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ASSOCIATION NOTES

Let Me Tell You About My Summer

Over the last few weeks the following question has echoed throughout studios across NATSdom, "How was your summer?" As a new school year begins and private studios crank up for fall lessons this question often breaks the ice at each student's first lesson and is an early question among colleagues as they reassemble for another academic year. For many in our profession the summer is a flurry of activity of a different sort: keeping up with our singers in various summer programs, teaching in various settings, travelling, preparing for upcoming engagements, planning new courses, recruiting new students, planning fall concerts, attending professional development events, and singing ourselves. Hopefully we also had some time to rest and enjoy the company of family and good friends along the way.



Allen Henderson,
NATS Executive Director

On a professional level, one of the highlights of my summer, and many other NATS members who joined me, was our time together in Boston at our 53rd National Conference. Over 950 of us gathered for fun, fellowship among colleagues, and professional development. It was truly a great event that could not have happened without the work of our colleagues and national office staff who worked hard to plan and execute. Check out some of the photos on our [Flickr page](#). It was a pleasure to read many comments on the evaluation forms expressing appreciation for the diversity of presenters and the overall high quality of the presentations. We also saw the culmination of several years of work with the very first NATIONAL Student Auditions. This will now be an ANNUAL happening with the 2015 National Student Auditions taking place in Greensboro, NC at our NATS Summer Workshop. We also have a committee working to create and implement unified audition guidelines to facilitate this new format.

One would think that after the conference some down time would be in order, but we have been busy at work finalizing and launching [Vocapedia!](#) If you have not already seen this resource, visit www.vocapedia.info. As we announced at

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Continued: About My Summer

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the conference this summer and on our website, Vocapedia is envisioned and constructed to be THE trusted resource on singing. With the enormous amount of information on the Internet about singing, both teachers and students can often find inaccurate information when searching the Internet. Every resource that is placed on Vocapedia is reviewed and vetted for accuracy before being added. Most importantly it is a resource built by YOU as you suggest quality resources you use regularly or have created yourselves. Visit this resource, suggest it to your students and colleagues and most of all, click on “suggest a resource” and help us build this repository of trusted resources for our profession.

If you missed our conference in Boston, all is not lost. With the launch of our **NATS Live Learning Center**, you can purchase access to individual sessions you missed or to the entire conference. We will soon be adding sessions from the Orlando, Salt Lake City, and Nashville conferences as well. This will be another excellent resource for you personally and for your students.

This summer we also launched our new book series **So You Want to Sing** in cooperation with Rowman and Littlefield. Karen Hall’s book, *So You Want to Sing Music Theater* is now available with Matthew Edwards’ *So You Want to Sing Rock ‘N’ Roll*, available in October and Jan Shapiro’s *So You Want to Sing Jazz* available in January. Next year we will publish

Trineice Robinson-Martin’s *So You Want to Sing Gospel*, Kelly Garner’s *So You Want to Sing Country*, and one other title. With a goal of 9-12 titles in the series, this will be a reference series that you and your students can regularly use in order to expand skills in performing and teaching a variety of genres. Best of all royalties from this series will go to funding research on Contemporary Commercial Music.

All of these efforts are designed to help you improve your skill as a teacher, help your students broaden their skill set, and facilitate and improve your access to information that is relevant to your work. I hope you will avail yourself of these resources.

Lest you think my entire summer was work, work, work, it began by celebrating my daughter’s graduation from Barnard College (one down, three to go!); seeing Audra McDonald inhabit Billie Holiday, Kelli O’Hara and colleagues in *Bridges of Madison County* and Jacob Keith Watson and colleagues in *Violet*; a week in the North Carolina mountains singing in a chamber choir; a visit to the JFK Library; and a Labor Day weekend trip to sing “Rocky Top” with a 105,000 voice choir in Neyland Stadium at the opening of the University of Tennessee football season.

I hope your summer was similarly exciting and filled with activity. Now pardon me while I get back to teaching so I can get some rest!

As always, I welcome your comments at allen@nats.org.

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