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Practice Tips for the New Year!

by Ryan Cullen, Director

IMPORTANT DATES:

February 11-15
Mardi Gras Break

March 9 -
LAAPAFEST in
Covington

March 16 -
LAAPAFEST in
Mandeville

March 23 -
LAAPAFEST in
River Ridge

April 21 -
Faculty & Honors Recital
Loyola University
New Orleans - 2 PM

- Does Practicing Feel like a Chore Lately?
- Let's face it, sometimes practicing your instrument can feel like a chore. Granted, some technical things take time doing over and over until you get it right, but practicing doesn't always have to be a chore! It should be more like a fun challenge.
- I always like to share my story when I speak with parents and students about practicing - let's just say that I personally didn't spend as much time as I could have practicing as a beginning student (just ask Russell Tucker, Associate Director and my first piano teacher)! However, somehow I ended up with two degrees in Music. I share that to encourage you and not to boast, yet I realize students attend LAAPA for many different reasons and all have very different goals.
- So, what should you expect from yourself or your child as far as practicing goes? What are the best ways to achieve those expectations? Here are some of my thoughts on the subject:
 - 1.) Set a reasonable amount of time for your practice sessions. Beginning students do not need to sit at the piano or their instrument for 30 plus minutes a day. 10-15 minutes even as little as 3-4 days per week can go a long way with the right amount of focus.

2.) Setup a routine so that it's "on the schedule" and just another part of the daily "to-do" list. I personally encourage younger students to setup morning practice sessions (after breakfast) for example because at the end of the day there is homework, much needed playtime, and extracurricular activities to go to!

3.) It's of the utmost importance to find a style of music or even just a song that you or your child enjoys playing. Even if he/she cannot play it immediately, it can be a goal that you work towards. For me personally, it was the discovery of jazz - once I heard it, I couldn't help but want to practice and play it as much as possible!

4.) Spend part of the session improvising and/or creating your own songs - they don't have to be award winning! This can be a nice relief from the structured part of your practice session.

5.) Try to participate in our concerts, or just give mini-concerts in your home! Having the opportunity to perform what you've been learning in your lessons provides you with the incentive to really practice well. Even if you cannot make our regular concerts at LAAPA, try setting up a concert night in your house - it could be formal or informal. In our house, for example, the kids love to randomly ask Mommy or Daddy to sit down and listen to them play the piano - they make up their own songs and perform the ones they've been working on in class - then we of course clap for them, and they love it! This alone adds a great deal to the "fun" factor.

These are just a few tips - give them a try and let me know how it goes!

Have a practice tip that you've found helpful in your house? Email it to us at studentnews@laapa.com and it may be included in our next newsletter!

Have fun practicing in this New Year!



Ryan Cullen, Director

In This Month's Newsletter:

- Practice Tips for the New Year!
- Christmas Benefit Concerts - A Huge Success!
- Students of the Month: The Moore Family
- Welcome To Our New Students!
- Is Your Teacher Booked?
- Free Theory Classes!
- New Covington Preschool Classes
- Where's Your Teacher Performing?
- Student News!

CONTACT US:

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985.590.4545
Mandeville School of Music
985.674.2992
River Ridge School of Music & Dance
504.738.3050
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www.facebook.com/laapaface

Where's your Teacher Performing?



Katarina Boudreaux, piano/voice/dance will be performing and participating in Argentine Tango Workshops at the Dance Quarter to celebrate dance renaissance; a week of swing and soul music!

She will also be performing with the Grayhawk Band and Dr. John January 27 from 5-7:30 PM at the Fuhrmann Auditorium in a benefit concert for the Women's Shelter. Tickets are available at the English Tea Room and at Moe's Art Supply in downtown Covington!

Student News!



Patrick Lyell played the role of John in the recent Jefferson Parish student production of "Peter Pan". Patrick was selected to perform in the production from among the talented theatre students in several Jefferson Parish schools!

Parker Enright just filmed a national commercial for "Post-It Notes."

Juliette Enright and **Callie Matyas** performed in the New Orleans Ballet Theater's production of the Nutcracker.

Have something to share? E-mail your news to studentnews@laapa.com!

CHRISTMAS BENEFIT CONCERTS - A HUGE SUCCESS!

Please welcome our
Newest Students to the
LAAPA Family!

