



August 19, 2020

Greetings colleagues,

I suspect that most of you are settling back in to teaching and are navigating this very “interesting” time in our musical lives. If you have not yet returned to teaching, time is drawing near.

As we continue to doggedly face challenges of music-making in the time of COVID-19, I’ve been impressed by the NC chapter and by our organization at large and its commitment to delivering high-quality music and vocal education despite the pandemic. I continue to be inspired by the dedication of our members to “Sing On, Sing On!”

You may recall from my summer letter, new officers have been installed and our Fall MT/CCM auditions will be virtual to ensure the safety of our singers, teachers, collaborative pianists, parents, family, and friends. Our new VP/Auditions Chair, Dr. Brittnee Siemon will be in touch within the next week or so to provide you audition information.

As we’ve adjusted to these new conditions, our experiences with and responses to technology and online auditions has varied greatly and some members may feel anxious about an online audition process. Know that this is not difficult, just different, and with Dr. Siemon leading the way and NC NATS members with online experience willing to encourage and assist their colleagues, I believe we can have another stellar and record-breaking fall event. As the African proverb partially states, “it takes a village..” and I expect that our village will rise to the occasion.

I have some wonderful news to share. In addition to the Hall Johnson Spiritual Category which is offered every other year (currently even-numbered years), National has announced the implementation of a new NSA category: the American Negro Spiritual Category. This will be offered in odd-numbered years which means we plan to offer this category at our spring auditions in 2021. There will be 3 divisions of this category: High School, First through Third Year of College, and Fourth/Fifth Year of College through Graduate. Information on the category, history, repertoire requirements, and awards can be found here: https://www.nats.org/American_Negro_Spirituals_Competition.html

National has also shared that of the \$7500 necessary to offer this category at the National Student Auditions this year, they have raised \$3750. If you are able, I encourage you to donate to this NSA fund at: https://www.nats.org/DONATE_to_NSA_Award_Fund.html .

Stay strong. Stay focused. Stay committed. Stay safe and now.....LET’S DO THIS!

Wendy Jones

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