



Palos Verdes/South Bay Chapter

Newsletter - June 2021

*Discovering Ways to Connect through
Making Music*

From the keyboard of the Co-President:

As this never-will-be forgotten year winds down, there are many things about which we could complain, grieve, be angry and resentful; we could lash out at all the terrible things that have happened because of the pandemic; forever mourn the loss of loved ones, and even those with whom we were unacquainted; we could be furious with the political and social divisiveness; we could cry out in despair for those whose business or income suffered irreparable losses. But of what avail!!? Focused on the darkness, we cannot see the light and it is the light that brings us out of darkness. Leading the way is music. Grand and glorious music!!!

Our beloved Mu Phi Chapter has been a bright and beautiful light shining throughout this long and challenging year. Our wonderful VPs of Programs, **Mika Yamamoto** and **Jennifer Holly Cannon**, have planned and presented fabulous programs; we were able to hold Scholarship Auditions, twice, under the capable management of **Jean Cobb** and **Pat Maki**; we held possibly our most successful Musical Mosaic yet, as a virtual success story, assisted by many dedicated and skillful members; we presented some of our talented students in a virtual Young Performers Showcase recital; we shared their recorded recital with two assisted living communities; and we even had some Holiday fun and games very cleverly planned by **Lenita McCallum Witherspoon**.

The latest tribute to this outstanding Chapter is the Mayor's Award from the city of Rancho Palos Verdes as recognition of our Chapter's contributions to the community. Many thanks to **Lenée Bilski** for making us aware of the award and assisting us through the process.

Throughout this entire year, music soared above sorrow and sadness and filled each of our gatherings with its lovely strains, uplifted our hearts, inspired our souls, and embraced each of us in its comforting charms. There is so much for which to be grateful and let each of us sing and shout with joy that we are survivors, we have endured, we have overcome obstacles, and we are moving forward, triumphant!! Music strengthened and inspired us to win the day!

Darlene Vlasek

Member and Patron News

- It is the season for honors! While we were finishing up our spring lessons and filing those endless reports, **Lenée Bilski** recommended our chapter apply for the Rancho Palos Verdes Mayor's Award. **LaVerne**, responding to the call, submitted the application. On June 1st, the RPV City Council set aside time to acknowledge our chapter for its service to the community. **LaVerne M. McCoy, Darlene Vlasek and Lenée Bilski** were recognized and invited to address the community via the zoom meeting. In addition, several city councilpersons spoke to the importance of music in their lives and lauded our membership for its contributions.



From the city's announcement: "Rancho Palos Verdes residents, and members of the Palos Verdes/South Bay Alumni Chapter of Mu Phi Epsilon, **Lenée Bilski, Ramona Gifford, Kathy Kerstein, Jean L. Strickland, Lois Jen Tai, Anli Lin Tong, Darlene Vlasek** and **Jin Yoo** assisted in raising over \$12,000 in 2019-2020 to support youth music and music therapy through grants and scholarships. Since 2011, the Palos Verdes/South Bay Alumni Chapter of Mu Phi Epsilon has held an annual Musical Mosaic fundraiser and raised over \$150,000 for instruments, music stands, teaching support, and sound equipment for 18 South Bay schools."

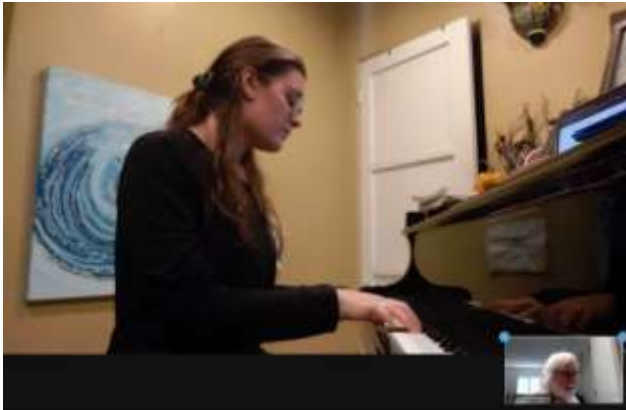
- On June 5th, the new Slate of Board Members for 2021-22 will be installed:
President: **LaVerne M. McCoy**
Vice Presidents: **Jennifer Holly Cannon, Mika Yamamoto**
Treasurers: **David Champion, Lois Tai**
Recording Secretary: **Lenita McCallum**
Newsletter Editor: **Michelle Hazen**
Webmaster: **Julio J. Sequeira, Jennifer Holly Cannon**
Chorister: **Lorna Katz**
School Liaison: **Debra Shrader**
Past President: **Darlene Vlasek**

Last month's MPE Meeting

Scholarship Winners of 2020

On May 16th, our monthly zoom was enhanced by recorded performances from the scholarship winners of 2020. **Brenda Osorio**, Memorial Scholarship winner, delighted us with her voice. **I-Chun Kuo**, winner of the Pearl Kim Award, performed on the piano. **Cassidy Feskowetz**, soprano, winner of a Patron Scholarship, sang a song. **Aaron Greer**, also winner of a Patron Scholarship, sang a lovely solo. **De Ana Abinante**, winner of the Ruth Cuccia Memorial Scholarship, demonstrated her composition abilities, singing and playing one of her songs. Finally, we were impressed with **Carlos Rodriguez**' prowess on the guitar,

winner of another Patron Scholarship. Even though the performances were pre-recorded, most of the artists joined us on the zoom meeting, so we could ask questions of them and applaud their efforts. It was a wonderful way to pass an afternoon.



Anli Lin Tong is the winner of this year's Violet Award, announced at the May 16th meeting. Congratulations on this well-deserved honor. Through careful planning, Anli was surprised by the announcement at our May 16th meeting. Congratulations, Anli, for your extensive service to our chapter.



DATES FOR YOUR CALENDAR

June 1st, 2021 – Newsletter deadline and **RPV Mayor's Award**

June 5th, 2021 – 5:00 PM – Installation of officers and announcement of scholarship winners for 2021

July 6th, 2021 – Newsletter deadline

July 13th, 2021 – 9:30 AM – MPE Board Meeting

July 21-24, 2021 – Mu Phi Epsilon International Convention (see website to register for the virtual conference: <https://www.muphiepsilon.org/international-convention> with early bird rates good until June 11th)

Zoom Link for This Month's Meeting:

Topic: Mu Phi Epsilon Palos Verdes/South Bay Alumni Chapter

Time: Saturday, Jun 5, 2021 05:00 PM Pacific Time

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81006914175?pwd=dIVURnhqa3BQSU10U1g1aUJwUXhldz09>

Meeting ID: 810 0691 4175

Passcode: 510641

To join with a mobile phone:

+16699009128,,81006914175#,,,,*510641# US

To join with a landline phone: +1 669 900 9128