Province Officer. She studies the generations in her daily work as Director of Marketing and Communications at Truckee Meadows Community College in Reno, NV.*

## **Workshop Recap**

### **Communication Matters: Strategies for Impactful Interactions**

By Kristi Pizzini and Michelle Werner

Effective communication is a cornerstone of successful leadership, collaboration, and chapter operations. During the 51st National Convention, members gathered for the interactive workshop Communication Matters: Strategies for Impactful Interactions, presented by now NVP Fraternity Development Michelle Werner and Chi A Province Officer Kristi Pizzini.

The session explored the benefits and limitations of various communication formats—including face-to-face, email, phone, texting, and social media—and offered insights into when and how to use each method most effectively. Attendees shared real-life examples and reflected on how communication styles can differ between collegiate and alumnae members, sparking a rich and engaging dialogue.

The workshop continued with scenario-based discussions, allowing participants to evaluate who to contact in different situations and what communication method would be most appropriate based on urgency, tone, and clarity.

To wrap up the session, we offered a refresher on SAI communication best practices, including etiquette tips, the “Golden CC” rule, and a quick SAI Communication 101 guide to ensure members are fostering respectful, clear, and constructive exchanges. Through hands-on activities and peer insights, attendees walked away with strategies to build stronger connections, enhance teamwork, and promote a more positive, productive communication culture within our sisterhood.

The full slide presentation is available in the Officer Portal Document library, under Convention 2025.

## **DEI Belonging**

The DEI National Committee has been hard at work onboarding and planning for our DEI committees focused on education, strategy, policy/procedures, social media, and DEI chapter committee planning, with 40 new and returning committee members! In the coming months, the SAI Belonging Index will be released to members to collect data on understanding the identities of members to set priorities for this triennium. Additionally, SAI members will begin to see the DEI committees presenting articles and webinars offering opportunities to learn about SAI's approach to DEI implementation, education sessions pertinent to individual and chapter engagement, and social media posts celebrating SAI's diversity as an organization. After the belonging index data collection concludes, you will also see invitations to participate in listening tours for the committee to learn more about SAI member experiences! More to come!

If you are interested in receiving our SAI asynchronous materials, please email [nh@sai-national.org](mailto:nh@sai-national.org) to request those items. These materials help further our aims towards understanding the components of diversity, equity, and inclusion. We will also kick-off presentations at upcoming province days! Finally, I will be meeting with nationally elected officers to collaborate on engagement offerings.

SAI members represent the fabric of the importance of celebrating identity and focusing on belonging, not only in our chapters but in our national organization. I am looking forward to the work ahead for this triennium!

Thank you for your support, your commitment to our work together, and the elevating of women's perspectives in music!

**Dr. Keena Day**

**SAI Director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion  
2025-2028**

## **SAI Annual Award Application Deadlines**

### **March 1**

Summer Music Scholarships funded, in part, by a generous donation from Mary DeLoache Jennings

### **March 15**

Career Performance Grant

Conducting Scholarship for Graduate Students

Doctoral Grant

Impact Project Grants

International Study Grant for Graduate Students

Music Business/Technology Scholarship

Music Education Scholarship for Graduate Students

Music Therapy Scholarship

Musicians With Disabilities Scholarship

Undergraduate Scholarships

Applications for all of the above are found here:

<https://bit.ly/4aqwBbq>



## **Help Protect Sigma Alpha Iota's Trademarks**

As members, we all share the responsibility of protecting Sigma Alpha Iota's trademarks. Our new Trademark Licensing Toolkit helps chapters understand why this matters and how to use our marks correctly.

### **Key points:**

- All vendors and products using SAI's name, nickname, Greek letters, or symbols must be licensed through National Headquarters.
- Only approved vendors may produce goods or materials with our trademarks.
- Members cannot use SAI trademarks for commercial purposes without prior approval.

Find the toolkit on the Officer Portal in the Document Library in the Fraternity Education folder.

### **Next steps:**

1. Watch the short video as a chapter:  
Sigma Alpha Iota Licensing Video
2. Province Officers—review the presentation with executive boards.
3. Complete the quick Google Form to enter a \$100 Amazon gift card sweepstakes (linked in the Licensing Education Presentation and Facilitator Guide).

Questions? Contact Executive Director Christine Bruns at [nh@sai-national.org](mailto:nh@sai-national.org).

## Collegiate Comment

### Theta Lambda Furman University, Greenville, NC

It was a crisp Saturday afternoon in late October, perfect for celebrating homecoming festivities. Furman University had just finished their first half against Mercer University, and halftime meant the winners of Furman's annual week-long Homecoming competition would be announced. Every student could feel the anticipation for these twenty minutes. This included the members of Sigma Alpha Iota's Theta Lambda chapter, who stood spread between the field and stands of Paladin Stadium with their breaths held, eyes closed, and hands clasped together. As representatives from the Homecoming competitors took the field, they stared longingly at the monumental trophy held by the president of Furman's Student Alumni Council (SAC), wondering if it was their turn to take home the gold.

