

# a Look at the Performers!



**Luciana Balzer**  
Luciana is 11, in 5th grade, and is finishing 4 years of piano study. She has really persevered through some very challenging pieces and has done amazing work. She loves exciting music and beautiful pieces, showing her musical diversity! I appreciate her hard work and the great attitude she brings every week! Her duet with Emily has been a great achievement as well as her favorite recital piece this year! Luciana, you have exceeded all our expectations this year! Congratulations! ✨



**Serena Balzer**  
Serena is 14, in 8th grade, and is finishing 7 years of piano study. She enjoys upbeat jazz songs with fun pizzazz as well as songs with driving beats. It has been a great year of music making for her with great achievements along the way! It has been a lot of fun to have her be part of our Don't Stop Believing Quartet this year! She has been a wonderful team member to many students in our studio this year. Thank you, Serena, for helping with so many ensembles this recital!



**Marissa Bartels**  
Marissa is 13, in 7th grade, and is finishing her 5th year of piano study. She has worked hard throughout the year, in spite of breaking a finger or two along the way. She was very resilient and found ways to practice with her splints. She has enjoyed learning recital music this spring and her duet with Bailey! Marissa, you have an undeniable talent for piano and have shown it this year!



**Annia Blasi**  
Annia is 9, in 3rd grade, and is completing her first year of piano study. She has shown a wonderful aptitude for music and has achieved much in her first year on the keyboard. She has really blossomed with her music this year and shown tremendous understanding for a first year student! Her recital pieces have been particularly fun for her this year. Annia, Congratulations on your first recital and playing such beautiful music for us today!



**Emily Burgess**  
Emily is 10, in 5th grade, and is completing her 2nd year of piano study. She shows much perseverance in getting her music learned. It has been a pleasure to work with her, watch her grow, and challenge her for another year. She has achieved a lot in her recital pieces, being a part of a duet and trio as well. Emily, you were a page turner extraordinaire! Thanks for being such a great team player!



**Bailey Crenshaw**  
Bailey is 16, a sophomore, and is completing her 2nd year of piano study. She has worked hard, learned many more piano skills this year, and continually shown the ability to do more. Through the thick and the thin, the ups and the downs of life, she constantly amazes me with her love for piano and her perseverance through many challenges. Bailey, you bring a quality of emotions to your music and life that is unmatched!



**Sammy Dykhuis**  
Sammy is 15, a sophomore, and is finishing 10 years of piano study. She loves to play the piano for her own enjoyment and for the accomplishments she achieves each year. She is a student who has a love for piano and perseveres no matter how busy she is with the other parts of her life. She juggles sports and music and has to constantly work at making it all happen. Sammy, your artistry and your love for playing the piano will follow you in all your endeavors in life. Don't Stop Believing!



**Anna Fortelka**  
Anna is 12, in 6th grade, and has studied piano for 6 years. She has worked very hard this year and has been very excited about her piano accomplishments. Having a real piano has been a true inspiration to her! She has continually amazed me with her enthusiasm and striving through the challenges. I am so proud of her consistent work this year. She constantly desires harder music and amazes me with her ability to accomplish it. Anna, keep reaching for the stars. They are in your grasp!



**Ella Gsedl**  
Ella is 17, a junior, and has studied piano for 9 years. She has always enjoyed songs with scales and fun movements. Her ensemble abilities have grown tremendously and her duet has been a lot of fun for her this year. She has grown her musical expression and artistry this year especially. Ella is a kind, dedicated piano student who brings a lively attitude into our studio. Ella, thank you for your sweet spirit and love for piano. It brightens my Thursdays!



**Nina Gsedl**  
Nina is 14, in 8th grade, and has studied piano for 6 years. She loves upbeat, jazzy songs and especially loves to play duets. Her sense of rhythm is strong and a natural strength in her. She works hard at her musical accomplishments. Nina has a strong ear for music and can pick up almost any melody with ease. She is a quiet, sensitive artist in her playing and constantly shows me all she is capable of achieving. Nina, your beautiful playing and our duets are a sparkle in my life!



