



Music Lessons on Piano, Voice, Guitar & Violin

December 2025 Newsletter



Alek Wasserman, Founder



[triadmusicacademy.com](https://www.triadmusicacademy.com)

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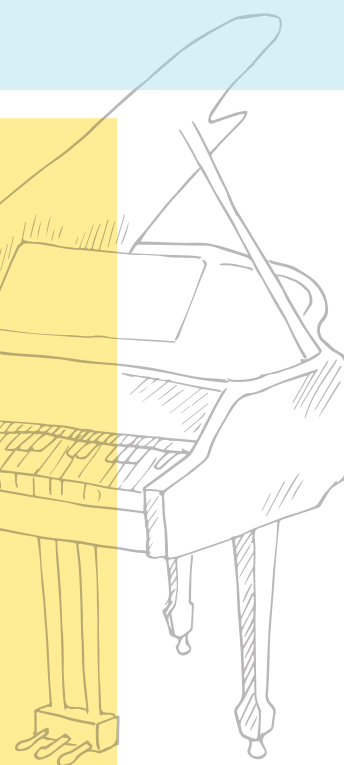
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2025 Student of the Year: Gabe Cole

Piano Student of Shannon Lindegren



Gabe Cole, Pianist

Triad Music Academy is thrilled to announce Gabe Cole, pianist, as our 2025 student of the year!

Gabe, who comes from a musical family, has shown consistent dedication to his craft over the years that he has been a TMA student.

He shines with his passion both for following the instruction in his method books and in learning pop and rock tunes, a rare combination.

Gabe's talent, curiosity, and persistence all point in one direction: a lifetime of joyous musicmaking at the piano!

"Gabe is the most motivated middle school music student I have ever met. He has a natural passion for music that has driven him to increase lesson time, and begin to develop his own sense of musicianship. Gabe already has short-term musical goals for the near future, and that is an inspiration to anyone who has the pleasure of interacting with him!"

- TMA Piano Instructor Shannon Lindegren



2025 Student of the Year: Gabe Cole

Piano Student of Shannon Lindegren

Q: How long have you been playing the piano, and what is something you've learned that really stands out to you?

A: I've been playing for 2 years, and something that I learned that stands out is that I've learned to catch most of my mistakes from my improved sight reading, rhythm, and technique. I am proud of how far I have come in my musical career.

Q: What is your favorite aspect of playing the piano, and why?

A: My favorite aspect is when you try and try to get the piece of music to its peak the best you can, and when its sounding great, and it's coming together, it makes you feel good.

Q: What is the biggest challenge you've overcome on your piano journey so far?

A: I think the biggest challenge I had to overcome this year was rhythm.

Currently I have been working better with rhythm and have noticed the before and the after.

Q: What are your other interests and activities aside from playing the piano? Do you know what you want to do when you grow up?

A: Other interests I have are playing the electric guitar and to try and make music on my computer with equipment. As time goes by, I plan to be the pianist and guitarist in a future band.

Q: What does it mean to you to be named Triad Music Academy's Student of the Year?

A: To be TMA student of the year makes me feel really good. It tells me that I have improved. Now what I want to do is to keep playing piano and guitar until I've mastered both. Then, maybe I will be in a band.

"Gabe brings a lot of joy into the studio every week when he comes to lesson. When I've had the chance to hear him play, I've been very impressed with his natural sense of musicality and his obvious passion. He has all the traits necessary to take music as far as he wants, and he makes TMA better every time he's in the studio." - Alek Wasserman, TMA Founder & Lead Piano Instructor



Teacher of the Month: Hayley Mullins

Piano Instructor



Q: How did you decide to become a professional musician? What did the journey look like for you?

A: I had my first piano student as a high school junior, but music as a career path was mostly accidental! I have a lot of interests, so I wavered between majors. When my local university offered me piano and marching band scholarships, I made a purely pragmatic decision! Since then, I have had a diverse music career! I've gotten to work as a collaborative pianist, voice instructor, music editor, and classroom teacher. Being a musician makes life

more interesting!

Q: What is your favorite type of music to listen to? What do you like to perform?

A: I really love anything with interesting harmonies or thoughtful lyrics: choral music, Motown, singer-songwriter, cool jazz . . . genre doesn't matter to me! For background music, I love video game soundtracks! If I'm performing these days, I'm either playing or singing at my church, or playing something popular or by a French classical composer for friends.

Q: Do you have any hobbies or special interests outside of music?

A: Yes! I read a ton, both fiction and non-fiction, and listen to podcasts. I also enjoy hiking, cooking, and traveling. To unwind, I play Nintendo and support Liverpool FC.

"Hayley is an amazing piano teacher. Her students love learning with her, and she is able to work with such a diverse set of student needs and musical backgrounds. TMA would not be the same without her."

- Alek Wasserman, TMA Founder & Lead Piano Instructor



Fall Recitals Recap

On Sunday, November 23rd, we witnessed wonderful performances from 98 students, our highest total yet! 89 piano students and 8 guitar students, and one singer-songwriter wowed us with their awesome playing!



New Piano Instructor: Dr. CJ Everett



Triad Music Academy welcomes our newest piano instructor, Dr. CJ Everett!

CJ joins the studio as our first-ever instructor to hold a doctoral degree, something we are very excited about!

Primarily a dance pianist, CJ expressed his desire to add teaching back into his routine during the interview process. He brings a warm demeanor and expertise that every student can learn from.

CJ said the following about his approach to teaching:

"My background as an artist in several fields informs all of my work as a performer and educator. In addition to music, I have studied and engaged in the fields of architecture, graphic design, sculpture, and clothing design.

"A passion for art allows me to approach every aspect of musicianship creatively, so I encourage students to discover how solid technique makes room for creative exploration. My overarching goal with teaching is to inspire passion for music as a creative art."

CJ holds a Doctor of Musical Arts from the University of Southern Mississippi, a Master of Music from Florida State University, and both a Bachelor of Music and a Bachelor of Arts from Miami University in Ohio.

CJ works full-time for UNCSA as a Performing Artist (dance pianist) and is originally from New York State.

Lesson Openings

Program	Day	Time
<u>Piano</u>	Monday	3:30-4:00 PM 5:30-6:00 PM 6:30-7:30 PM
	Tuesday	5:30-6:30 PM
	Wednesday	5:30-6:00 PM
<u>Guitar</u>	Friday	3:30-4:00 PM
	Saturday	11:15-11:45 AM
<u>Voice</u>	Thursday	6:00-6:45 PM
<u>Violin</u>	Fully Booked!	N/A
<u>Piano (In-Home)</u>	Sunday-Friday	Various Times (Email us!)

Upcoming Events!

Allison Gagnon Piano Duet Masterclass

Saturday, December 6th @ 3:00 PM

Triad Music Academy

Dr. Allison Gagnon
Collaborative Piano Department
Chair, UNC School of the Arts



Select Triad Music Academy students will be chosen to perform. Email alek@triadmusicacademy.com if you would like to watch!