This trophy has winners engraved on it starting in the mid-1990s, long after Furman began celebrating Homecoming in 1919, but not long before the Theta Lambda chapter was chartered in 1997. In the chapter's almost thirty-year history, its name has never been on the trophy. Each year two or three fraternities, sororities, or other student organizations that have been paired together by SAC and the Student Government Association participate. The trophy is presented to the overall winner of Furman's Homecoming competition. The competition consists of four events during the week leading up to the football game: Banner Painting, Chalking, Horseplay, and Pumping. In addition, competitors earn spirit points for the percentage of member attendance at each event. Homecoming itself and the competition also have an overarching theme, with each group of organizations receiving a subcategory of this theme to base their participation in events around. For 2025, Furman rolled out the purple carpet for a movie-themed Homecoming. Theta Lambda was paired with Phi Mu Alpha's Gamma Eta chapter, a men's music fraternity, with the subcategory of Mystery.

While it may have been more fitting for Theta Lambda and Gamma Eta to be given a subcategory like Music rather than Mystery, the ideas for a mystery movie-themed banner, chalk art, skit, and pumped float began stirring immediately. The plans began with late-night meetings in the Music Building Library by the two fraternities' Homecoming Committees, led by each organization's social chair and composed of four to five more willing members. Numerous sketches and rough drafts came from these meetings until the banner, chalk art, and float became intricate works of art placed on grids for easy execution, and the skit became a multiple-page script.

Homecoming week began on the Monday night before the Saturday game with Banner Painting. Theta Lambda and Gamma Eta recreated Detective Benoit Blanc's chair made of knives from the murder mystery *Knives Out* on their nine-foot-long piece of paper. Instead of Blanc or any of his suspects sitting in the chair with the text "Knives Out" above it, it was Furman's mascot Victor, a purple and silver knight-like figure, with the text "Knights Out."

Tuesday's activity, chalking, occurred at the Dining Hall. Each team receives a 5-foot-by-5-foot square to create a chalk art design on the concrete leading up to the building's entrance. Like their banner, Theta Lambda and Gamma Eta tied Furman's mascot to a mystery classic, this time Sherlock Holmes. They adorned Victor with a spyglass, a tie, and a mustache.

The most unique Homecoming competition event is Horseplay. Teams are tasked with creating a seven-minute skit to be performed in front of all competing organizations and a live panel of judges, who also judge the other events. Theta Lambda and Gamma Eta had the audience and judges holding their stomachs over a reimaged version of the movie and board game Clue. The skit told a classic who-done-it tale about the Dining Hall's missing ice cream machine, with character names pulled from favorite Furman locations and people.

The Homecoming competition wrapped up with Pumping, the most daunting event. This year, teams had to build their own three-dimensional float that they covered in chicken wire and stuffed with tissue paper. These floats were put on display along the Furman Mall. For their final event, Theta Lambda and Gamma Eta recreated Scooby Doo's Mystery Machine. This Mystery Machine was fitted with a steering wheel, working headlights, the Sigma Alpha Iota and Phi Mu Alpha Greek letters, and even an interior filled with question marks and fairy lights that could be used for photo opportunities or to grab a Scooby Snack.

As members of Theta Lambda stood on the field in the culminating moment of the homecoming events, the air went silent in Paladin Stadium. It was time to announce the overall winner of the Homecoming competition, something Theta Lambda had never achieved. An occasional individual event was won, but never first place. In 2025, Theta Lambda had taken home best Spirit, Horseplay, and Pumping. However, with each event having different weights determining the overall winner, this did not guarantee the overall win. Members had waited all week for the news that their hard work, effort, and sisterhood were worth it. Suddenly, the silence was interrupted with joyous screams of the members of Theta Lambda as they heard their name called as the winner of Homecoming 2025. —  
*Madelyn Tracy, editor*

### **Delta Lambda, State University of New York at Fredonia**

SUNY Fredonia's Delta Lambda Chapter has been fortunate enough to have amazing musical experiences this year! We celebrated our members who were a part of the Hillman Opera's production of "The Consul" for the fall opera! The opera was amazing, and we congratulate them on their talent and hard work. Several of our members also gave stunning performances on their senior recitals last semester! We are so sad to see them all go, but we are excited to support them on their new student teaching journeys. We are looking forward to the College Symphony Orchestra's side-by-side performance with the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra! We anticipate a great semester of recruitment and making music together! — *Sam Tirino, editor*

### **Epsilon Pi, Truman State University, Kirksville, MO**

With the help of a SAI Philanthropies, Inc. Impact Project Grant, Epsilon Pi hosted our annual North Star Music Festival in October, welcoming four guest artists to campus from across the country. In collaboration with the Truman State University Department of Music, this festival brings together students, faculty, and community members to celebrate newly composed music. This year's featured artists included the award-winning Vinola Trio, internationally renowned clarinetist and composer Jorge Montilla, and interdisciplinary artist Cherie Sampson. Additionally, Truman's Cantoria choir premiered *Toward Evening* by commissioned composer William Averitt, an SAI Composers Bureau member. Other performances featured faculty, students, and the contemporary campus ensemble Uncommon Practice.

