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# MUSE NEWS®

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## A NATIONAL NEWSLETTER FOR GROUP PIANO TEACHERS!

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## How three teachers built successful group piano studios!

### "I WANTED TO BE MY OWN BOSS!"

Colette Fallon, Owner  
THE MUSIC FACTORY  
Portland, OR  
e-mail: [colette@musickeys.com](mailto:colette@musickeys.com)

I've been teaching music for twenty-three years—seventeen of those as a school music teacher. Four years ago I opened a commercial music studio because I wanted flexibility and control, I wanted to be able to advertise and—I wanted to be my own boss!

I had done some group piano teaching through the years—so the concept of group piano instruction was not new to me. But my problem was finding the right group piano method for my students. I'd used almost every piano method out there, and I knew what I was looking for. I also knew that I would know the method I wanted to teach when I saw it! One day, a piano teacher friend of mine told me about THE MAYRON COLE PIANO METHOD®. The minute I saw Mayron's piano method, I knew that *this* was the piano program for me! I could tell by looking through some of

*Colette Fallon, second from left, poses with some of her Level I-A students.*



her books that Mayron and I are on the same wavelength. For years, one of my biggest pet peeves had been about the too-small notes in the other methods. Children (and adults!) have difficulty reading those small-sized notes. Plus, those "other" methods present concepts too fast for kids to completely understand them. That's why so many piano students are weak note readers and rhythm counters. But Mayron's piano method uses larger notes in the lower levels, and she layers music concepts. Each piece of music and its theory is built upon the music and theory taught in previous lessons! And that's how people learn—by constantly reviewing concepts and adding a few more concepts on top of that knowledge. Mayron had obviously taught children before writing her piano method!

After I decided on The Mayron Cole Piano Method, it was time to blitz my area with advertising and build a financially secure music school. I was  
*(continued on next page)*

### INSIDE!

REGISTRATION FORMS  
AND CITY SCHEDULE  
FOR OUR SUMMER  
CERTIFICATION SEMINARS!  
LEARN THE SKILLS OF  
GROUP PIANO TEACHING!

# *“I have found that my group piano students are better at counting rhythms than my privately taught students!”*

*(continued from page 1)*

on a budget, so before I started my advertising plan, I calculated how many new students it would take to pay for all of it.

**Here’s how I advertised:** I advertised heavily in a parent magazine and the local neighborhood magazine with discount flyers. I had an open house at my studio with a free introductory piano class lesson using Mayron Cole’s coloring books. I also was listed in the parks and recreation schedule of activities for children. I sent postcards to all the school music teachers in my area announcing the opening of my music studio. Then, I purchased a mailing list (through US West) and mailed announcement postcards to area residents with children. I offered a discount to parents who referred students that signed up at my school. I posted flyers in grocery stores and libraries. I even had advertisements attached to grocery shopping carts. Every caller was asked where she found information about my school. That helped me judge the most effective areas of advertising. I found that my best advertising came from the postcards, a yellow page ad, and the parent magazine. My program is currently filled with seventy group and private piano students. (I use Mayron’s piano method for both my private students and my piano class students!) I also have two hundred early childhood students that feed into my piano program. From the beginning, my commercial music studio has been a financial success. I’ve been very blessed.

**Here’s what I have found after using Mayron’s piano method for four years:** Children love this piano method! Plus, they love the theory games that go with it! Game time really tells me that the kids have learned

their notes and theory concepts. I have found my group piano students are better at counting rhythms than my privately taught students. That’s because piano classes demand accountability! A person cannot “fake” rhythm and note reading when playing music in ensemble.

I especially like Mayron’s piano programs for young beginners—EZ KEYS and MENEHUNE MUSIC. These two pre-reading programs lay a strong foundation for my beginning piano students. My little students are great counters, and they can play their music in ensemble. I love to hear them playing and singing along during piano class. They are fun! And these young students are not locked into reading fingering numbers like the other piano methods “encourage” students to do.

I recently entered twenty students in the National Federation of Music Clubs festival. Out of that twenty, thirteen students received “superior” ratings and the rest received the next-highest rating which is “excellent”. Superior ratings are not easy to get! Most of the judges wrote “Good counting!” and “Good steady beat!” on the students’ critique sheets. I was very proud!



