

2016 Teacher of the Year

Dorothy Travis

Dorothy's service to MMTA and to our music teaching profession at large, have both been deep, longstanding and unwavering.

Dorothy has exemplified herself in commitment to the MTNA Competitions as Chair of the Massachusetts Competitions. Over the years, this competition, with all its many sections and levels, has grown progressively more complicated and demanding. Dorothy has represented MMTA with unswerving calm, understanding, efficiency, warmth and organization. She has dealt with competitors, their parent, judges, teachers and volunteers with ease and cheer, without compromising the rules and regulations imposed on the competition by National.



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In June of 2014, MMTA suffered a crisis just before it's spring Board meeting – the member who had been nominated as President suddenly resigned. Dorothy, who was about to be nominated as President-Elect, unflinchingly and without hesitation, stepped up and offered to go immediately into the role of President. I can honestly say that this saved the organization from many months of what could have been a foundering, leaderless transition.

Dorothy proceeded to seamlessly take over, bringing her characteristic depth and thoughtfulness to even the most contentious Board discussions. She is superbly able to be official without being rigid, to be organized without being inflexible, to hear opposing viewpoints and negotiate all of us to a conclusion of consensus.

Dorothy has gone to great lengths to establish transparency, identify and involve new members, communicate efficiently and promptly, refine our level of organizational protocol and, especially, represent our state at the National level with intelligence, grace and strength.

Dorothy received her Bachelor of Music from the Crane School of Music at SUNY Potsdam where she studied with James Ball and Delores Johnson. She received her Master of Music with a concentration in Piano Performance and Pedagogy from Northwestern University studying Performance with Guy Mombert and Piano Pedagogy with Frances Larimer.

Dorothy has an extensive background as a Music Director having prepared the cast and orchestra for dozens of theater productions. She regularly music directs and plays in the orchestra at regional theaters and high schools. She has also been the Pianist for **Polymnia Choral Society** for over ten years, whose performances meet with rave reviews.

Dorothy is unequivocally dedicated to improving every aspect of the world around her. For example, she is active in her Temple Beth Shalom and was responsible in large part to its rebuilding and rededication in 2009 as a thriving place of worship.

I share this quote from the **Polymnia Choral Society** website: *“In her private piano studio, Dorothy believes in an eclectic approach for each student, providing a safe environment in which to cultivate each musician. She blends a combination of singing, ensemble work, sight-reading, theory, harmony, technique, and repertoire to motivate students of all ages to find their inner muse. Her students have received recognition and awards from the Beethoven Society Scholarship Recital, MMTA Judged Festivals, and Polymnia's own Spotlight on High School Talent.”*

Dorothy Travis is a consummate leader. She communicates by both written and verbal means, at the highest level. She excels at developing a sense of positive motion for our programs and goals. She includes and affirms all voices. And, most importantly, she recognizes that running a volunteer professional organization is first and foremost about the humanity of its members. Please join me in acknowledging Dorothy Travis' contribution to MMTA, MTNA, our profession and the community around her.

Respectfully submitted by Alison Barr