Epsilon Pi also hosted our second Music Retreat event for local music students. Launched in the spring of 2025, this event invites elementary and high school students to campus for an afternoon of music, fun, and performance. K-5 students engaged in rhythm activities and composed an original song. High school students had private lessons with our members, participated in a masterclass, and performed their repertoire in the closing concert. What began as a fundraiser has grown into a meaningful project that supports music in students' education outside the classroom and in the community. We are excited to continue growing this new initiative! — *Emma Stanley, editor*

### **Eta Omega, University of the Pacific, Stockton, California**

On December 22, the Eta Omega Chapter of Sigma Alpha Iota proudly welcomed two new members during our Fall 2025 initiation ceremony. We are excited to introduce our

newest sisters, Julianna Ramirez and Lauren Haile, who officially joined our chapter after completing their MIT process.

This initiation marked a meaningful conclusion to our fall semester and reflected our chapter's continued commitment to fostering musical excellence, leadership, and sisterhood. We are especially excited to share this milestone as Eta Omega's first contribution to *Tempo!*, allowing us to connect with sisters across the country and celebrate our growing chapter.

As we enter the Spring 2026 semester, we also honor and say goodbye to our graduating seniors: Elizabeth Mendoza, Stella Mahnke, Jasmine Valentine, Ngoc Gia Han Nguyen, and Olivhea Ross. We are grateful for their dedication, leadership, and lasting impact on our chapter and wish them continued success in their future endeavors. — *Nadege Tenorio, editor*

### **Mu Zeta, Kutztown (PA) University**

The Mu Zeta chapter chose to emphasize growth throughout the past academic year. We focused on the importance of positive change within our chapter by actively seeking ways to connect more deeply and optimize our overall functioning. As we approach the second semester with this mindset, we would like to celebrate the changes that have occurred and will continue to within our chapter.

Following convention, our chapter discussed and proposed modifications to our attendance policies, fundraising expectations, and musicale length. We also established a DEI committee! Additionally, we created multiple chapter objectives and methods for achieving them throughout the academic year, all of which align with SAI's National Objectives. One objective that has generated excitement is Artistry Without Barriers, through which our DEI committee has planned to teach the chapter the SAI Chorale in ASL. We are excited to see where this continued growth will lead our chapter next! — *Isabella Lara, editor*

### **Nu Alpha, The College of New Jersey**

Nu Alpha hosted their Fundraiser Blitz for Breast Cancer the week of October 20. On October 20, we held a Balloon a Brother/Sister Event with the local Phi Mu Alpha chapter. On October 21, there was a frozen yogurt fundraiser located at Red Berry on TCNJ's campus. On October 23, SAI sisters sold goodie bags filled with candy and stickers. On October 24, SAI held a Paint and Sip Event. After a week of fun fundraisers, the chapter

came together and did a walk for Breast Cancer. All of the funds raised were donated to Making Strides Against Breast Cancer, which aims to help people detect, treat, and survive Breast Cancer through the use of research, patient support, and advocacy. Nu Alpha raised over \$2,100!

“Deck the Halls with Boughs of Holly...” and many other carols could be heard as Sigma Alpha Iota - Nu Alpha caroled around TCNJ’s campus and local neighborhoods on December 6th. The sisters and brothers of Phi Mu Alpha created and handed out candy cane grams that had a candy cane and note card. The note card had information about the organizations and a QR Code for donations. The event brought smiles to the faces of fellow peers and community members. Many members dressed up with Christmas hats and even a Santa outfit, which made the event even more joyful. The sisters had so much fun bonding with one another, singing music together, and bringing joy to their community through the gift of music! — *Nikki Hayden, editor*

### **Nu Theta, Texas Tech University, Lubbock, TX**

In 2025, the Nu Theta chapter went from just a small petitioning group to an established chapter at Texas Tech University. The Nu Theta chapter spent the previous four years as a petitioning group. We were initiated and installed as a chapter on May 14, 2025, just after the end of the spring semester. During our time as MITs in 2025, the group worked on a menstrual product drive for the TTU School of Music and raised money to make fees more accessible for their members. Over the summer, the chapter sent our first president, Elizabeth (Lizzie) Lambert to the National Convention, where she was one of two collegiate delegates who participated in the opening night’s initiation ceremony. The Nu Theta chapter had a great first fall semester. They worked to continue raising money for their philanthropy projects and had a successful fall recruitment week, where they earned a great deal of interest from their peers at Texas Tech. The chapter faced several challenges during their first semester that was amplified by the remoteness of TTU. Nu Theta credits their successes to the supportive community of Sigma Alpha Iota, and the local alumni. Nu Theta is looking forward to more success in 2026 and its first anniversary in May. — *Sophia Hernandez, editor*

### **Sigma Lambda, Iowa State University, Ames**

Sigma Lambda has spent the fall semester fundraising with our Soup Fridays and Sn’ute. Every Friday, we sell soup in Simon Estes Music Hall lobby, and the students eat it up! Usually, we sell out of soup within 30 minutes of starting. This is how we fundraise for

our chapter, and it has been remarkably successful. Reach out to us if you want to try it at your university. We are also raising money for Youth Shelter Services with our annual winter fundraiser called “Sn’ute.” Sn’ute is where we have a professor teach another professor their instrument. For example, this Winter we had Sonja Giles, the flute professor, teach flute to Nathan Dishman, the trombone professor. Every year, the instrument changes. Last time it was Sn’uba (tuba!). People vote for which professor they want to see play the instrument by voting. They put money in jars for their choice, and the professor with the most money wins! — *Keelie Maas, editor*

