



MTAC OCC NEWSLETTER

President's Message

Dear MTAC-OCC Teachers,

I hope this message finds you well and enjoying a wonderful and productive fall season with your students. We have an exciting month ahead with opportunities to learn, be inspired, and continue nurturing our students' musical growth!

Branch Meeting – Wednesday, November 12, 2025

We are honored to welcome our guest speaker, **Kai Ono**, who will share practical and inspiring strategies on how to introduce and guide your students in composition. You won't want to miss this valuable session—it's perfect for teachers with any level of experience in composition!

Theme Festival – Sunday, November 9, 2025

A huge thank you to **Julie Nakamura**, our Theme Festival Chair, for her dedication in chairing this exciting event. We look forward to celebrating our students' creativity and musicianship!

Community Service Recital – Saturday, November 15, 2025

Our heartfelt thanks to **Laura Combs** for passionately carrying on this meaningful tradition that brings joy to our students and community! We appreciate you, Laura!

Certificate of Merit Reminders

We know everyone is busy preparing for CM:

- Repertoire Edit Deadline – December 15, 2025
- Media Submission Window – February 14 - 24, 2026

Thank you all for your dedication to supporting student success during this busy season!

Lastly, my heartfelt appreciation goes to:

- **Deborah** and her team for their warm hospitality
- **Nancy Shao** for her prompt and efficient digital communications
- **Dongping McIntyre** and **Keiko Ikeda** for their tremendous help with setup, cleanup, and hosting at our first branch meeting

Your contributions make all the difference, and we are so grateful for each of you.

I look forward to seeing everyone at our upcoming events and celebrating another wonderful month of music together!

Warm regards,

Lan Vu

MTAC-OCC Branch President

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CALENDAR

November 2025

- 1 VOCE applications open online at mtac.org
- 9 **Sunday, Theme Festival, Saddleback College**
- 12 **Wednesday, 10:00 am. Branch Meeting, LHCC.**
Program: Rote Learning, Composition, and Improvisation
Presented by Kai Ono
- 15 Community Service Recital #1, 2-3 pm, Freedom Village Retirement Community
- 26 Community Service Recital #2 online registration opens, with payments due.
Registration closes at 20 entries at mtac-occ.org

December 2025

- 1 Deadline for VOCE applications online at mtac.org
- 1 Young Composers Guild (YCG) applications open.
More information can be found on mtac.org
- 1 Baroque Festival online registration opens on mtac-occ.org
- 10 VOCE application edit closes
- 15 Deadline for CM Repertoire completed online at new.mtac.org
- 18 Showcase Recital #2 online registration opens, with payments due.
Registration closes at 20 entries at mtac-occ.org
- 26 Deadline for Community Service Recital #2. Registration closes at 18 entries max.

January 2026

- 5 Deadline for Young Composers Guild (YCG) application.
More information can be found on mtac.org
- 10 Deadline for VOCE Media Submissions
- 10 Community Service Recital #2, 2-3 pm, Freedom Village Retirement Community
- 10-11 CM In-Person Evaluations. Go to new.mtac.org for more information
- 12 Deadline for Baroque Festival. Online registration and payments due at mtac-occ.org
- 14 **Wednesday, 10:00 am. Branch Meeting, LHCC**
Program: The Role of Imagination in a Young Beginner's Lessons
Presented by Dr. Samantha Cho
- 18 Deadline for Showcase Recital #2. Registration closes at 20 entries max.
- 20 Composers Today State Contest entry applications open. More information can be found on mtac.org
- 28 Deadline for Panel Regional Audition submissions

Note: All events and dates subject to change.

NOVEMBER BRANCH MEETING

Wednesday, November 12th at 10:00 AM

LHCC = Laguna Hills Community Center

[25555 Alicia Parkway, Laguna Hills, CA 92653](#)

Join us as we hear from **Kai Ono**, celebrated performer, composer, and teacher, as he speaks on the importance of incorporating composition into lessons. Composer of the beloved sets of children's pieces, "For the Birds" and "For the Little Birds," Kai will discuss introductory compositional ideas to equip us in our teaching.



