



**Arkansas NATS Chapter**  
Spring 2024 Conference  
February 23-24, 2024  
Henderson State University

**President's Call**

Dear Arkansas NATS Colleagues,

You are invited to attend our annual conference and student auditions to be held at Henderson State University in Arkadelphia, AR, on February 23-24, 2024. We had a great regional conference in Arkadelphia in the fall and it is exciting to be returning for our state conference. I hope to see you there!

**Registration** will open on Monday, January 29 and remain open until midnight on Friday, February 9. Late registration will not be accepted since the auditions will be run manually rather than through the AuditionNow after the registration process. Please access the AuditionNow portal on the NATS.org website to register. If your membership is not current, you will need to take care of that prior to registering. If you have questions about your registration or auditions, please contact **Dave Ekstrum** ([DaveEkstrum@saumag.edu](mailto:DaveEkstrum@saumag.edu)).

For those that were able to attend the Southern Region Conference, it was exciting to experience the inclusion of new categories. Based on member response, we are choosing to phase in new categories rather than include them all at once. This year, in addition to the classical, musical theatre, and biennial Hall Johnson spiritual categories, commercial music categories for high school through advanced and adult singers will be included. The categories for children and youth will be added at future conferences. A document with the categories for this conference may be found on the [Arkansas NATS Chapter website](#).

All members who are sending students to participate are strongly encouraged to attend the conference. With the addition of more commercial music categories, conference attendance is particularly important to help with judging. If you plan to send students and are unable to attend, please consider asking someone – perhaps a graduate student or retired colleague – to go in your place. This will assist us in being able to hold a timely and beneficial conference for our student participants.

This year, [Hilary Maiberger](#) will be presenting a recital of varied repertoire on Friday evening at 8:00pm. With experiences in both musical theatre and commercial music, I am looking forward to an exciting and inspiring performance. On Saturday at 11:00am, Hilary will be conducting a musical theatre and commercial music masterclass. If you have a student interested in applying to participate in this masterclass, please use [this link](https://forms.gle/QCUXfi1jNtMnJaaNA) (<https://forms.gle/QCUXfi1jNtMnJaaNA>) to apply by noon on Monday, February 12<sup>th</sup>. Participants will be notified by Friday, February 16<sup>th</sup>.

Please see the attached PDFs for **Hotel Information** and a **General Conference Schedule**. Please note that some blocks of hotel rooms are only available at the NATS rate through specific dates. Additional information regarding parking and a campus map will be available on the Arkansas NATS website a week before the conference. Special thanks to **Bill Higgins** for his work as site host!

I look forward to seeing you soon!

Warm regards,  
Susan Shirel, Arkansas Chapter President