

**History of the Ann and Robert Stigall Scholarship Program**  
Gay G. Pappin, DMA, and Michael Lehtinen, DMA; [gpappin@gmail.com](mailto:gpappin@gmail.com)

The Charlotte Chapter AGO established a scholarship program in 2002 to honor the work of Ann and Robert Stigall, who served Myers Park Presbyterian Church, Charlotte, North Carolina, from 1963 until 2001.

The Stigall Scholarship encourages organ study for students in grades 6-12. At the audition, held annually in May, students are expected to be proficient at the piano. Each candidate must play 2 pieces in contrasting style, scales and arpeggios, a hymn, and sight-read. No previous organ study is required. If a student has previous organ training, s/he may elect to audition on the organ and/or the piano. A small committee of AGO members, including Ann and Robert Stigall, listens to the auditions and determines the awards.

The amount of money awarded varies from year to year, depending on the amount of money available, and on the number of recipients chosen. Each teacher must be an active member of the Charlotte Chapter AGO. The Scholarship money to be used for organ lessons is awarded in two parts: half is paid to the teacher to assist with tuition for lessons taken in the first semester, June 1-December 31. Bestowal of the second half of the award, covering lessons in the second semester from January 1-May 31, is dependent on the Student Progress Report. The teacher submits the Student Progress Report to the chapter Treasurer at the end of each semester, listing the dates and lengths of lessons, repertoire covered, and a short description of the student's progress. Should the student make excellent progress at the organ during the year of lessons, s/he may be asked to perform on the Charlotte Chapter AGO Summer Recital Series.

In addition to the money awarded for lessons, a Stigall Scholarship includes a student membership in the local Charlotte chapter, and an opportunity to attend recitals and master classes sponsored by the chapter. The students are warmly welcomed to all chapter events. As available funds have increased, the students have been awarded money to be used to attend a POE or an approved music camp. This year each student was also awarded a gift card to be used to purchase music. About \$8000 was awarded to six students to be used in the 2014-15 academic year.

Funding began in 2002 through offerings collected during the chapter's Summer Recital Series, a weekly series of recitals given by chapter members. (The Charlotte Summer Recital Series began in 1979. A history was published in *The American Organist* in June 2006.) Freewill offerings received at the Summer Recitals fund the Stigall Scholarship program. The scholarship fund has always been kept separate from the chapter's operating budget.

In the last ten years, the Charlotte Chapter AGO has awarded Stigall Scholarships to approximately 30 students. Of the 18 scholarship winners who have already graduated from high school, 15 have gone to college as organ majors or have studied organ at the

college level; 7 have completed advanced graduate degrees or are working toward an advanced degree in organ performance, sacred music, or choral conducting. Currently, 11 are employed as church musicians.

Ann and Robert Stigall have enjoyed getting to know the students over the years and have marveled at the progress of the young musicians: “Over the past twelve years it has been exciting and gratifying to observe the progress of many young people who received the scholarship in their teenage years and then went on to attend excellent music schools from which they received degrees in organ. Some of them have pursued graduate study in organ and church music and are now in churches where they play and direct the music program and teach others. Several of these young people have returned to Charlotte to play recitals in the Summer Series.”

The members of the Charlotte Chapter take great pride in the Stigall Scholarship program, volunteering to perform on the Summer Recital Series, and making financial contributions to the scholarship fund. We encourage all chapters, both small and large, to create a scholarship fund to provide organ lessons and/or POE experiences for the organists of tomorrow.

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### **2021 Cooper-Miller Organ Scholarship**

\$1,500 Cash Award  
Presented by the  
Central North Carolina Chapter  
American Guild of Organists  
Scholarship Chair, Lorraine Magnuson, [raineymag@gmail.com](mailto:raineymag@gmail.com)

The Cooper-Miller Organ Scholarship is presented in memory of two distinguished organists from Raleigh, North Carolina:

Harry Cooper, D.Mus., FAGO, born December 1897, died May 1986. Dr. Cooper was a member of the AGO from 1920 until his death. He was long-time head of the organ department at Meredith College; organist/choir master at Christ Episcopal Church Raleigh for many years; subsequently served at First Baptist Church, Raleigh for years; and was a consultant on organs.

Catherine Ritchey Miller, born June 1904, died January 1998. She was a member of the AGO from 1933 until her death and was an honorary member of the Central North Carolina Chapter since 1990. Mrs. Miller was long-time organist at Edenton Street United Methodist Church and also served later at White Memorial Presbyterian Church.

Scholarship Mission

To encourage promising young musicians and support them in the early stages of their education in organ.

### Critical Dates

Applications will be solicited from area teachers, churches, and musicians in the Fall of 2020. Deadline for submitting an application is January 15, 2021. Auditions by video recording will be accepted by February 15. Winner(s) will be announced by March 1.

### Donations Welcome

The Cooper-Miller Organ Scholarship Fund is the perfect way to memorialize or honor someone who loves and supports sacred music. It is also an important way to identify, support and develop the organists needed to continue the great tradition of sacred music in worship services.

