

*Press Release*  
*Midwest Young Artists*  
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**Consistent Excellence: Midwest Young Artists Win Gold, Bronze Medals at  
2006 Fischhoff National Chamber Music Competition**

*HIGHWOOD, IL*, - Each spring, scores of the country's most talented student chamber musicians convene at the prestigious **Fischhoff National Chamber Music Competition** in the hopes of becoming medallists. It is a procession of students bearing elegant violin cases, punchy marimbas, and nervous parents – but the pressure only heightens the drive and ability of the groups representing the **Midwest Young Artists**. On Sunday, May 7, MYA's Percussion Trio "*Beat 3*" and the *Alethea String Quartet* were awarded the Gold and Bronze Medals, respectively, from a field of over 60 chamber ensembles at the **2006 Fischhoff National Chamber Music Competition**. This is the 12<sup>th</sup> medal (including an honorable mention) awarded to MYA in the last thirteen years of the competition, a feat no other chamber music preparatory program in the U.S. can boast. Furthermore, MYA is the only program to have multiple groups win medals, and even more impressive is that two 2006 MYA medallists, percussionist Molly Yeh and violinist Shawn Moore, have now won medals twice.

Percussion Trio "*Beat 3*," coached by MYA percussion coach Sarah Barnes, won the Junior Division Gold medal. The group consists of percussionists David Hutter (student of Ben Wahlund) a senior at St. Charles North High School, Victoria Aschheim (student of Edward Atkatz) a senior at The Latin School of Chicago, and Molly Yeh (student of Vadim Karpinos), a junior at Glenbrook South High School. This year marks an almost unheard-of second year of medals for Ms. Yeh, whose group *The Rattan Trio* won a gold medal in the 2004 competition. When asked how "*Beat 3*" excelled in the competition, Ms. Yeh commented, "In addition to all playing at a high level, we're all good friends and love and care for each other, and that really stands out when we play."

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Junior Division Bronze winner *Alethea String Quartet*, led by MYA string chamber music coach Gene Purdue, consists of violinist Krista Stewart (student of Gene Purdue) a junior at Middleton High School, WI, violinist Shawn Moore (student of Cyrus Forough), a senior at Elgin High School, violist Vicki Powell (student of Sally Chisolm and Gene Purdue), a senior at Madison East High School, WI, and cellist Jimmy Kang (student of Hans Jensen), a junior at Middleton High School, WI. Like Molly Yeh, 2006 marks the second year of medals for Mr. Moore, whose 2005 string quartet took home the silver medal.

The *Alethea String Quartet* is also the first prize winner in the 2006 St. Paul String Quartet Competition, held on April 30<sup>th</sup>. Proud coach Gene Purdue commented that *Alethea* is “a great group of kids, a joy to coach. This year has been so much fun that they are all going to the prom together next weekend.” MYA’s focus on chamber music is what gives these students an edge – most youth orchestra programs focus only on the young musician as part of a large ensemble. MYA’s chamber music requirement helps each student learn new and different ways to practice and perform. With intensive chamber music coaching, MYA students learn chamber music as a life skill; they learn how to lead and follow, how to be a soloist and a team player, how to support each other musically and how to listen with musical maturity. These skills have given MYA students a true advantage in competitions such as Fischhoff.

Other MYA participants in the 2006 Competition include the Ruvido String Quartet: Mae Bariff (New Trier High School), Katie Belleville (Glenbrook South High School), Elisabeth Graham (Northside College Prep High School), and Kevin Kunkel (Vernon Hills High School), the YAM String Quartet: Moire Bette (New Trier High School), Scot Moore (Elgin High School), Madeline Sharp (New Trier High School), and Mindy Park (Lake Zurich High School), Trio Pathos: Ryan Murphy (Lincoln Middle School), Stanley Moore (Elgin High School), and Christina Kwok (Stevenson High School), the BAM Quartet: Herah Kim (Wilmette Jr. High School), Rachel Goldberg (homeschool),

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Gabriel Cabezas (Wilmette Jr. High School), and Sean Yeh (Libertyville High School), and Temporal Trio: Hiral Desai (Wheeling High School), Nick Kabat (Niles West High School), and Becca Laurito (New Trier High School).

The Fischhoff National Chamber Music Competition is the nation's largest chamber ensemble contest. Founded in 1973, the Competition's purpose is to encourage emerging instrumental chamber music ensembles and to provide a forum for their talents. Each year students from the finest American conservatories and music schools participate. Foreign nationals from more than twenty countries representing South America, Asia, Africa, Australia and Europe participate. The competition takes place in several rounds. The first round is a video tape screening conducted by a panel of qualified performers and instructors. The junior quarterfinal, semifinal and final rounds are live auditions in South Bend before a panel of distinguished jurors. The 2006 competition judges included Maria Lambros, viola, Abram Loft, violin, Lydia Artymiw, piano, Robert Nagel, trumpet, David Jolley, french horn, Arthur Weisberg, bassoon, Kathryn Lucktenberg, violin, Terry King, cello, George Sakakeeny, bassoon, and Gwendolyn Mok, piano.

**Midwest Young Artists** (878 Lyster Road, Highwood, IL, 847-926-9898), is the premiere youth-music ensemble program in the Midwest. Founded in 1993 by Dr. Allan Dennis with one orchestra, MYA has grown into a full-curriculum music school with a focus on chamber music. Presently, MYA has five youth orchestras, more than 50 chamber music ensembles, three vocal ensembles, an all-inclusive jazz program, as well as classes in music theory and history. The program is for serious young musicians and dedicated amateurs. MYA is housed in its own state-of-the-art facility in the town of Fort Sheridan, which provides its students with large rehearsal halls, classrooms, a recording studio, and music library. MYA graduates are accepted at the most selective conservatories in the country.

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