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Take Pride in a Successful Collegiate Year

Hello, collegiate members and a wonderful April to you all! It is with pride that I write to you all one last time and look back on a stellar year for Collegiate NYSSMA. Here are some of the highlights.

NYSSMA Collegiate Leadership Summit

In lieu of this year's Biennial Collegiate Summit, leaders of collegiate chapters across the state will meet virtually on April 30 to discuss the state of music education in New York, conference with some executives, and building our community as future music educators. I believe this will be a wonderful first step toward many new connections being made throughout the state, including a yearly Leadership Summit in our new form.

I love nothing more than connecting and collaborating with my fellow collegiate members, and this one last opportunity to see many of you before we embark on our careers will be golden. More information about this event has been sent out to your chapter advisors and through NYSSMA Collegiate social media.

2021-2022 Collegiate Year in Review

This year has been in every way a year for NYSSMA Collegiate to be proud of. We have grown as a community, shown our strength, and worked to make each other better together. We have had many firsts this year:

- the first-ever Collegiate Summer Series featuring presentations on such topics as the business of music education, health and wellness of educators, and public relations for a music educator.

- the first-ever Winter Conference Collegiate Interaction Hour featuring an opportunity for students to speak directly with NYSSMA and NAFME executives.
- the first-ever Collegiate Leadership Summit, which provided an opportunity for the young leaders of New York State music education to come together and collaborate in what may now be a regular process.

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This year has also been a fantastic year for growth within NYSSMA Collegiate as we have seen more participation from not only more students, but also significantly more chapters than ever before. We love seeing future music educators in New York come rushing out of the woodwork to share in this passion. NYSSMA's collegiate members have made a loud and lasting impact this year, and it is one that will beget respect and open ears to the music education student for decades to come.

We made it!

To all my fellow seniors who may be finishing their last semester or wrapping up student teaching, to those who are navigating the job market for the very first time or taking on the daunting task of choosing a graduate degree program, to those who got that call about their first job offer, to those who are taking their

time but know they will make it in good time, it has been a very long road. It has been tough in many ways that we never could have imagined.

We are the teachers who had to learn to teach through a computer screen. We are the ones who had to find our own students for class. We are the ones who had to make do with what we had, and we are the most qualified and prepared generation that music education has ever seen. We are nurturing, we are understanding, we have a whole lot of hope for the future. But most important, we made it. Congratulations to all who have taken this next step.

Thank you all

As this is the final editorial of mine, I need to send a heartfelt thank you to all of my colleagues who have made this year so amazing and so possible: Emma Uruburu, Madi Yung, Elira Mavraj, Angela Burtulato, Halie Carden, Katie Dessert, Madison Garrafalo, Matthew Grosso, and Paige Lee. I must also send a particular thank you to Dr. Keith Koster without whose guidance this year's accomplishments would not be possible.

This has been a journey that I never expected and would not trade for anything. So, I urge any and all of my colleagues to take this as your sign to say "yes!" to something. Whether it is signing up to run for that leadership position, accepting that job offer, or even just raising your hand when someone asks for a volunteer. All it takes is stepping up for one thing, and it may snowball into a lifetime of opportunity. Just say yes, PLEASE just say yes. ||

With Peace and Love,
Christopher McAfee
Collegiate President