"sonorities reminiscent of the stormy meter-high waves of a wild ocean."

Ostholsteiner Anzeiger

"spectacularly creative young pianist...a very poetic player"
Orange County Register

"masterfully played"
Lubecker Nachrichten

About Kai Ono

Kai Ono is an unmoving idealist and romanticist. He commands a musical style that sways between the cathartic and the intimate, the academic and the intuitive, the traditional and the innovative. He also loves games and birds.

As a pianist, Kai wields a vast array of genres, having performed at the international stage with each. Touring with indie rock band Melt in venues including Red Rocks Amphitheater, Hollywood Palladium, and the Greek Theater; performing with jazz greats including Shiela Jordan and Jay Clayton; classical recitals at Carnegie Hall and the Laeiszhalle of Hamburg; Kai's piano performance and creative ethos revolves around his rich experience in various styles.

Kai's cross-genre fluency expands into his composition. His most recent project, "For the Birds" and "For the Little Birds", published by My Melodies Publishing, is his educational recital pieces for beginner to intermediate students, combining his love for modal harmony with the joy of teaching. In the jazz realm, he is a recipient of a Downbeat Magazine and ASCAP Herb Alpert award; in the classical realm a National Federation of Music Clubs award winner. His artist project, OK KAI, innervated by his neo-soul and folk influences beyond his classical and jazz writing, is driven by his love for the marriage of compassion and intellectualism as well as singing with random people in a circle.

Kai's pedagogical ethos primarily revolves around the idea that a musical education is a valuable investment into one's culture and emotional intelligence. Heavily using rote learning and ear training on top of the usual skills such as reading sheet music, Kai's students forge a deeper relationship with music through the development of associations between musical elements and emotional affect. Kai teaches composition, arrangement, theory, music appreciation, or whatever else interests his students. He may even be prepared for a couple of animal facts for some curious students.

Kai graduated from the University of Kansas with a BM in Piano Performance and Composition with distinction, and as a Presser Scholar. He is eternally grateful for his amazing mentors he's studied under so far - piano with Dr. Scott McBride Smith and Chizuko Asada, composition with James Barnes, Dr. Forrest Pierce, Dr. Kip Haaheim, and Dan Gailey, and jazz piano with TJ Martley.

COMMUNITY SERVICE RECITAL #1

Community Service Recital #1

Recital Chair: Laura Combs, (949) 233-2806,
lauralinda@cox.net

Recital Administrator: Lan Vu, (949) 390-4084,
lanphuongvu@hotmail.com

Saturday November 15, 2025

Arrival Time: 1:45 pm

Performance Time: 2:00-3:00 pm

Location: Freedom Village Retirement Community, (949) 472-4700
22442 El Toro Rd., Building 1
Lake Forest, CA 92630

Dress Code: Dressy Apparel

This Recital is a wonderful opportunity for students to share their music that will brighten the day for so many, bring joy to the residents, and experience the true spirit of giving through performance. Community Service Recitals are always a heartwarming highlight for both performers and audience.



COMMUNITY SERVICE RECITAL #2

Community Service Recital #2

Recital Chair: Laura Combs, (949) 233-2806, lauralinda@cox.net

Recital Administrator: Lan Vu, (949) 390-4084, lanphuongvu@hotmail.com

Saturday January 10, 2026

Arrival Time: 1:45 pm

Performance Time: 2:00-3:00 pm

Online Registration Opens: November 26, 2025 at mtac-occ.org.

Location: Freedom Village Retirement Community, (949) 472-4700
22442 El Toro Rd., Building 1
Lake Forest, CA 92630

Deadline to sign up: December 26, 2025, or until registration reaches maximum capacity (18 students).