*ABOVE: Some of Colette’s “EZ Keys” students are ready for piano class.*

*BELOW: Colette Fallon uses The Mayron Cole Piano Method® with her privately taught students.*



*LEFT: Colette teaches seventy-five group and private piano students plus two hundred early childhood students.*

# “I WANTED A CAREER CHANGE!”

STEPHANIE DERRICK, Owner  
HEAVENLY SOUNDS, Arlington, TX

Three years ago, I was a music teacher in an elementary school, and I wanted a career change. In addition to teaching music all day at the school, I would come home and teach private piano lessons to twelve students in the evenings. I really didn't like the fact that those twelve private piano students were taking up so much of my after-school time for so little income. And it quickly became obvious to me that I could never earn enough money teaching piano to one person at a time to quit my school job. So I began to think of other career options that were outside of music. Then one day a copy of MUSE NEWS® was left in my school mail box. In it were articles about teachers who had successfully started group piano studios. What caught my eye was the announcement that Mayron Cole would be conducting a seminar in my area in which she would train music teachers to become group piano teachers. I decided then and there that this was what I wanted to do—start a group piano studio! I was so positive about this career change, that I purchased ten electronic keyboards from a friend who got me a great price!

## THE FIRST YEAR

That summer I quit my school job in order to devote my full energy and attention to my new music studio. I live forty-seven miles (one way!) from the school in which I had been teaching, so I couldn't count on any of my former school students coming to me for group piano lessons. I had to attract students that were closer to my home. But I'm my church's organist and people had been asking me for years to teach their children. When word got out that I had opened an “official” group piano studio in my home, I had thirty-six students almost immediately!

## THE SECOND YEAR

The next year, I got more organized with my hours. I taught from four to eight p.m. Monday through Friday. My studio had grown to around sixty-five piano class students and fifteen voice students. Oddly enough, the fifteen voice students took up three entire teaching days and the sixty-five class piano students took up only two. It didn't take a great mathematician to see that those numbers needed to be changed.

## THE THIRD YEAR

The third year (which began this past summer) I moved my music studio out of my house! I wanted to be free to advertise and hire a voice teacher. So I located my studio in a music store from which I rent teaching space. I had a flyer printed that told all about my studio and advertised a “try piano” summer course. For a fee, this flyer was inserted in The Shoppers' Guide (a free neighborhood newspaper) and delivered to over 28,000 homes. I then hired a distribution company to place my flyer on doors of another 7000 homes. I got thirty-two new summer students from this advertising endeavor, and twenty-two of them later registered for the fall session. That's a great return for the amount of money I spent advertising! So, this past fall, I had one hundred and five students enrolled in group piano classes plus twenty-five voice students. I need only forty students enrolled to pay my studio overhead. Any number above forty students is profit!

My piano classes average about six students—but I have one class with eight students. I've found that my larger classes do better than my smaller classes. The kids listen closer and follow instructions better. There's little “fooling around” in my large classes. And happily, the parents of my students have been completely

receptive to the concept of their children being taught in group piano classes. I've never had a problem with parents about that!

## THE PRESENT

My music studio has been so successful that I recently rented a space that is five times larger than my music store studio. It's located less than two miles away, and I moved into it on April 1st. I have big plans to expand my studio into a music school by offering other musical instruments and hiring more teachers. As you can tell, I am thoroughly enjoying this new career!



ABOVE: This student is happy about moving to Stephanie's new studio.



ABOVE: Stephanie Derrick (left) poses with Mayron Cole at a training seminar.

LEARN THE SKILLS OF GROUP PIANO TEACHING!  
ATTEND A **MAYRON COLE PIANO METHOD**©  
TRAINING SEMINAR!  
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## Year 2000 Schedule!

Register With Visa, MasterCard, Discover, American Express

**\$150/day plus cost of books being studied**

Group piano training seminar:

**9 a.m. until 6 p.m.**

May 8 ..... Monday ..... Ellicott City, MD  
June 3 ..... Saturday ..... Oklahoma City, OK  
June 24 ..... Saturday ..... Salt Lake City, UT  
July 8 ..... Saturday ..... Atlanta, GA  
July 22 ..... Saturday ..... Houston, TX  
August 5 ..... Saturday ..... Denver, CO

To learn MORE about us, visit our website:

**[www.mcpiano.com](http://www.mcpiano.com)**

Teachers:

Be a part of our new web site! We have a brand new section being developed on our web page entitled “**Mail Bag**”. Send us your **thoughts and comments** about The Mayron Cole Piano Method<sup>©</sup> and we’ll post them for the world to read. (We reserve the right to edit letters for brevity.) Plus, send us **pictures** of your students as they enjoy the many aspects of The Mayron Cole Piano Method. We’ll put them in our “**Photo Album**” section.

