



KENT S. DENNIS MEMORIAL ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIP

Saginaw Valley Chapter
American Guild of Organists
2017

GENERAL INFORMATION

The purpose of the Kent S. Dennis Memorial Endowed Scholarship is to encourage and enrich the musical education of present and future church or synagogue organists.

The scholarship is open to keyboard students of any age enrolled in high school or college, and also adult students, residing in the area served by the Saginaw Valley Chapter (including counties such as Arenac, Bay, Clare, Gratiot, Isabella, Midland, Saginaw, and Tuscola) or studying with a teacher who is a member of the Saginaw Valley Chapter. Awards totaling \$750-1250 will be given for beginning study or further study of the organ. Scholarships will be based solely on merit and will be paid directly to the college or university or to an approved instructor on behalf of the student in accordance with the Midland Area Community Foundation's award distribution policy.

All application requirements of the Saginaw Valley Chapter and the Midland Area Community Foundation must be completed by the posted deadline, March 1, 2017, to qualify for the scholarship.

If, in the opinion of the committee, no suitable candidate is eligible, the scholarship may not be awarded. The amount of each award will be determined at the discretion of the judges. The Midland Area Community Foundation reserves the right to accept or reject the recommendations of the Saginaw Valley Chapter AGO.

Dr. Kent S. Dennis [1928-2007]

Kent S. Dennis was born June 25, 1928, to William and Mabel Dennis in Donora, Pennsylvania. A scientist, Dr. Dennis earned a BS degree in chemistry from Grove City College, where he graduated summa cum laude. He received MS and PhD degrees from Cleveland's Western Reserve University (now Case Western Reserve). In 1954 he began a position at the Dow Chemical Co. in Midland before being drafted into the U.S. Army for two years. He retired from Dow in 1986 after 32 years as a senior research associate. Dr. Dennis was organist at The Bertha E. R. Strosacker Memorial Presbyterian Church in Midland for 47 years, and was named organist emeritus in 2003. He played for more than 700 weddings and performed annual organ recitals for 46 years; he also taught many organ students. His community involvement included leadership terms for the Saginaw Valley Chapter AGO, which he served three times as dean. He also served on the board of managers of the Midland Center for the Arts and as president of the Midland Symphony Orchestra. In 1987 the Music Society and Midland Symphony Orchestra honored him with the Musician of the Year award. In 1997 he received the Grove City College Alumni Achievement Award. In 2002, Dr. Steven Egler commissioned an organ piece, "Fantasia on Dennis," by David Gillingham in honor of Dr. Dennis. Having both extraordinary technical and musical talents, Dr. Dennis built a pipe organ in his Alden Dow-designed home. When his health declined, he donated the organ to St. Joseph the Worker Church in Beal City, Michigan. Kent Dennis died on January 1, 2007.

Application Process and Audition Requirements

All the requirements of the Midland Area Community Foundation, found at link below, must be followed to qualify for the Kent S. Dennis Memorial Endowed Scholarship. Follow all instructions closely. Variations will cause immediate disqualification. All required materials are due by March 1, 2017. This includes all transcripts from all previously attended educational institutions (both high school and college(s) if applicable).

<http://www.midlandfoundation.org/scholarship-guidelines/>

Each scholarship applicant is required to take part in a performance audition, which will take place March 31, 2017, beginning at 5:00 p.m., in the sanctuary of The Memorial Presbyterian Church, 1310 Ashman Street, Midland, MI 48640. The scholarship committee, upon receipt of any or all applications, will schedule the date and times of auditions and rehearsals and distribute the organ's stoplist. The applicant will perform two pieces in contrasting styles and periods. One selection must be taken from the Baroque or Classical era. Memorization is not required. Performance time is limited to a maximum of ten (10) minutes.

A \$15 application fee – payable to "Saginaw Valley Chapter AGO" – must be received at the same deadline by Nicholas Schmelter, Saginaw Valley Chapter AGO, 215 N. Almer St., Caro, MI 48723, who will be pleased to assist as needed. Complete and mail the form below with the \$15 application fee.

first name

middle initial

last name

address

city

state

zip code

phone number

e-mail address

name of organ instructor or private teacher

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Saginaw Valley Chapter - American Guild of Organists

c/o The Midland Area Community Foundation

76 Ashman Circle

Midland, MI 48640