- Aeden B.
- Aniya C.
- Annabel B.
- Austin I.
- Bernadette M.
- Brette S.
- Caleb B.
- Caroline D.
- Chloe A.
- Colt B.
- Cooper R.
- Dominique G.
- Elizabeth D.
- Emily T.
- Emily G.
- Evan F.
- Gabby R.
- Glenn M.
- Grace C.
- Jalisia S.
- John D.
- Joseph G.
- Kelly W.
- Landon D.
- Luke T.
- Madison V.
- Matthew L.
- Pat V.
- Porsha D.
- Rolland D.
- Ryan S.



A HUGE congratulations to students, faculty, staff, and parents for some outstanding Christmas performances at our 2012 Christmas Concerts.

In addition to the wonderful performances, your generosity helped many children and families who would have literally had nothing this holiday.

We filled our truck and trailer to the brim with your donations of toys and basic need items - and as usual when we unloaded them at the Teresian Sister's main province in Covington, we literally filled their living room!

Additionally, we were so pleased to present the Sisters with your most generous cash donations of \$1483.00! This is a new record for us - so thank you so much once again for your support. Photos from the concerts will be available at the school shortly - and we will also be posting some on our Facebook page. Be sure to like us on Facebook if you haven't already at <http://facebook.com/laapaface>!

STUDENTS OF THE MONTH - THE MOORE FAMILY



How long have you been taking music lessons at LAAPA and Liz, how did you get everyone started?

Liz: Madeline started playing with me at home, but I wanted something more professional. Someone told me about LAAPA, and said that y'all had great recitals and reliable teachers. So, I enrolled both of them in piano in 2007. I started taking lessons in 2009.

Madeline and Melissa, you are both enrolled in piano, voice, and violin lessons. Do you have a favorite program?

*Madeline: Piano
Melissa: Voice and Piano*

What made you choose these programs?

*Madeline: When I was little, I really wanted to play the piano, and then I wanted to play the violin.
Liz: I wanted them to be musical, because I think that's a worthy education. We didn't know which one they would be good at. I think doing both has been the biggest thing that makes them so much better than I thought they could be. It's like submersing in language: if you were going to learn Spanish, kids speak Spanish faster if they are submersed in Spanish.*

Melissa – you are already an accomplished composer – talk about your approaches and initial steps when coming up with new pieces.

*Madeline: I know how she does it. She will sing it in the shower or in her room, and then she'll pick it out and write the notes down and then make chords for it.
Melissa: But if I'm writing an instrumental piece, usually I'll just sit down and mess up on something and think it sounds cool.*

Madeline – you always have such enjoyable, interesting and difficult recital pieces – what gives you the daily motivation to work so hard on them?

Madeline: Most of them are just fun, and so I'll learn halfway through it. And, when I get to a hard part, Ms. Rebecca makes me learn the rest.

Liz – you are a very talented adult guitar student at LAAPA. I've noticed that you always participate with your girls in our recitals for a true family experience. Give us some examples of your family's musical interactions at home.

Liz: For Christmas, we put on a talent show... Everyone in the family prepared a piece. We have a little girl; she's eight years old with Down's Syndrome, and Madeline and Melissa each did a Christmas carol that she could sing to. Even my three year old did it... Music is important to my whole family.

What music/composers do you enjoy listening to and/or find inspiring?

*Madeline: Justin Bieber. Does that count? [laughter]
Melissa: I like the singer, Kari Jobe. She's a Christian, contemporary musical person. She composes a lot of songs.
Madeline: I like Clementi. I learned four sonatas when I was 8 through 10. I learned all their movements; they are really fun.
Liz: I like Pepe Romero. I'm going to see him in concert in two weeks... I'll just say that our experience in LAAPA, I think when you're interested in music, it's important to find what you like about music. And the music school has been very influential in the development of our musical tastes. I didn't know anything about classical guitar until one day I met Ben in the parking lot and asked him a question. And that led me down to... I am crazy about classical guitar; I love it! And I didn't know anything about it. It's the exposure around professional teachers and a different body of teachers, rather than just one, that I think has been really helpful to my family. Melissa learned about Kari Jobe through Carolyn, and Madeline's definitely studying with a true classical musician, Rebecca!*

IS YOUR TEACHER COMPLETELY BOOKED? • TEACHERS WITH WAITING LISTS

Many of our teachers are totally booked! If you need a schedule change or would like to be added to a waiting list for a particular teacher, day, or time, please contact any of our office staff team and they can add you to the waiting list. There are still limited lesson spots available.