### **Alumnae Comment**

#### **Atlanta (GA)**

Our executive board enjoyed a wonderful time of sisterhood and fellowship as we gathered at the Atlanta History Museum to honor the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and reaffirm our commitment to his vision of unity, diversity, and education. Throughout our visit, we deepened our understanding of Atlanta’s role in the Civil Rights Movement. We took part in a lively trivia challenge, where our President, Desiree Bell, proudly placed in the top 10 out of 47 groups. We also added heartfelt wishes of peace and love to the museum’s Wish Wall, making the experience even more meaningful. It was truly a memorable outing to share together. — *Melanie G. Jackson, editor and historian*

#### **Bloomington (IN)**

Our SAI alumnae chapter, Bloomington, Indiana, has no collegiate chapter. Bloomington is home to the largest campus of Indiana University, as well as the world-renowned Jacobs School of Music, but there is no longer an affiliated collegiate chapter in town. We recruit graduate students from IU who move to Bloomington and are looking to affiliate with an alumnae chapter, as well as women in Bloomington who were SAIs in college. Our chapter is fairly small but still maintains a presence on the IU campus via a bulletin board in the music school.

Until recently, we had a local music store that stocked a little music as well as a store specializing in used music. Both stores closed recently, leaving a real “gap” for local musicians and IU music students. Our chapter collected used music with the idea of making it available to IU students for free! A box was placed by our bulletin board, is checked every few weeks, and restocked when necessary. To date, several hundred pieces of music have been taken! — *Karen Willett, editor*

## **Boston (MA)**

The Boston Alumnae Chapter had an eventful fall and a great start to winter! We started off the fraternity year with our annual Welcome Back BBQ in September. This is always a highlight of the year. This year, in addition to good food and time to hang out with sisters, our delegate at the most recent National Convention shared about her experience and what she learned at the convention.

In October, we honored the lives of three sisters we recently lost through a memorial ceremony and musicale. We keep Marcia Bachman, Doris McNabb Youngquist, and Sara Shub Hoff forever in our hearts. We were also able to celebrate Arlene Jospe Veron when National Vice President, Fraternity Development, Michelle Werner, presented her with an award on behalf of SAI Philanthropies, Inc. It was so special to join together in sisterhood and celebrate sisters both past and present.

In November, we gathered at Lookout Farm for a fun fall farm hang. December brought holiday fun with an ugly sweater business meeting and a holiday social. We also awarded the Joan Reddy Memorial Scholarship to Sarah Dorey from Lambda Phi. Congratulations Sarah!

Sisters kicked off 2026 by volunteering at the South Shore Children's Chorus's winter concert in January. This marks the second year of our partnership with this organization. We love volunteering at their concerts and supporting the next generation of singers! — *Amanda Roth, editor*

## **Boulder (CO)**

Congratulations are in order! Our sister Megan Nugent was awarded the Greeley-Evans School District 6 Success Foundation Choice Award after being nominated for Educator of the Year. She is a K-5 music teacher at S. Christa McAuliffe STEM Academy. The Board chooses one teacher out of the district each year who exemplifies what the Foundation is about, and who builds student and community partnerships beyond the classroom, and awards that individual the Success Foundation Choice Award – a special award for which there are no nominations. In addition, Megan also graduated with her master's in educational leadership this December!

The Boulder Alumnae Chapter is also excited to announce its 25th anniversary of re-chartering this June, and we are hard at work planning a "Silver Celebration" event to celebrate. Sisters Dr. Jamie Reimer Seaman (soprano; Richard H. Larson Distinguished Professor of Music (Voice); Area Head at the University of Nebraska Lincoln) and Katilyn



Rittner (adjunct faculty and collaborative pianist at the University of Northern Colorado) will be featured in a concert to benefit SAI Philanthropies. Registration for the anniversary event will be available soon on our website (<https://saiboulder.weebly.com/>), and all are welcome to join us in sisterhood and celebration! Contact us for more information at [saiboulderinfo@gmail.com](mailto:saiboulderinfo@gmail.com). — *Patty Stanfield, secretary and editor*

## **Buffalo (NY)**

We capped off 2025 with a New Year's celebration appetizer buffet and the singing of holiday songs on January 3rd at the home of chapter President Cindy Ripley. Creatively titled "Sip and Sing," a large gathering of members, family, and friends made for a very enjoyable afternoon. Making this event even more special, we presented Cindy Ripley with the Rose of Honor.

Cindy has served as our President for multiple terms. Under her leadership, our chapter has embraced innovation and thrived beyond our expectations. Cindy's personality, enthusiasm, and dedication to SAI and our chapter are inspiring to all. Under her leadership, we have welcomed many new affiliates and have initiated patronesses with training. Our chapter is united, growing, and adding new members, both young and old. Cindy's attention to detail, creativity, and ability to make all members feel included are exceptional. The presentation of the Rose of Honor to Cindy was a wonderful, joyful moment for our chapter.

