

Carolina LifeSong Initiative – Music is for Everyone.

The Carolina LifeSong Initiative exists to serve students with special needs and include them in activities in which they may excel. We believe that everyone possesses music aptitude, that music education should be available to all persons, and that all persons may create and connect through making music. We seek to include students with special needs, nurture their gifts, and celebrate their achievements.

Mission Statement:

The Carolina LifeSong Initiative

- 1) provides music experiences for persons with disabilities*
- 2) develops best practices in teaching and promote teacher education*
- 3) supports the creation and dissemination of research*
- 4) serves as a network for the community*

Values:

- Music aptitude does not discriminate, and neither should teachers
- The student is the teacher; we learn from them
- Age-appropriate and child specific instruction and delivery
- Concrete and literal instructional language

1*) The Carolina LifeSong Initiative continues to provide piano instruction and music experiences for people with Autism, ADD/ADHD, Developmental Delays, Down Syndrome, Hearing Impairments, and Visual Impairments, and is the only University-level piano pedagogy program serving such a diverse population of students with disabilities. Student teachers working in our Community Music School have served students with hearing impairments, visual impairments and other disabilities.

2*) The Carolina LifeSong Initiative has created a special topics course at the University of South Carolina titled “Piano Teaching and Special Needs” to promote teacher training for advanced graduate students pursuing degrees in Piano Pedagogy. Undergraduate and graduate students receive introduction into this area of piano teaching. Special workshops for piano teacher education continue to be presented locally, regionally, nationally and internationally.

3*) The Carolina LifeSong Initiative works in partnership with “Piano Pedagogy Forum”, the first internet-based journal in piano pedagogy, in developing free resources for information and in creating current research and practice for teaching students with disabilities. “Piano Pedagogy Forum” was awarded the 2008 Frances Clark Keyboard Pedagogy Award by the Music Teachers National Association. Articles on piano teaching and students with special needs have been published in “Piano Pedagogy Forum” and in “Clavier Companion”. “Musicians with Hearing Loss: A Basic Guide for

Teachers and Performers” by Dr. Cherisse Miller (DMA in Piano Pedagogy 2009 University of South Carolina) was the first doctoral treatise on musicians with hearing loss produced in the piano pedagogy field.

Special workshops for piano teachers have been presented at the national and international conventions of the:

Royal Conservatory of Music Keyboard Pedagogy Professional Development Summit, Toronto and Vancouver, Canada (2012, 2013, 2018)

Korean Association of Piano Pedagogy, Seoul, Korea (2012)

Music Teachers National Association (2002, 2010, 2012, 2013, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020)

National Conference on Keyboard Pedagogy (2005, 2009, 2011, 2013, 2015, 2017, 2019)

Music Teachers National Association/Canadian Federation of Music Teachers/Royal Conservatory of Music Collaborative Conference in Toronto, Canada (2007)

National, regional and local presentations have been given at:

Arizona State University, Phoenix, AZ

California Association of Professional Music Teachers State Conference, Los Angeles, CA

Armstrong Atlantic State University PianoFest, Savannah, GA

Georgia Music Educators Association State Conference, Savannah, GA

Georgia Music Teachers Association State Conference, Carrollton, GA

Indiana Wesleyan Piano Pedagogy Conference, IN

McNeese State University, Lake Charles, LA

Mississippi State Music Teachers State Conference, Hattiesburg, MS

Mississippi College, Clinton, MS

University of Central Missouri, Columbia, MO

Charlotte Piano Teachers Forum, Charlotte, NC

University of Nebraska-Kearny, NE

SUNY Potsdam, Potsdam, NY

Ohio Music Teachers Association, Athens, OH

Ohio University, Athens, OH

University of Oklahoma, Norman, OK

South Carolina Music Teachers Association State Conference

South Carolina Music Educators Association State Conference

Aiken Music Teachers Association, Aiken, SC

Bob Jones University, Greenville, SC

Charleston Music Teachers Association, Charleston, SC

Coker College, Hartsville, SC

Columbia Music Teachers Association, Columbia, SC

Charleston Music Teachers Association, Charleston, SC

Long Bay Music Teachers Association, Myrtle Beach, SC

Southeastern Piano Festival, Columbia, SC

National Piano Institute for Teachers, Southern Methodist University, TX

Tri-Cities Music Teachers Association, Richland, WA

4*) The Carolina LifeSong Initiative currently sponsors a public recital for our students each semester. In addition to being featured in video presented at local, regional and national meetings, our student have participated in lectures and workshops for piano teachers at the local level. We are continuing to develop our efforts to strengthen our associations with similar efforts in the Columbia, SC metro area and beyond.

Current and past partnerships include:

- Babcock Center/Pitt's Work Activity Center, Columbia, SC
- USC Children's Music Development Center, Columbia, SC
- USC CarolinaLife Program, Columbia, SC
- Beethoven's Buddies program, Wheaton College, IL