Registration Fee: \$10 per student. (Example: a duet will be charged \$20 total)

Dress Code: Dressy Apparel.

- Teachers may enter up to 3 students per recital.
- Teachers are **not** allowed to perform duets (four-hand piano music) with their students. It is acceptable for teachers to accompany their students for different instruments or voice.

Sign up your students early and be part of this meaningful event.



SHOWCASE RECITAL #2

Showcase Recital #2

Chair: Lan Vu, (949) 390-4084, lanphuongvu@hotmail.com

Sunday February 1, 2026

Arrival Time: 2:20 pm

Performance Time: 2:30-3:30 pm

Online Registration Opens: December 18, 2025 at mtac-occ.org.

Location: Laguna Hills Community Center

Deadline to sign up: January 18, 2026, or until registration reaches maximum capacity (20 students).

Registration Fee: \$15 per student. Ensembles: \$15 per student in the group.
(Example: a duet will be charged \$30 total)

Dress Code: Dressy Apparel

- Teachers may enter up to 3 students per recital.
- Teachers are not allowed to perform duets (four-hand piano music) with their students. It is acceptable for teachers to accompany their students for different instruments or voice.

Sign up your students early and be part of this remarkable event.



MTAC ORANGE COAST CITIES BRANCH BAROQUE FESTIVAL 2026

Baroque Festival 2026

Chair: Susan Wong, 310-529-5875, frau Wong@hotmail.com

Co-Chair: Maurita Eberly Hanford, 504-209-4185, mauritamusic@gmail.com

Festival Administrator: Pam Worcester, (949) 683-3293, pocky@cox.net

Festival Date & Location:

Saturday February 7, 2026 @ Saddleback College
(in-person recital format)

Application & Festival Deadline:

Opens: December 1, 2025

Closes: January 12, 2026 at 11:59 PM

@ mtac-occ.org.

**More details can be found on the website*

Application Fee: \$50 for solo entries, \$80 for duets (\$40/student), \$35/student for all other ensembles

(Note: This is different from the BACH FESTIVAL. Please read Bach Festival rules for details on how to register students.)

NEW this year: Students may enter either or BOTH the Baroque Festival or the Bach Festival.

For our Baroque festival, teachers may enter as many students as they like. **There will NOT be an 8 student limit.** Contributory Members may NOT enter students. You may request AM or PM if absolutely necessary. More specific scheduling requests cannot be accommodated.

The purpose of the MTAC OCC branch festival is to provide an opportunity for students to perform in a recital while gaining supportive comments from the judges. Students will also have the opportunity to hear music from a specific "theme" or musical period, depending on the festival they enter. The event is not meant to be a highly competitive experience, but rather a way for students to be acknowledged for their hard work and gain feedback to further their music studies.

There is also the option to choose the Non-competitive category, for those students who would solely like to join for performance experience.

BAROQUE FESTIVAL RULES

- The Baroque Festival is open to all levels of piano, instrumental, and voice students, both solos and ensembles. In addition, Pre-Classical repertoire will be accepted. Contact the Festival Chair or Festival Administrator with repertoire questions.
- Students will receive awards of medals, ribbons, and certificates based entirely on adjudicators' decisions. **Students may enter a Non-Competitive category if they prefer to only receive adjudicator comments.** Otherwise, students are separated into the following age categories:
 - 11 and under
 - 12-14
 - 15-18
 - Adult

**The top 25% of students in each age category receive 1st Place Medals, the next 25% of students in each category receive 2nd Place Blue Ribbons, the next 25% of students receive Honorable Mention Red Ribbons, and the next 25% receive Yellow Participation Ribbon.*

Teachers may enter an unlimited number of students.

Each student must actually study with the teacher who is entering him/her in the festival, and should have studied with the teacher for six months prior to the festival, unless permission is given by the previous teacher, or the teacher change was necessary because of a geographic move.