**Wen Jin Gsedl**  
Wen Jin is 13, in 6th grade, and is completing his 5th year of piano study. He has worked hard this year and accomplished some great music. He loves to play songs that take him around the keyboard in fun musical patterns. He brings a lot of fun and laughter to the group lessons and keeps us all enjoying all the activities and games! Wen Jin has shown me over and over this year what he can do at the piano! Wen Jin, you made the Hoe Down trio a huge success. Bravo!



**Sarah Lydon**  
Sarah is 11, in 5th grade, and has studied piano for 6 years. She has a deep love for music, and has enjoyed her flute as well as piano. She enjoys her successes and the music that she understands and can easily play. This year she has enjoyed some challenging recital music and a Sonata! It has been exciting for her to have a real piano and her momentum has proven it. Sarah, your musical desires have taken you far this year and I am so proud of you!



**Caleb Logan**  
Caleb is 12, in 6th grade, and is completing his first year of piano study. He enjoys playing music that has an easy beat to understand. He also likes to play music that has excitement in it. He is learning to keep organized in a very busy household! ✨ Our duet this year has been a lot of fun for him and exciting to play! Caleb, keep at your music, and enjoy the rewards of your hard work!



**Priscilla Logan**  
Priscilla is 11, in 5th grade, and is completing her first year of piano study. She has moved at lightning speed in her musical advancement this year, keeping me running with her. She has had tremendous motivation which, coupled with her strong musical aptitude, has made for an exciting first year of keyboard accomplishments. Priscilla, you have been an awesome student this year. Thanks for all your hard work!



**Timothy Logan**  
Timothy is 7, in 2nd grade, and is completing his first year of piano study. He has had some great successes and has completed his first set of piano books. He has enjoyed playing a book of folk songs and has done a great job on his recital music this year. His successes at piano have been very exciting for him this year! Timothy, you are a great keyboard player. Keep up the good work!



**Melissa Metzger**  
Melissa is 18, and has returned to piano this year after a seven year hiatus. She has proven what all parents hope their kids will want from piano study. She has returned to it for her own desires to play, understand more, and enjoy her music. She has set goals this year and achieved them very successfully. Thank you Melissa, for giving me the gift of loving piano and coming back for a wonderful senior year!



**Maura Nika**  
Maura is 11, in 6th grade, and has been studying piano for 6 years. She loves to play jazzy music and especially loves duets. She and Anna have loved their duet and added a trio with Wen Jin to their recital music this year. She perseveres through her challenging music and is very satisfied by the completion of her hard work! I have enjoyed her smile and her candid way of telling me what she needs to work on every week. Maura, your great attitude at your lesson has made you a wonderful student this year.



**Leah Nika**  
Leah is 9, in 3rd grade, and is finishing her 4th year of piano study. She loves her new skill of moving around the keyboard from place to place! She has had a wonderful time with her recital music and especially playing duets with her mom and sister. We made it through the long cold winter morning lessons! Leah, you have learned so much this year and really blossomed in your musical understanding and expression!



**Kaleigh O'Brien**  
Kaleigh is 12, in 7th grade, and is completing her 6th year of piano study. Kaleigh loves to be busy and learning new music constantly! She doesn't like to be bored so she practices! She is a member of the 200 practices club, which balances out some of the other years! ✨ Kaleigh, you are an inspiration to me and a total joy in our studio. Thank you for all the work you did to perform 6 different pieces for the recital!



**Matthew Ratliff**  
Matthew is 9, in 4th grade, and is completing his 4th year of piano study. He continues to work at completing his work each week and is very happy when he has accomplished his music. He completed his first AIM exam this year! He loves to play music he knows and music with a fun beat! He has grown in his musical understanding this year and been able to play even more challenging pieces. Matthew, you have proven over and over this year your piano playing abilities!



**Anna Reitz**  
Anna is 13, in 7th grade, and is finishing her 5th year of piano study. She has pushed herself in some truly challenging music this year and has had great success! She is artistic in her musical expression and is a joy to spend time with at the piano. She works hard and loves her accomplishments. She loves playing her recital music and has especially enjoyed her duet with Kaleigh. Anna, you have radiated your enjoyment of piano this year and done amazing work!



**Elise Ricamato**  
Elise is 12, in 7th grade, and has studied piano for 6 years. She enjoys all kinds of music and is especially excited when she can truly read the music language! She has grown through some really challenging music this year and has continued to work hard even when pushed by a busy volleyball schedule! Elise loves her recital music, enjoying a duet and a trio this year. Elise, you are beautiful inside and out and have been a delightful student this year! Thank you for all your hard work!