Information and Donations:  
Application Forms: Lee Harris  
Lorraine Magnuson, Chair 210 West Boulevard  
919-870-6942 Laurinburg, N.C. 28352  
raineymag@gmail.com Make check out to Central NC Chapter

### Application Process

Application Deadline: January 15

A complete application will include:

- 1) Application Form
- 2) Letter of Recommendation from teacher(s) including both specific criteria on a set scale and descriptive comment
- 3) Student's written statement of goals and intentions in organ study and service
- 4) Statement from parents/guardian/responsible party that they will encourage/support student's interest in studying organ

Note: A statement of financial need from parents/guardian/responsible party may be submitted.

### Eligibility Criteria

- Age range 13-18. For the upper age limit, student should be 18 at the time of the audition and still be in high school
- Intermediate keyboard skills
- Serious approach and desire to learn organ
- Recommendation of teacher(s)

### Audition Procedures

Auditions in 2021 will be by recording. Please submit your recording by Monday, February 15 to Lorraine Magnuson. This could be a cellphone video which can be sent by

email; or, a video to be accessed via a Facebook or YouTube website. If there are technical difficulties, the audition may be audio only.

Applicants should choose a hymn or song from their faith tradition and prepare two verses as though they were being sung in a service of worship. Applicant should also prepare a solo appropriate in a worship service, plus a third piece of the applicant's choosing. Student may choose to perform on either piano or organ. Performances will be evaluated by a panel of judges and recommendations will be made to the scholarship committee. Decision will be announced by March 1.

#### Financial Goal

Maximum value of award is \$1500. In addition, the winner receives a 2-year student membership in AGO. The award may be used for any of the following: educational events, private organ lessons, organ shoes, and music.

#### NOTES:

- Scholarship committee and judges will make final determinations of awards and specific amounts for the best usage and stewardship of the funds.
- Judges reserve the right not to award any prize.
- Decision of the judges is final.
- A candidate cannot win 2 years in succession.
- Recipients will be invited to perform at a chapter meeting.

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**The Dayton Organ Academy**  
**Founded 1983 under Chapter Dean Wilma Meckstroth**  
Rachel Lammi, Academy Chair, [rachel.spry@gmail.com](mailto:rachel.spry@gmail.com)

The Dayton Organ Scholarships began in 1989 with \$2000. This money was originally designated to pay Organ Academy teachers. Immediately, these funds became used for college scholarships, adult independent studies, and pipe organ encounter scholarships. Priscilla Acuff current manages our scholarship program.

There have been 11 female and 8 male teachers over the 38 years of the Academy. They have included Judy Bede, Dr. Richard Benedem, Mary Anne Blazer, Joanne Buck, Fred Chatfield, Rev. Earle Copes, Dr. David Crean, Terry Donat, Danielle Guilbault, Devon Howard, Effie Sue Kemerley, Dr. Alan Kimbrough, Rachel Lammi, Joan McConnell, Lee McGinty, Wilma Meckstroth, Julane Rogers, Jerry Taylor, Phyllis Warner, Dr. Ritter Werner.

There have been three academy chairs:

Wilma Meckstroth 1983-2015

Rachel Lammi 2015-2017; 2018-present

Dr. David Crean 2017-2018

The current teachers are Danielle Guilbaugh (Christ UMC) and Effie Sue Kemerley. Terry Donat, Dr. Alan Kimbrough, and Rachel Lammi are available for teaching when we find more students. Currently, there is one female and one male current student. There have been 48 female and 26 male students over the 38 years of the Academy. The Academy teachers teach pro-bono.

Academy auditions are held in April/May. We ask students prepare a Bach invention (or another piece demonstrating independence of hands), a contrasting piece, and a hymn. We also have the students sight read. Qualified students receive one year of free lessons. They perform at the May Guild meeting, which doubles as their re-audition for a second year. Before 2018, students could receive additional years of lessons. Due to a wait list at the time and a few students who became lax in their practice, we reduced the number of years to two. Students are responsible for purchase of shoes and music. The Dayton Chapter has a music library. It is currently housed on the third floor of Westminster Presbyterian Church, Dayton. Students may borrow scores, or purchase with small donation.

One a personal note, I am an organist today thanks to two of these three programs. I was a student of Phyllis Warner in the academy from 1993-1995. I received two scholarship for college study, one in 1995 and one in 1996. My family could not afford the lessons otherwise.

There are two factors I see as to why the Dayton Chapter has a strong female involvement in organ scholarship and leadership. The first is because we have females in leadership. The second is because the conservative nature of the churches in this region see woman as needing supplemental income for family life. I do not enjoy the reality of the second factor, but that does not remove the reality. We get many homeschool applicants. The young ladies often wear long skirts.

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### **AGO San Diego Scholarship Program**

Leslie Wolf Robb

Education Coordinator, San Diego AGO

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San Diego AGO's scholarship program began in 1960 with a bequest given for that purpose. Several other bequests followed (including an oil well in Texas!). These bequests, along with donations over the years, give us an endowment that today exceeds \$86,000. We also have a policy of donating \$50 to the scholarship fund in memory of each member who passes away. Annual awards today average a total of \$3,000, allowing the principal to continue to grow.