There is a **five minute time limit** per performer. Pieces longer than five minutes may be ended by the presider.

Please remember that a **MAXIMUM of TWO pieces** per student are allowed ONLY if they are by the SAME COMPOSER and from the SAME COLLECTION. Each piece must be under TWO minutes.

All music **must be memorized** with the exception of duets, ensembles, and accompanists.

Music should be in its **original form**, NOT simplified or transcribed.

No keyboard concerti will be allowed.

Grounds for festival disqualification include failure to bring music for the judges, bringing photocopied music, performance of a piece other than the piece entered, and incomplete or inaccurate entry applications. **In addition, accompanists cannot use photocopied music except to facilitate a page turn.**

Teachers are expected to work at the festivals in which they have entered students; failure to do so may result in a monetary fine or other penalties.

Teachers may **not** accompany their own students.

Parents may only videotape their son or daughter's performance.

BAROQUE FESTIVAL APPLICATION PROCEDURE

Registration closes at 11:59 PM on January 12, 2026.

Please ask your **students' parents** to go to mtac-occ.org to register. They will need the following information:

- Teacher name, email, phone, and branch teacher #
- Student name, instrument, level, birthdate, and current age
- Parent/Legal guardian name, email, and phone
- AM/PM time request, sibling request
- Consent waivers
- Repertoire: Composer, piece, time (piece length)
- Parent pays entry fee

If teachers are unable to attend the branch meeting on March 11, 2026 and wish to have the result packet mailed, please submit **\$11.90 (or current flat rate)** for postage (USPS Priority Mail flat rate) at the **Baroque Festival Teacher Postage Fee link**.

Reminder: No checks or cash will be accepted. Registration and postage fees are non-refundable.

Absolutely NO CHANGES, ADDITIONS, OR LATE ENTRIES will be accepted after the January 12, 2026 deadline as the website registration will close automatically.

After the registration deadline:

Participating teachers will receive information on students' performance time, teachers' work schedule, and map/directions via email.

On the festival day:

Make sure that each student knows the rules for recital etiquette, dresses appropriately, and brings a copy of the music (NO PHOTOCOPIES) with measures numbered.

Within a few days of the festival:

The Medal winners and Blue Ribbon winners will be posted on the mtac-occ.org webpage by student numbers. Certificates, evaluation sheets, medals, and ribbons may be picked up at the March 11, 2026 Branch Meeting.

CERTIFICATE OF MERIT

Branch CM Adviser - Gloria Liu Traulle, gltraulle@gmail.com
Voice CM Repertoire Expert – Susan Wong, frauwwong@hotmail.com
Piano CM Repertoire Expert Team:
Anne Prestridge, anneprestridge@gmail.com
Laurie Meinhold lemeinhold@cox.net

The 2025-2026 CM ONLINE Evaluation (CM/South Region 2)
Online Evaluation Media Submission, Sight-reading, and Theory online test.
Open on February 14 - 24, 2026, For All Instruments

In-Person Evaluation Date: January 10-11, 2026

Location: Claremont Community School of Music in Claremont, CA
January 10-11, 2026 In-Person Evaluation Schedule

Please check all detailed information from the teacher or parent portal.

Application Edit Close Date: December 15, 2025

Panel Level Eligibility Update

Beginning for Panel 2025, students must be at the Advanced to be eligible for a Panel Regional Audition for all instruments. No exceptions will be made.

All online CM Students will need to hold up an official MTAC recording cover sheet at the beginning of each repertoire video recording. The Recording Cover Sheet will be posted on the CM Teacher Resources and the CM Parent Resources page.

- Students who do not use the recording cover sheet will receive an "Ineligible Results" rating for that repertoire piece. [Certificate of Merit® 2026 Recording Coversheet](#)

2025 New Online CM Syllabus System update

All active teachers, parents, and students can access the new syllabus through the “**Resources**” section of their portal.