**Will Ricamato**

Will is 10 in 4th grade, and is completing his second year of piano study! He enjoys music that he can easily understand and play. He loves his successes and the high fives that go with them! He comes to piano every week ready to take on his music and get ready for new challenges. He completed his first AIM exam this year. Will, you have discovered that you can memorize and achieve all kinds of music. Thanks for your commitment to "getting it done"! 🌸



**Tyler Ricamato**

Tyler is 7, in first grade, and is completing his 1st year of piano study. He is an intensely chatty musician, talking, playing, playing, talking...Tyler is an animated adventure! He has worked hard at his music and has been very dutiful in completing his tasks. Whether sitting at the piano or standing while playing, he has made it happen! Tyler, you have done such a good job your first year and I am so very proud of you!



**Barbara Richert**

Barbara is 15, a sophomore, and has studied piano for 7 years. She has had a really busy year with sports and activities, but has still made piano a real priority. She loves to use her strong fingers for the big sounds with deep tones with an ever artistic quality to all her playing. We have had a great time this year with some really great musical achievements. The end of the year has been a big challenge! Barb, thanks for all your work, your smile, your perseverance, and for being in our fun quartet. Don't Stop Believing!



**Sara Richert**

Sara is 13, in 8th grade and has studied piano for 6 years. This year has been a real challenge for Sara. She works at many activities while pursuing the highest challenges in piano. We have our moments of collaborative strategizing, some of which, I have been known to say to her, "Just Do It!" She is my Nike kid. Sara, thanks for all the fun this year and for having the guts to reach for such challenges. Our duet Touch a Rainbow has been an amazing journey, a beautiful one at that!



**Kyra Saflarski**

Kyra is 13, in 8th grade, and is completing her first year of piano study in our studio. She has enjoyed learning piano as music is a big love in her life. She has grown this year as she has learned to read music, and has developed confidence in her abilities. Preparing music for the recital was a big achievement for her. Kyra, you are a wonderful musician and I have enjoyed helping you start your piano studies. I am so proud of your accomplishments this year!



**Lisa Soppi**

Lisa is 7, in 1st grade, and is completing her first semester of piano study in our studio! She has had so much fun playing the piano and learning how to move around on the keyboard. She has had a lot of enthusiasm and her strong musical aptitude has made her progress quick and exciting. Lisa, I am so glad that you have joined our studio and I am so proud of the recital music you have played so wonderfully!



**Ema Tomasevic**

Ema is 9, in 3rd grade, and is completing her 1st year of piano study in our studio. She has worked hard at understanding the rhythms and note reading challenges of a first year student. We have counted out loud and played some great music together. Her recital music is a big achievement for her. She has put a lot of effort into her music and made some big strides this year. Ema, thank you for all your hard work and the great attitude of learning you have brought to your lessons!



**Katelynn Tracey**

Katelynn is 10, in 4th grade and is completing her 4th year of piano study. She is creative, artistic, imaginative, and full of musical energy. She loves to explore learning songs she knows on the keyboard and is always picking out melodies and finding ways to play them. She has done a great job this year in concentrating on her music and reaching new heights of success. Katelynn, I am so proud of your work in piano this year and how much you have concentrated for music reading success. Good job!



**Kate Vallaro**

Kate is 8, in 2nd grade, is and is completing her 2nd year of piano study. She is excited about all that she is learning and the fun of new songs. She enjoys learning her music and finding the pieces that she accomplishes easily. She has worked hard at rhythm and note reading this year as she has progressed in her studies. She has especially loved playing a happy birthday song in honor of her brother's birthday. Kate, you have been a wonderful student this year and you have brought such a great enthusiasm every week. Thank you so much for a great year!



**Debi Inch**

I have been teaching piano for 27 years, all of which has taken place here in West Chicago. I have a love for all of my students, young and old, striving to find the music and styles which will bring excitement to all who are studying piano with me. I find the creativity in music making an amazing experience as well as deeply personal one with those God has entrusted me with each year. In 27 years, the teaching journey has been a path through the lives and hearts of students and parents that counts for blessing after blessing. Thank you to everyone for such an amazing and exciting opportunity!



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