

Diane Higgins

Our Students Have Something to Say! Exploring Student Creativity in Your Studio from Start to Finish



Friday, October 16th, 2026

Location: Jordan Kitt's Music
5164 Virginia Beach Blvd.
Virginia Beach, VA

10:00 Business Meeting & Workshop

12:00 Lunch

Biography: Diane W. Higgins is an Independent Piano and Composition Instructor, and she has maintained a music studio in the Charlotte area for over 35 years. She earned her Bachelor of Music degree in Piano Performance at Salem College, where she studied piano with Clemmons Sandresky, music theory and composition with composer Margaret Vardell Sandresky, and piano pedagogy with Margaret Mueller. Diane has also been a violin member with the Charlotte Symphony, Winston-Salem Symphony, and Charlotte Civic Orchestra. As a promoter of teaching composition in the studio, Diane has been invited to present composition sessions to MTNA National Conferences in 2024 (ATL) and 2012 (NYC), State MTA Conferences, pedagogy classes at universities and colleges, local associations, private music schools, and independent teacher's studios. Her composition students have won first place prizes in state, regional, national and international competitions, and several of these compositions were published in the National Piano Explorer Magazine. Diane is currently completing a book on teaching composition in the music studio. Diane has received Steinway's 2025 Top Teacher Award, the NCMTA Teacher of the Year Award (2012), and the UNCG Summer Music Camp Hall of Fame Award (2012). In 2007, she was declared a MTNA Foundation Fellow recipient. Diane has served on the MTNA National Board of Directors, the MTNA National Nominating Committee, and as National Chair of the MTNA Local Associations Forum. Diane served as both President and Director of MTNA Southern Division. She is past President of NCMTA, Charlotte Piano Teachers Forum, and Friends of Music at Queens University of Charlotte. She has also served as a board member with the Friends of Music at Salem College, Charlotte Music Club, Charlotte MTA, and she was founder/director of the Charlotte Music Career Fair. For 30 years, Diane has served as a UNCG Piano Camp faculty member. She holds national certification from MTNA, and she has served as an adjudicator for piano, violin, and composition competitions in both North and South Carolina. Her articles and eleven book reviews are published in the American Music Teacher national magazine.

Workshop Description: Have you ever had a student who wanted to compose a piece of music...but did not know how? Has a student ever walked into your studio, and wanted to play a piece that he/she had made up in their head? Do you ever have students who "fool around" on the piano...when they should be practicing their assignment? If so...well, this session is for you! Come learn how to get your studio ready for teaching composition! You will learn how to get started, develop tips for sparking creative ideas, secure equipment on a budget, explore composition contests, and launch your own composition camps!