[Click here for the Online CM Syllabus System](#) to open the new syllabus for the instrument.

**This includes applying to all levels of CM, Panel and YAG, and submitting Special Needs Accommodation Requests.*

Using Photocopies for Page Turns

MTAC Policy states that students who use photocopied sheet music during their video recordings or live evaluations will receive an automatic Remain at Level rating for their evaluation. The only exceptions are copies to facilitate page turns (an original, published sheet music book must be on the music stand during the video recording or the live evaluation) and copies for confirmed out-of-print material. If the original, published sheet music book is not on the music stand, the student will receive the Remain at Level rating.

CERTIFICATE OF MERIT, cont.

For technical assistance, please contact the [MTAC State Office](#).
Office hours are Monday through Friday, from 9 AM to 5 PM PT.

Young Artist Guild Information yag@mtac.org
CM Digital Contents: All information also listed on teachers and
parents' portal under "Resources"

Online CM Syllabus Training Video

[CM Syllabus Webinar Presentation](#)

[Quick Guide to the New Online CM Syllabus](#)

CM General Information

For help, go to: [Frequently Asked Questions & Contact Information](#)

- [CM 2025-2026 Calendar](#)
- [CM 2025-2026 Sight Reading and Sight Singing Instructions](#)

Policies and Procedures

- [Official 2025-2026 CM Policies and Procedures - NEW!](#)
- [Teacher's Guide to Requesting Special Needs Accommodations for Certificate of Merit® - New!](#)

Panel and YAG

- [Official 2025-26 CM Panel Auditions and YAG Guidelines - New!](#)
- [Panel Sample Piano Repertoire](#)

Teacher Training Materials

- [CM 2026 Teacher Training Quiz - New!](#)
- [CM 2025-2026 Teacher CM Information Videos Playlist - New!](#)

CM Enrollment Instructional Guides

- [Teacher Instructions to Add a New Student 2025-2026](#)
- [Teacher's Guide to the 2025-2026 Certificate of Merit® Enrollment Process - New!](#)
- [CM 2025-2026 Teacher's Guide to Changing the CM Level and/or Grade after Payment - New!](#)
- [CM How To Enter Repertoire Guideline](#)
- [How to Add Collaborative Pianist](#)
- [Change of Teacher Guide 2025-2026 - New!](#)

CERTIFICATE OF MERIT, cont.

CM Test Overview Videos

- [CM Sight-Reading Overview Video](#)
- [CM Sight-Singing Overview Video](#)
- [CM Technique Overview Video](#)
- [CM Theory Test Overview Video](#)

CM 2026 Testing Resources

- [CM Keyboard and Staff Paper](#)
- [CM Voice Vocal Technique Exercises and Vocalises in 5 Keys](#)
- [CM Voice Sight-Singing Examples](#)
- [Certificate of Merit® 2026 Recording Coversheet - To be used exclusively for Certificate of](#)