Our scholarship program, like many others, began as a traditional 1st place/2nd place competition with junior and senior divisions. This format, however, never drew more than a few applicants in each division. The scholarship committee, with the approval of the board, combined the two funds, changed the awards criteria to a tuition grant program, removed all age limits, and invited pianists to apply for tuition grants to study organ as well as continuing to provide tuition grants to organ students. We have developed a leveled progression of repertoire, available on our chapter website <http://agosd.org/> and divide participants into three groups – Novice, Intermediate, and Advanced. A typical year's awards are as follows:

Piano: 4 @ \$200 = \$800 (covers 6 half-hour lessons) Novice: 7 @ \$150 = \$1,050

Intermediate: 2 @ \$200 = \$400 Advanced: 2 @ 250 = \$500

8 Honors "bonuses" @ \$50 = \$400 Checks to be issued: \$3,150

The average number of participants in the annual auditions since that time has been 15 – 25 students per year. Most have participated multiple times and have grown considerably in their organ skills. Some have gone on to study organ at college, some have become church musicians, some have become performers...some attend organ concerts regularly, some serve on organ committees... but all had the opportunity to meet, get to know, and fall in love with the King of Instruments! For a number of years we have partnered with the Spreckels Organ Society, which provides additional first, second, and third place cash awards to the top performers in the auditions and invites the top 6-8 students to perform on one of the Sunday afternoon concerts at the Spreckels Organ Pavilion.

Our auditions are held at a local church (different each year), and students are allowed practice time. As education coordinator for our chapter, I manage applications through Wufoo and requests for practice time via email, and keep the church informed of changes. Students register for the auditions through links on our chapter website's education page.

We provide an AGO membership to each student who auditions. We have a fall student recital to give the students an opportunity to perform.

We always approach churches with the invitation to partner with our chapter to grow the next generation of organists, and their staffs and congregation appreciate having the opportunity to

help. We always invite them to the live auditions and the honors concert, and make sure that they receive copies of the audition program along with a few photos. Auditions have worked most smoothly for us when we partner with a church that has someone on site through the early evening hours and where the organ has multiple memory levels.

We promote our auditions to our own members and encourage them to promote the auditions to their piano and organ students, children's choir members, and interested

church members. We also promote them through our local chapters of Choristers Guild, Music Teachers Association of California, and the Spreckels Organ Society. We also promote them during our Pipe Organ Encounters (our chapter has hosted six of these). Many of our students have participated in the Southern California Junior Bach Festival and Concordia University Irvine's Keyboard Day, providing us with additional opportunities to promote organ study.

We have a collection of used organ shoes, used music, and pedal extenders to loan to students as they begin their studies. This helps ease the cost for parents. The Spreckels Organ Society has recently started a practice organ loaner program for students, where the Society bears the cost of moving and maintaining the organ. One student is already enjoying his loaner Hammond organ, and a Baldwin organ will be available after some repair work has been done.

For 2020 and 2021, our auditions are virtual, since churches here are still have some pandemic restrictions. We look forward to returning to live auditions in 2022.

We have found that the most successful way to have students consider organ study is to INVITE them, rather than waiting for them to think of this on their own.

While we are delighted that a number of students who have participated in our auditions have gone on to study organ and have careers as church and/or concert organists, we believe that even those who do not choose organ as a career will be those who attend organ concerts, serve on organ committees at their churches, and, because of their introduction to the King of Instruments, will help us ensure a vibrant future for both organists and the organ.

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### **The Central Iowa Chapter Organ Scholarship (CIAOS) Fund**

Miriam Zach, Dean; [info@ciaago.org](mailto:info@ciaago.org)

The Central Iowa Organ Scholarship (CIAOS) Fund is established to foster musicians of all ages interested in beginning organ study in Central Iowa. Each application will be reviewed individually by the Central Iowa AGO Executive Committee.

FAQs:

#### **Q1) Do I need to continue taking piano lessons if accepted for scholarship?**

Continued piano studies and theory lessons are necessary for advancement on the organ. Your organ instructor will evaluate and help determine this as organ lessons progress.

#### **Q2) What will scholarship funds pay for?**

Students are granted awards for ten (60 minute) lessons with an approved organ instructor. Lesson arrangements are made between the student and instructor.

Students receive a document from their instructor specifying attendance, practice and participatory requirements to maintain eligibility for their scholarship.

Failure of student to maintain attendance, practice and participatory standards will result in lessons to cease or ineligibility for future funds.

**Q3) What are my student responsibilities?**

Maintain regular attendance at scheduled lessons, to practice regularly as determined by instructor so that progress is evident at each lesson, and to take part in performance opportunities.

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Maintain regular attendance at scheduled lessons, to practice regularly as determined by instructor so that progress is evident at each lesson, and to take part in performance opportunities.

**Q4) Where do I practice & how much time weekly am I expected to commit to this?**

Your instructor will help locate a practice organ if students do not have an instrument identified. The scheduling of practice times will be arranged between the student and the facility. The expected number of weekly practice times will be determined by the organ instructor. Lessons, practice times, and expectations are addressed in advance between instructor and student, as part of eligibility for scholarship funds.