Highlights of other chapter activities included a wonderful presentation in October by Tony Buttino about his years of involvement with the production of PBS's Emmy-winning *Reading Rainbow*. November brought a formal meeting complete with two new initiates and a meeting visit by Province Officer Holley Chase. — *Louise Schwarz, editor*

## **Cleveland (OH)**

This past spring, the Cleveland Alumnae Chapter was proud to honor Adam Whiting as a Friend of the Arts. Adam has accompanied many of our string contestants at our annual competition over the years. He has held the position of staff accompanist at the Cleveland Institute of Music since graduating with a double master's degree in piano performance and accompanying in 2005. — *Christine S. Kilbane, editor*

## **Colorado Springs (CO)**

The Colorado Springs Alumnae Chapter affiliated Megan Hampton at our November meeting. Welcome Megan! We celebrated the holidays at a luncheon in December. On March 7, we will host the Xi C Province Day. The chapter is looking forward to welcoming our sisters to Colorado Springs. We have a Honey Baked Ham fundraiser active at this time and also plan to hold a Panda Express fundraiser in the spring. — *Chris Heisler, editor*

## **Dallas**

At their November meeting, the Dallas Alumnae Chapter celebrated the 82nd anniversary of its founding. The meeting included a special edition of Fraternity Education focused on important events and individuals in the 82-year history of the chapter, a program about the history of the song *Happy Birthday*, and a beautiful cake with an image of the SAI crest. We look forward to many more years supporting music around the Dallas area. — *Kathy Kuddes, editor/historian*

## **Evansville (IN)**

Our chapter began the year by continuing our Community Service Project of providing monthly Exploring Music sessions for the senior citizen center in Evansville, IN for the third year. We studied George Gershwin's contribution to American music to celebrate the 100th anniversary of *Rhapsody in Blue* and the history of Farm Aid, founded by our own Hoosier John Mellencamp. We also had a very interesting performance of Christmas music by the duo of Leanne Hampton (our recently initiated SAI Friend of the Arts), flute, and Ross Erickson, marimba. Both are first chair members of the Evansville Philharmonic and professors at the University of Evansville. In addition, we performed the National Anthem for the senior center's packed house Veterans' Day Luncheon, an important annual event. Our alumni singers were accompanied by Jill Snyder (President), piano; Elizabeth Robertson, oboe; and Leanne Hampton, flute.

We were pleased to welcome a new chapter member, Nicole Bittner, who is a recent graduate of Tulane University. She has returned to our area for further music therapy study at the University of Evansville. Finally, in December, we enjoyed a well-attended sisterhood "fun holiday luncheon" for members and families. — *Carol Hahn, vice president, membership*

## **Fort Wayne (IN)**

The Fort Wayne alumnae chapter held its January gathering at a local retirement center, graciously hosted by founding member Joyce Satre (Alpha Tau, Carthage College, 10/18/1952). The agenda featured performances from chapter sisters, with audience members enthusiastically joining in sing-alongs after each act. We were privileged to be joined by retired national president and chapter member Ginny Johnson, along with her guest, former Executive Director Ruth Sieber Johnson. Both of those ladies contributed greatly to the sing-alongs and can really sing! It was fun to join the residents in music-making. An enjoyable time was had by all.

During the fall, our activities included a well-received candle sale and the introduction of Lucy Rhymes as our newest affiliate. Originally from Lafayette, Louisiana, Lucy is the marketing director at Heartland Sings. Lucy jumped right into volunteering her services by recording our retirement center event so that it could be shared with our members who could not attend.

Looking ahead, we are excited for warmer months and our upcoming events, which include our spring music benefit and our Youth Orchestra camp scholarship auditions. — *Susan Jehl, editor*

## **Gainesville (FL)**

The Gainesville Alumnae Chapter's 2025-2026 activities thus far have included a joint meeting with the University of Florida's Delta Gamma Chapter on August 24th, when we shared plans for the academic year. Our October featured a program about American composer Amy Beach that was offered by Sara Nussel. In November, we donated needed clothing, household items, and toiletries to the Peaceful Paths Domestic Abuse Facility in Gainesville. We held our officer election along with a lovely luncheon at a locally owned restaurant in December. In January, we enjoyed a presentation by Brenda Smith about Anna Magdalena Bach.

We are looking forward to making music together with our Alumnae Sisters and Delta Gamma Sisters on March 7. Our public musicale will feature music by "Amy Beach and Friends". Plans for the spring also include sponsoring the Penland Prize Award that offers a financial prize to University of Florida Delta Gamma Sisters. Winners of the Penland Prize will be featured at our spring combined luncheon meeting/recital in April. Additional activities include attending the University of Florida Opera presentation of *Pirates of Penzance* in April. — *Cheryl Poe, editor and yearbook directory chair*

## **Grand Rapids (MI)**

The Grand Rapids Alumnae Chapter's 60th Anniversary celebration was held on October 4 at St. Luke's Lutheran Church in Grand Rapids, MI. The event brought together charter members Sharon Steffens, Betty Barber, and Gretchen Weaver, along with twenty-five chapter members and guests, including current Alpha B PO Jennifer Bailey and past Alpha B PO Sally Roach and her husband, Jim, a Friend of the Arts. President Jean Hudson led introductions and greetings, followed by a chapter history presentation from Sharon Steffens and a group sing-along from the SAI songbook.