Merit® 2026 Evaluations

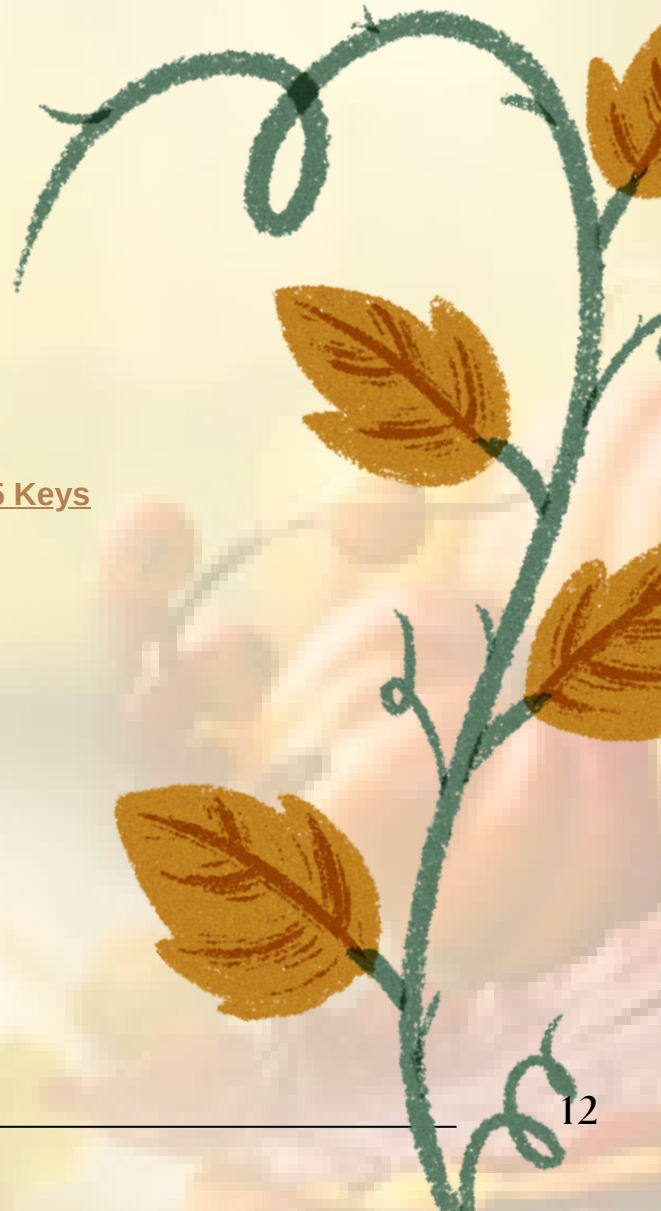
- [CM 2025-2026 Teacher's Guide to the Practice Portal](#)

Online CM Syllabus System Directory

- [CM Cello Syllabus, 2025 Edition](#)
- [CM Piano Syllabus, 2025 Edition](#)
- [CM Violin Syllabus, 2025 Edition](#)
- [CM Viola Syllabus, 2025 Edition](#)
- [CM Voice Syllabus, 2025 Edition](#)

Syllabi Resources

- [CM Voice Syllabus Addendum](#)
- [CM Voice Vocal Technique Exercises and Vocalises in 5 Keys](#)
- [CM Voice Sight-Singing Examples](#)
- [MTAC Copyright Policy](#)



VOCE

THE MTAC STATE PROGRAM

All details of the competition will be posted online by the VOCE program.

VOCE Region Chair Jane Masur, Guido d'Arezzo, Rhonda Williams, Plain Jane Doe
VOCE State Chair: Kathy You Wilson

Regional Competitions

Students first perform in Regional Competitions. A non-competitive format is available for students who are not quite ready for competition, allowing them to perform for judges' comments without the pressure of competing to move onto the State Finals Competition.

A non-competitive format is available for students who are not quite ready for competition, allowing them to perform for judges' comments without being judged against other students.

State Finals

First place winners of Regional Competitions advance to State Finals. Registration fees are non-refundable.

Winners Recital

First place winners of State Finals perform at the State Convention in order to receive their cash awards and plaques.

VOCE Region South Region

VOCE Dates & Deadlines

VOCE Region Audition Information ONLINE Competition

Nov. 1, 2025, Application Open
Dec. 1, 2025, Application Close
Dec. 10, 2025, Application Fee Payment Due Date
Dec. 10, 2025, Application Edit Close Date
Jan 10, 2026, Media Due Date
Feb. 14, 2026, Results Available

State Competition Information ONLINE Competition

March 15, 2026, Media Due Date
March 15, 2026, State Finals Fee Due Date
April 6, 2026, State Finals Results Available
May 15, 2026, Convention Schedule Publish Date
June 27, 2026, Convention Date: Hilton Los Angeles Airport , 5711 W Century Blvd, Los Angeles, CA 90045

VOCE Information

- [How to Add Collaborative Pianist](#)
- [MTAC Copyright Policy](#)
- [How to follow the MTAC Copyright Policy](#)
- [Supporting Creators of Music \(National Music Council/Music Publishers Association\)](#)

VOCE Regional Competition

- [VOCE 2026 Regionals Recording Cover Sheet - NEW!](#)

MEMBERSHIP

Dear O.C.C. members, I hope you're all doing well this November!

