

**Classical Guitar Society of Upstate New York
Board of Directors and Officers for 2022-23**

President: Paul Sweeny (bpsimplegifts@earthlink.net)

Paul Sweeny earned a BA in music from Harpur College, presenting the first student classical guitar recital in the history of the school. He later returned to earn his MA in Music History. Paul has taught at BCC for 35 years where he created the school's guitar program, its sequence of music history classes, as well as a very popular class in the history of popular music. Over the years Paul has taught music history and guitar lessons at BU and currently teaching guitar lessons and directing the Guitar Ensemble there. He has been on the Board for 10 years. He is a frequent performer in the area both as a soloist and as a member of the duo Simple Gifts with recorder player Barbara Kaufman. He also maintains a private guitar studio in Binghamton.

Vice-President: Donna Noyes Grosser (dngrosser@gmail.com)

Donna Noyes-Grosser has been a member of CGSUNY for more than six years and was first elected to the CGSUNY Board of Directors in 2019. She is a member of the Albany Guitar Ensemble and a student of both classical and flamenco guitar. She has a Certificate in Advanced Professional Theory, Harmony & Ear Training from the Berklee College of Music on-line program and is currently enrolled in an Advanced Professional Certificate program in General Music. Her professional experience includes serving as a member, vice president, and president of the board for a national organization representing state directors of early intervention programs.

Treasurer: Matthew Downey (down2425@gmail.com)

Matthew Downey has been a member of the CGSUNY for the past 8 years and currently serves as the Treasurer for the society. Matt has an undergraduate degree in music education and masters in classical guitar performance from SUNY Fredonia. Matt works with the Bainbridge Guilford Central School District running their Jr. and Sr. High School choral program and fretted string program. He also helps with elementary curriculum development for Internal Creations – A program in NYC that offers free classical guitar instruction to schools without music programs. Matt teaches guitar/mandolin/banjo privately, works as a pit musician, gigs locally, arranges guitar ensemble and solo music, and does piano tuning for local school districts. Matt also serves as a Board of Education Member for the Unatego Central School District.

Secretary: William Simcoe (Wsimcoe@gmail.com)

William Simcoe is from Albany, New York. William is one of the founding members of CGSUNY. He has performed in many venues including Caffe Lena, the Hyde Collection, Kenwood Chapel, the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception, East Greenbush Community Library, and for the Troy Victorian Stroll the Shorts Out Loud series at the Troy Public Library. He has performed in Rhode Island, Florida, Massachusetts, Connecticut, and New Jersey, at the Ordu International Guitar Festival in Ordu, Turkey and for the Classical Guitar Academy of Milan, Italy. He has two recordings, "Studies, Memories & Moons" (solo guitar and duets with cellist Lisa Nielson) and "Mis Sueños de Tango" (with flautist Elisabeth Williams and soprano Rose Hargrave).

Directors

Deena Freed (deenafreed@gmail.com)

Deena has been a long-term member of the society and a Board member for several years. She considers herself a 'serious amateur' and has had a lifelong love for classical guitar. She grew up in New York City and was able to attend live concerts of Segovia, Julian Bream, and John Williams. She has attended guitar festivals in Germany, Mexico, Scotland, Greece, and Canada, and Cleveland, and Oneonta, NY. A retired public school teacher, she has devoted her retirement to improving her guitar skills.

Kenneth Meyer (kmeyer@syr.edu)

Kenneth Meyer holds degrees in Music Composition and Classical Guitar Performance from the State University of New York at Fredonia and Master of Music and Doctor of Musical Arts degrees from the Eastman School of Music. He has served on the faculties of East Carolina University and SUNY at Fredonia and most recently held visiting professorships at the Eastman School of Music and SUNY Potsdam's Crane School of Music. Currently, Dr. Kenneth Meyer serves on the guitar faculty of Syracuse University and Hamilton College. Since his professional concert debut at the *Teatro de la Opera de Maracay*, Mr. Meyer continues to appear in recital, as a chamber musician, and soloist with orchestra in venues throughout North America, South America, Europe, and Asia. In addition to live concerts, his performances have been featured on television, film, radio and most recently, on the Albany, Innova, Bridge, and Frameworks record labels.

Elaine Pellegrin (elainepellegrin_72@hotmail.com)

Elaine has over sixteen years of artist management experience including dealing with venues and promoters and artist relations. She has successfully worked with the board at the past three CGSUNY Fall Festivals. Her experience in corporate management is an asset to the society.

Harry Pellegrin (recitalguitarist@verizon.net)

A performer, composer and teacher, he studied at The Mannes College of Music in Manhattan, with Albert Valdés-Blain and Eliot Fisk, both well-known and respected performers and teachers as well as students of Andrés Segovia. A 1989 accident resulted in neurological deficits curtailing his musical career for almost seven years and he could not return to the classical repertoire until 2004. The year 2007 marked his return to the recital stage when he played the Troy Savings Bank Music Hall, a venue he has played two additional times. From January 2008 until June 2021, he was a member of the adjunct faculty of Union College also in Schenectady, New York. He was installed on the Board of Directors of the Classical Guitar Society of Upstate New York in 2011. Pellegrin was an Artist member of the Monday Musical Club of Albany. He has performed extensively in New York City and in the Capital District. He is the author of numerous books on guitar pedagogy and has had four CDs released on the PAB label.

Giancarlo Sidoli (sidoli1210@yahoo.com)

Giancarlo Sidoli is a classical guitarist from Walton, NY. He has served numerous terms on the board of directors of CGSUNY, including Secretary. Giancarlo currently is the classical guitar artist-in-residence at Hartwick College where he teaches private lessons and a guitar fundamentals course to non-music majors. Giancarlo serves as one of Townsend School's PK-5 general music teacher as well as teaching grades 2-5 strings/elementary orchestra. Giancarlo has presented solo and chamber music concerts throughout New York, Massachusetts, and Pennsylvania since his informal concert debut in 2005. As an artist, Giancarlo seeks to bring the guitar to more rural communities, as well as communities that do not have as large a following in the live classical guitar. Giancarlo is currently emerging as an arranger dedicated to preserving the folk music and traditions of North America, Scotland, Ireland, and England.

Director Emeritus

Dennis Turechek (dennis.turechek@oneonta.edu)

Dennis Turechek is one of the original Co-Founders of the Classical Guitar Society of Upstate New York. He is retired from the State University of New York at Oneonta and Hartwick College after a career of more than thirty years of teaching at both institutions. He is an emeritus member of the CGSUNY Board.