The celebration featured a catered luncheon, a beautifully decorated cake, and a musicale performance by chapter members Marcia Klein, Helen Emerson, Char Lothian, and Jean Hudson, with guests Margaret Thorstein and Linda Martino. Chapter Vice-President of Ritual Lynne Kleeman led the Rededication Ceremony, marking 60 years of Sigma Alpha Iota in Grand Rapids. The afternoon concluded with the singing of the SAI Chorale, celebrating sisterhood and the chapter's legacy. — *Jean Hudson, president*

## **Hot Springs (AR)**

Every year our chapter organizes and performs a holiday fundraiser. This year was our best yet! The theme was "A Colonial Americana Christmas" celebrating America's 250<sup>th</sup> birthday. A brunch with all the decorations and costumes of the Colonial Period was enjoyed by all. This was a great community event beginning with members from the Sons of the American Revolution presenting the flags (old and new). Then, an original flute composition, *Revolutionary Medley*, was performed by local musicians Shelley Martin and Dr. Tish Kennedy Davenport. Our chapter singing group, Cantate, began with musical selections by William Billings, including *Sing Gloria* and *Chester*, then to Joseph Martin's *A Festive Call to Freedom*. Cantate filled in with traditional carols — "Wexford Carol," "I Saw Three Ships," "I Wonder as I Wander," and "Silent, Holy Night" — played on the clarinet by Hailey Kirksey. The event ended with a sing-a-long of "God Bless America." One of the highlights was a visit from Benjamin Franklin (aka Kathie White, Cantate Music Director) with his famous quotations. Besides our event having great ticket sales, the best part was our Sisterhood of teamwork and making music together. Nothing beats that! — *Sheree O'Rourke, president*

## **Kansas City (MO)**

Six of our chapter members attended the SAI National Convention in Minneapolis in July. Three of our members served in leadership roles at the Convention, including: Marsha Oyer, Region III Representative for the Nominating Committee; Nanie Downs, Election Committee member and flutist in the SAI Wind Ensemble; and Paula Moseman, Director of the Inter-American Music Awards of SAI Philanthropies, Inc. Our chapter received three awards at the Convention, including the Alumnae Chapter Achievement Award for Pi A Province, the Alumnae Chapter Achievement Award for Region III, and the Helen Byrn May National Alumnae Chapter Achievement Award. We celebrated receiving these wonderful honors at our chapter meeting in September and heard reports about the National Convention. In October, we welcomed Emily Mastenbrook, Janet Walbert, and Kayla Wiedeman as affiliates to our chapter, and had our official visit from Sariah Pinick, Pi A Province Officer. In November, Katie Kingsley presented an informative program on music therapy. In December, we didn't have a chapter meeting but met for a holiday brunch at a restaurant. We each brought either a holiday mug filled with treats and small gifts or a Christmas ornament. We passed the gifts to the person on our right or left when we heard the words "right" or "left" in a Christmas story that was read by Alex Moutray, Social Chair. The gift that we held when the story ended was the gift that we kept. — *Vicki Hedger, editor*

## **Lake County (IN)**

Early in August the chapter met together for a "Picnic in the Park." It was a relaxing afternoon where we shared great conversation and sisterly togetherness. We followed that activity with a BYO picnic supper for our September meeting. October's meeting included a visit from our Beta B Province Officer, Carlie Allen, and in November we affiliated two new alumnae members, Erin Buckley and Bailey Burton. Because of very busy schedules, personal and professional, we decided to postpone our annual Christmas party and gift exchange until January. January's cold winds and abundant snow canceled our meeting and we met via Zoom to warm our hearts in sisterly love.

Our sister Bridget Flory shared the news of being chosen by her peers to receive special recognition – a Michiana Outstanding Music Educator Award. This special award recognizes excellence in the field of Music Education in our area. Bridget is the band director at River Forest Junior/Senior High School in New Chicago, Indiana, which services students who live outside the city limits of Gary, Hobart, and Lake Station.

To keep the "Symphony ever in our hearts" we continue to record volunteer hours given to musical activities in our chapter and community. — *Anna Padberg, editor*

## **Madison (WI)**

The Madison Alumnae chapter was honored to end the previous school year by honoring current chapter president Martha Dodds Stoner with the Ring of Excellence, our fraternity's highest award. Martha was initiated by Sigma Alpha chapter in 1966. Most recently, Martha coordinated the chapter's September fundraiser concert featuring the Grandsons of the Pioneers, a group which performs Old West and Cowboy style music to benefit collegiate music scholarships. Other events this year have included a presentation on the Galway Flute Festival by Betsy Dunne, our annual September potluck, and our Solstice Celebration, which featured a cookie exchange and an open musicale for members to share music and poetry related to the winter solstice. Local sisters interested in joining us for future events can learn more at [madisonsai.org](http://madisonsai.org). — *Jessica Newberry, editor*