If your contact information has changed or needs to be updated, please email Jennie Huang at jh05168@gmail.com.

Please remember to update your information in your MTAC Teacher's portal as well to ensure you receive all emails from the state office.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Jennie Huang

O.C.C. Membership Chair/2nd Vice President



ORANGE COAST CITIES BRANCH OFFICERS 2025 - 2026

President.....Lan Vu
 First Vice President (Programs)Dr. Priscilla Chang-Pai
 Second Vice President (Membership).....Jennie Huang
 Treasurer.....Laura Combs
 Recording Secretary.....Anne Prestidge
 Corresponding Secretary.....Dr. Shelby Wong

Directors:

Past President.....Chamonix Patterson
 Festival Administrator.....Pamela Worcester
 Recital AdministratorLan Vu
 Certificate of Merit & CM Strings.....Gloria Liu Traullé
 CM VoiceSusan Wong
 Digital Communications.....Nancy Shao
 Director..... Dr. Lawrence Mumford
 Director..... Julie Nakamura
 Director..... Kara Christianson Ahmann
 Director.....Maurita Eberly Hanford
 Director.....Sally Honda

Past Presidents

1974-1976	Dr. M'lou Dietzer	1997-1999	Pamela Worcester
1976-1978	Donna Bashaw	1999-2001	Laurie Meinhold
1978-1980	Joyce Conway	2001-2003	Valerie Radlick
1980-1982	Shirley Case	2003-2005	Carol Sporleder
1982-1984	Margery Ellesmere- Jones (Burger)	2005-2007	Nilou Sarraf
1984-1986	June Lusk Nelson	2007-2009	Angela Leu
1986-1988	Lyle Samuel	2009-2011	Keiko Ikeda
1988-1990	Arlene Schreder	2011-2012	Esther Park
1990-1992	Trudy Pauperas	2012-2015	Pamela Worcester
1992-1994	Nancy Rohr	2015-2017	Nancy Lau
1994-1995	Meldene Gruber	2017-2018	Angela Leu
1995-1997	Judy Jenkins	2018-2023	Deborah Glass
		2023-2025	Chamonix Patterson

BRANCH INFORMATION

For maps and directions to branch venues,
please visit <https://www.mtac-occ.org/maps-directions>

LHCC = Laguna Hills Community Center
Address: 25555 Alicia Pkwy, Laguna Hills, CA 92653
Map - [Laguna Hills Community Center](#)

Saddleback College, 28000 Marguerite Pkwy,
Mission Viejo, CA 92692- [Saddleback College Campus Map](#)

MTAC-OCC Branch Events at Saddleback College:

Park in Lot 12, but DO NOT park in a space marked for faculty or staff.
Parking permits must be purchased from the Lot 12 kiosk.

The Fine Arts building is just above the parking lot next to the McKinney Theater.

WANT TO PLACE AN AD?

If you would like to see your advertisement here, please e-mail Dr. Shelby Wong (newsletter editor) at shelbywongmusician@gmail.com with "MTAC OCC Newsletter Ad Request" in the subject line. **Please submit requests by the 20th before the next month's newsletter.**

For non-commercial and educational events, ads are free for both MTAC-OCC members and nonmembers.

For commercial, buy/sell, and business advertisements, there is a \$20 fee per issue (5 issues per year: Sep, Nov, Jan, Mar, and May) for a partial space of the page. Only advertisements that are beneficial for members' professional life will be published.

All advertisements are subject to approval by the board.