To inquire about openings for January or February, send an email to contact@laapa.com or call one of our locations: (504) 738-3050 for River Ridge, (985) 674-2992 for Mandeville, and (985) 590-4545 for Covington. The following is a PARTIAL list of who is BOOKED!

Here's just a partial list of who's currently full at all campuses:

VOICE/PIANO:

Kathleen: WED BOOKED!
Cara: MON BOOKED! WED 1 spot, FRI BOOKED!
Kristen: SAT BOOKED!
Bonnie: MON, WED, TH, FRI, SAT – ALL BOOKED!
Jennifer: MON BOOKED!
Russell: TUES BOOKED! TH BOOKED! FRI 2 spots
Meredith: MON, TU, WED, TH--ALL BOOKED!
Katarina: TU 1 spot, WED 1 spot, SAT BOOKED!
Jenna: TH BOOKED! SAT 1 spot
Charmaine: WED 1 spot
Baylie: MON 1 spot
Rebecca: Mon BOOKED! WED 1 spot FRI BOOKED!
Carolyn: TU BOOKED! WED BOOKED!
Victoria: MON 1 spot

GUITAR/DRUMS:

Bill: MON BOOKED! FRI BOOKED!
Jeff: WED BOOKED!
Josh: MON BOOKED!, TU BOOKED!
Ben: TUES BOOKED!, TH 1 spot, FRI BOOKED!, SAT BOOKED!

VIOLIN/CELLO:

Kate: MON BOOKED
Gabriel: MON 1 spot
Simona: MON 1 spot, WED 1 spot
Denise: MON 1 spot, WED BOOKED!

BRASS/WOODWINDS:

Vitalie: MON 1 spot
Ryan: TH BOOKED!
Jack: WED BOOKED!

Student Shout Outs!

"I would like to take this opportunity to thank the River Ridge school, in particular, Cyrena Adkins and my wonderful violin teacher Kate Withrow. I am 61 years old and started taking violin lessons a little over a year ago. A few months ago my wife was diagnosed with cancer and in order to get the best care for her it was necessary for us to move to Houston. I thought I would have to give up the violin. Fortunately for me, Cyrena came up with the idea that I could do lessons on Skype and Kate agreed to do it. Although it is not the same as hands on, I am still able to enjoy the violin. With my wife being sick and all that goes with it, it is nice to be able to take some time to play the violin and forget about everything else, even if it is only for half an hour. Thanks to all."

~ John M. Fore

Are you coming to our Free Theory Classes?

At LAAPA, all music students can attend our weekly 45 minute theory classes for FREE!

Classes are offered as follows:

- Covington Campus: MON 5:00-5:45 PM (Mr. Curtis)
- Mandeville Campus: WED 4:00-4:45 & 5:15-6:00 PM (Ms. Charmaine)
- River Ridge Campus: WED 5:30-6:15 (Ms. Denise) & THURS 5:15-6:00 PM (Ms. Jenna)

Too busy to come to theory class? Students ages 10-17 can attend SKYPE Theory Classes online with Mr. Ryan each Thursday from 4:15-5:00 PM.

Watch a video of a recent skype class at <http://laapa.com/video> (NEW RELEASES).

For more information on how to get started in our free theory classes, just call the office or visit the front desk!

New Preschool Music Classes in Covington!

We're now offering Preschool Music programs at our Covington Campus. Bring your little one in for a musical journey of discovery and exploration. This program is great for any parent hoping to further their child's development and socialization, all the while helping them to build confidence, self-control, and communication skills. Only \$50 per month! Classes are filling up fast, so contact us today!

Preschool Music I (Ages 18 months – 3 yrs.)

Covington School of Music - Wednesdays 5:00-5:45 PM
Mandeville School of Music - Tuesdays 11:15-12:00 PM
River Ridge School of Music & Dance - Saturdays 10:00-10:45 AM

Preschool Music II (Ages 3 – 5 yrs.)

Covington School of Music - Thursdays 6:30-7:15 PM
Mandeville School of Music - Wednesdays 6:00-6:45 PM & Saturdays 11:30 - 12:15 PM
River Ridge School of Music & Dance - Saturdays 10:45-11:30 AM