## **Minneapolis-St. Paul (MN)**

The Minneapolis-St. Paul Oktoberfest celebration featured the Deutsches Duo — Janet Heukeshoven on flute and SAI National Arts Associate Eric Heukeshoven on accordion—who delighted us with lively polkas and waltzes, and led everyone in a cheerful sing-along of familiar “beer-hall” and folk songs. Following the performance and our formal meeting, we held a meaningful SAI Memorial Service honoring Grace Jorissen, Barbara Kok, Alvina O’Brien, Donna O’Brien, and Shirley Santoro, and proudly affiliated Susan Trotter and Sheridan Zuther. The afternoon concluded with sister time as we enjoyed a variety of traditional Oktoberfest treats together.

On Thursday, November 13, the Schubert Club, the oldest performing arts organization in Minnesota, presented Roderick Williams OBE, baritone, with Iain Burnside, piano, in a concert featuring the premiere of new song cycle by Minnesota composer and SAI Member Laureate Libby Larsen. These new songs were woven into a selection of others on the program, including works by Schubert, Poulenc, Joan Trimble, Maria Grever, Britten, and Elizabeth Lutyens. The song cycle was warmly received by all in attendance, who gave a prolonged standing ovation. Minneapolis-St. Paul Alumnae Chapter contributed \$1,000 toward the production of Larsen's new songs, as well as Williams' Featured Artist residency during the 2025-26 Schubert Club season. — *Helen Franczyk, editor*

## **Moscow-Pullman (ID)**

On August 28, 2024 the members of the Moscow-Pullman Alumnae Chapter were proud to award the Rose of Honor to Patroness member Denise Crossler at the annual Fall Dinner meeting of both the alumnae chapter and the Sigma Zeta collegiate chapter at the University of Idaho. Denise was initiated as a Patroness in 1998 by the Sigma Zeta Chapter. Soon after, she affiliated with the Moscow-Pullman Alumnae Chapter and became an active member in local alumnae chapter activities. Denise excelled in leadership, holding the offices of VP Program (2012-14), President (2017-18), VP Ritual (2018-22), President (2022-24), and Secretary (2024-26).

Hers was the home in which chapter members gathered to build musical instrument lamps to raise money to support instrument repair for our Band Instrument Project for Local Schools. Denise plays the French horn in community bands and is an experienced handbell player at her church. She infuses our chapter activities with her enthusiasm, energy, and good humor. This award recognizes Denise's outstanding participation and service to the fraternity for over 25 years. — *Susan Billin, president and editor*

## **Pasadena (CA)**

This past fall, the Pasadena Alumnae Chapter held its first Women in Music event, featuring a panel of chapter members in various music fields, sharing their insight and expertise with college students and local musicians. This event was held on campus at California State University, Northridge (CSUN). Speaking on the panel were Devon Guthrie (performance/education), Kristen Hirlinger (composition/sound design), Emily Sonneborn (sync licensing), and Hilary Yip (music therapy). Moderating the panel was our President, Haley Schwalbe, who also shared her experience finding her path in a non-music career. Our audience had wonderful questions, with our conversation covering networking, seeking out opportunities, and when to set boundaries. This event also generated quite a bit of interest in our attendees about SAI and how to join or start a chapter. Thanks to our committee, led by chairwoman Tia Annis, for putting together such a wonderful event! — *Kristen Hirlinger, editor*

On October 18, Pasadena Alumnae Chapter member Edie Marshall was formally presented with the National Alumnae Leadership Award and the Diamond Sword of Honor. The award ceremony took place during the chapter's official visit with Delta A Province Officer Kendall Allen, who also presided over the ceremony. The National Alumnae Leadership award recipient was announced at the 2025 National Convention in Minneapolis.

## **Reno (NV)**

Sisters and families enjoyed Fall activities in October with a social event at Andelin Family Farms. Some highlights included the hayrides, pumpkin patch, and of course, all the animals. Afterwards, we gathered for a nice dinner to celebrate our chapter's 30th anniversary! In December, we held our annual Caroling for Camp fundraiser. Our sisters went door to door singing holiday carols for donations, which will be put toward a scholarship to send a local middle/high school student to Lake Tahoe Music Camp. We raised over \$500! This year, we also added a service element to this project and sang at St. Vincent's Food Pantry, Kylie Ranch Senior Living, and a couple of hospitals in the area to spread holiday cheer. — *Emily Haver, editor*

## **Rochester (NY)**

At our January meeting we welcomed guest speaker Alex Laing, President and Artist Director of Gateways, along with our own Kearstin Piper Brown, Gateways Chair of the Board of Directors.

Since 1993, Gateways Music Festival was founded to counteract the isolation and underestimation faced by many Black classical artists. By providing a platform for Black classical artists, Gateways not only showcases their talent but also redefines cultural and aesthetic narratives, using art to foster a more just, inclusive world.

