



Musicians in the Making Changes Hands

by Lynn Miller



Candice Choi, left, and Linda Fields

Musicians in the Making music school has changed hands. Linda Fields, the founder of the school, has retired from a successful teaching career.

Candice Choi, the new owner and director, has moved the school to NextGen Church, 1300 Windsor-Edinburg Road, in West Windsor. The first event at the new location is an open house on Saturday, August 4, at 10 a.m. Choi will present information about the early childhood music and piano instruction programs.

Musicians in the Making is unique in that it intentionally feeds a high-quality piano program with age-appropriate Musikgarten classes. "Some music schools offer both piano and early childhood music but it is unusual to find one in which the programs are designed to flow together in a comprehensive program starting at birth," says Choi.

Musicians in the Making, founded by Fields in 1993, is beginning its 20th year of bringing early childhood music and piano instruction to the West Windsor and Plainsboro area.

"The years have been a wonderful journey," says Fields. "We have seen children come to us as toddlers, barely matching pitch. And over the years they have developed into competent pianists, earning blue ribbons in piano festivals — true musicians in the making."

A native of San Francisco, Choi fell in love with music when she began her piano studies at age five. Choi received her bachelor's of music from University of the Pacific's Conservatory of Music.

She earned her master of music in piano pedagogy and performance from Westminster Choir College, where she served as graduate assistant to the piano department and president of the New Jersey Music Teachers Association's collegiate chapter.

She has held faculty positions at Toones Academic Music, where she taught piano, and at Amabile School of Music in San Francisco, where she founded the group piano program and was the director of community outreach. Choi has been on the faculty at the Westminster Conservatory for two years.

Choi and Fields met through a referral with Choi mentioned as a good fit to take over the studio. "I've always worked with young children," says Choi. The teachers licensed for MusikGarten train every summer.

The classes are for ages newborn to age six or seven — when the piano program begins. "Classes prepare students for the piano," says Choi. "It is the most efficient age to begin."

Fields and her husband, John, are selling their home in West Windsor and moving to Oklahoma. "My parents need me there," she says. "We're saying goodbye to West Windsor in little steps." Their sons, daughters-in-law, and grandchildren live in Seattle, Washington.

"I'm very excited about the studio's mission of nurturing children and strengthening families," says Choi. "We offer age-appropriate music classes, with the objective of laying a solid foundation for life-long music-making and appreciation. We educate parents about music's role in their child's mental, physical, and social development. And we model and encourage community music-making."

Open House, Musicians in the Making, NextGen Church, 1300 Windsor-Edinburg Road, West Windsor. Saturday, August 4, 10 a.m. to noon. Information, demonstration classes, and piano performances by current students. Register by E-mail to info@musiciansinthemaking.com. Free. 609-436-0809 or www.musiciansinthemaking.com.