

NATSAA Judge Profile
Jennifer Luiken, mezzo-soprano, SC



Mezzo-soprano **Jennifer Luiken** has a varied resumé of concert and operatic performance credits from around the world. She performs regularly with the Charleston Symphony Orchestra and at the Piccolo Spoleto Festival. Her students have been state, regional, and national winners in the NATS National Student Auditions. A native of Iowa, she is on the voice faculty at Charleston Southern University where she teaches studio voice, vocal performance related courses and is director of Lyric Theatre.

NATSAA Judge Profile
John Wesley Wright, tenor, MD-DC



Tenor **John Wesley Wright, D. M. A.**, is known for his soulful interpretations of music from baroque to Broadway. Holding degrees from Maryville College and the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music, Wright has performed as a soloist and in professional ensembles throughout the United States, Europe, and Japan. A member of the acclaimed American Spiritual Ensemble, Wright has garnered top prizes from the National Federation of Music Clubs, the Metropolitan Opera National Council, and is winner of the American Traditions Competition 2000. Dr. Wright is a native of Rome, Georgia and coordinates the voice program at Salisbury University.

NATSAA Judge Profile
Patricia Miller, mezzo-soprano, VA



Patricia Miller, Distinguished University Professor of Music and Director of Vocal Studies at George Mason University, is a graduate of Boston University, the New England Conservatory, and as a Fulbright scholar, the Accademia di Santa Cecilia in Rome. As a leading mezzo-soprano, she is an esteemed international opera and concert artist with performances throughout Europe, Australia, and North and South America. Her students have garnered top honors from state to international competitions, and are now singing with major opera companies including Metropolitan Opera, Washington National Opera, and Chicago Lyric Opera, among others.

Miller has served on the National Endowment for the Arts Opera Panel, the Virginia State Board and past Governor of NATS, and the International Institute of Education Fulbright Voice Committee. In 2018, she was awarded the John Troups GMU Presidential Medal for Excellence in Teaching.

NATSAA Judge Profile
Robert Petillo, tenor, VA



Called “one of the enduring joys of the local early-music scene” by the Washington Post, tenor **Robert Petillo** is well known in the DC area as a Bach specialist, especially the Evangelist roles in the St. John and St. Matthew Passions, having sung regularly with the Washington Bach Consort since 1980 and having been a soloist with many other local choral societies.

His concertizing has taken him across the country as well as to Germany, Italy, and England. Graduate studies on the music of Georg Philipp Telemann led to his collaborating on editions and performances of his unpublished sacred cantatas, many of them modern premieres.

He served 32 years as a first tenor in The U.S. Army Chorus and was a part of many historic events and thousands of performances nationwide. Now retired from the Army, he continues to be in demand, and retains a lifelong love of learning in multiple disciplines, including art and the intersection of art and music with mathematics. He enjoys opportunities to visit art exhibits and museums, and to accompany his mathematician wife to math conferences.

NATSAA Judge Profile
Kelly Smith Jones, soprano, MD-DC



Kelly Smith Jones has performed in a wide variety of musical styles with prestigious companies including Wolf Trap, NY Gilbert and Sullivan Players, Washington Concert Opera, Summer Opera Theatre, and Opera Theatre of Northern Virginia, and more recently has sung at the Kennedy Center. Kelly has appeared in several operas. Favorite roles include Marguerite in *Faust*, Adele in *Die Fledermaus*, Nannetta in *Falstaff*, and Susanna in *Le Nozze di Figaro*. Ms. Jones is on Voice Faculty at American University and maintains a private studio, teaching vocal styles from Opera to Contemporary Commercial Music.

NATSAA Judge Profile
Sandra McClain, soprano, NC



Soprano **Sandra McClain**, Metropolitan Opera Auditions national winner, has appeared in opera and concert throughout the eastern United States. *Love's Seasons*, her recording of American art songs with pianist Margo Garrett, was released by Musicians Showcase. Her students have performed with local and regional opera companies and in summer artist programs in the US and abroad. In 2018, her student was the NATS southeastern region recipient of the *Joan Boytim Award for Independent Teachers*. Dr. McClain, retired Professor of Music from Florida Atlantic University, has served NATS in both state and regional offices. She holds a Bachelor of Arts degree from Meredith College, a Master of Music degree from Manhattan School of Music, and the Doctor of Education from Teachers College, Columbia University.