<https://www.gatewaysmusicfestival.org>

In November the chapter presented a Fall Musicale at the Legacy at Clover Blossom featuring classical, patriotic, and traditional Swedish Folk Songs. — *Amy Harris, editor*

## **Rockford (IL)**

The Rockford Alumnae Chapter initiated not one, but two Friends of the Arts in December. Julia Schade is a Rockford native who is now the musical director and collaborative pianist on the Broadway musical *Six*, for which she received a Tony award in 2022. Nicolai Janitzky is a baritone operatic soloist who performs worldwide. He is a native of Northern California, but he has called Northern Illinois home for many years. We held each initiation separately, which allowed us to converse with both Julia and Nicolai and



hear more about their careers and musical lives. Both are amazing people that we are proud to honor and welcome to our chapter. — *Sarah Thurber-Fiorenza, editor*

### **San Francisco Peninsula (CA)**

Violinist Cary Koh, cellist Sue Larson, and pianist Chin Beckmann opened the fall season with the performance of a Beethoven trio, and for the October meeting's musicale, violist Noriko Iwamoto and pianist Chin Beckmann played selections by Piazzolla and Ponce. The singing of songs from the new SAI Songbook was featured in November, and treasurer Anna Blice-Baum was awarded the Sword of Honor. Each of the fall meetings included reports about the 2025 National Convention by delegates Connor Day and Anna Blice-Baum.

Our holiday luncheon bade farewell to President Connor Day, and in January our newly installed president, Katy Mitchell, led the board and chapter meetings and for Fraternity Education talked about SAI Honorary Member Dolly Parton. Alice Preston guided us through some yoga and then played several Native American flutes. — *Laurel Brobst-Gilbert, secretary*

### **Tampa (FL)**

We were thrilled to award our 2025-26 Music Education Grant to Cecilia Callaway, music specialist at Seven Springs Elementary School in New Port Richey, FL. This grant was made possible through collaboration with the Delta Chi Chapter and a Chapter Outreach Grant from SAI Philanthropies. Cecilia used the grant funds to purchase a classroom set of mini Casio keyboards. She reports that these keyboards quickly became an essential tool for introducing students to foundational musical concepts, including melody, rhythm, and creative expression. After implementing the mini keyboards into her lessons, Cecilia observed a significant increase in student engagement and an improved understanding of melodic patterns. She has also given her students keyboard opportunities for free exploration, allowing them to create their own short compositions. This creative freedom has encouraged confidence, collaboration, and a deeper personal connection to the music-making process. This spring, Ms. Callaway has plans for the mini keyboards to play a central role in enhancing the melody unit for 2nd and 3rd grade students. In summary, Cecilia said, "These grant-funded mini keyboards have made a meaningful

impact on student learning by bridging classroom instruction with real-world musical experiences and nurturing lasting enthusiasm for music education!” — *Janice R Lancaster, editor*

### **Topeka (KS)**

The Topeka Alumnae Chapter is working to grow our chapter through exciting programs and meaningful service to our community. We began the year with our annual Potluck BBQ Picnic with Theta Chapter in September, where collegiate members shared their plans for the year and we reflected on our experiences at National Convention. In October, Friend of the Arts member Dr. Gordon McQuere presented an engaging program on his Musical Travels in Russia. November featured a visit from Theta A Province Officer Kirsten Smallwood, and a delightful musicale from Friend of the Arts member Steve Patterson, who performed on cornet and shared his research into the life of Jules Levy, Cornet Virtuoso Extraordinaire. We were also thrilled to affiliate our newest sister, Shannon Mason. Our November service project took us to a veterans assisted living center for a fun karaoke night. We discovered some truly talented resident singers, and the evening was filled with entertainment, music, and connection. At our December Holiday Celebration, members contributed to a Kindness Collection of donations supporting TopCity Hope Dealers, a local organization serving families in need. The celebration concluded with festive holiday singing, accompanied by several of our instrumentalist members. — *Shayn Jones, editor*

### **Washington DC**

The past summer’s National Convention is now history but was a lasting inspiration for those who attended and for those who were not able to attend. The Washington DC Alumnae are now busy with plans for 2026 and in February, they will prepare Care Packages for the college students in the Province. On April 11th, the Delta Nu Chapter of Howard University will host Iota A Province Day.

Associate Alfred Hunt, well-known clarinetist and administrator, is President of the Friday Morning Music Club, Inc. (FMMC), one of the nation’s oldest music organizations, established in 1886, that includes many SAs as Performing members. Among them, Friend of the Arts Frank Conlon, distinguished pianist, appears regularly as soloist and collaborative pianist. Jeongseon Choi and Chen-Li Tzeng, who perform as soloists and duo-pianists, serve as Chairs of annual student competitions, while composer Sharon Guertin Shafer brings her creativity and interesting compositions to wide audiences. A new work for

voice, *Another Answer*, set to her poetry, will be presented in April on a local composers concert. — *Mary K. Traver, editor and historian*

### **SUBMISSION DEADLINES**

JAN. 30

MARCH 15

JULY 15

OCT. 1

Gregory Dickens, Publications Manager

Send photo submissions to [gregory@sai-national.org](mailto:gregory@sai-national.org)

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Rev. Dr. Michelle Whitlock, Alumnae Comment Editor

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