All letters and photos become the property of The Mayron Cole Music Conservatory, Inc. and cannot be returned.

Mayron Cole



# MAYRON COLE GROUP PIANO SEMINAR *REGISTRATION FORM*

(All seminar attendees must have the music that will be studied at the seminar. If you ALREADY OWN the music, you DO NOT need to purchase more. The music will be shipped to you BEFORE the seminar.

*Don't forget to bring the music with you!*

Complete this REGISTRATION FORM and return it with your check or credit card PAYMENT to:

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**1702 Hazard Street at Haddon • Houston, TX 77019-5719**

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## OUR NEW CATEGORY A!

*Check the city/seminar for which you are registering:*

- May 8-Ellicott City, MD
- June 3-Oklahoma City, OK     June 24- Salt Lake City, UT     July 8-Atlanta, GA
- July 22-Houston, TX     August 5-Denver, CO

How to Teach in Groups Pre-Reading and PrimerLevel Students; A Great Summer Piano Program; Primer Level Ensembles; Advertising/Building Your Studio; Scheduling; Business Management; and MORE!

**9:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.**

### CATEGORY A COST:

- Tuition..... \$150.00
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### MUSIC NEEDED:

- EZ KEYS Teachers Manual..... \$29.95
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Books and Tuition: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

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Texas Residents Only\*\* Add 8.25% Sales Tax \$ \_\_\_\_\_

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\*Teachers previously certified in CATEGORY A may attend seminar again at 1/2 of the tuition cost!

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# **“I was looking for an ‘at home’ means of earning a living!”**

STACY CALDWELL, Owner, Stacy’s Studio of Music, McKinney, TX

Several years ago I was teaching music in a public school in Irving, Texas, when I saw an advertisement for THE MAYRON COLE PIANO METHOD summer seminars. I was about to be married and was looking for an “at home” means of earning a living with my music. Even though I couldn’t start my own group piano studio at the time, I knew it was a great idea so I took Mayron’s course. Soon after, my husband and I moved to McKinney, Texas and I resumed teaching in a public school. But I still wanted my own group piano studio. My initial plan was to teach group piano two afternoons a week after I had finished teaching at the school all day. So I designed a great flyer, and the school principal allowed me to distribute it to the students at school. That was a big help because the flyers were going to the “customers” I wanted! Almost immediately, I had thirty-seven piano students! With the income from those students, I purchased six electronic pianos! (I already owned one electronic piano.) Even though my husband and I were still living in an apartment, my group piano studio had launched!

## **WE BLASTED OFF WITH PIANO!**

With seven electronic pianos in our apartment living room, conditions were extremely crowded. But my husband and I were also building a house that would have a music studio above the garage. I knew that, if I could just hold on, things were going to get better. In May, my school principal again allowed me to send flyers home with the students advertising Mayron Cole’s “Blast Off With Piano!”(c) summer program. The response was overwhelming! I got fifty “Blast Off” students from those flyers—and they were all taking group piano classes in my tiny apartment studio. At the end of that summer, I decided not to return to the school as a music teacher. Our new home was completed, and I could now move into my new music studio. That fall, my group piano studio opened with about seventy-five students and I was teaching three nights a week. The following summer, I again offered the “Blast Off With Piano!” course. And that time, eighty new students enrolled for “Blast Off!”

## **TEACH BLAST OFF IN A WEEK!**

Since “Blast Off With Piano!” is such a great course for attracting new students, I again offered it this past summer. I could not advertise with flyers through the school since I no longer teach there. But every phone call I received was a “word of mouth” referral which is the best kind. And I again enrolled about eighty students for the one-week sampler course! I can’t say enough about the Blast Off With Piano! course. It’s a great way for students and their parents to “try” piano for only a week. You should teach the course Monday through Thursday, as Mayron advises, and have a recital on Friday. That way, the students’ keyboard playing, rhythm counting, and ensemble performance abilities are overwhelming for the parents. Students who knew absolutely nothing about piano the first day of the Blast Off! course are playing in harmonic ensemble on the recital five days later! Always have plenty of registration forms ready to hand out the day of your Blast Off! recitals!

## **I’VE HIRED MORE TEACHERS!**

I now have about one hundred sixty-five students enrolled for the school year and have hired two teachers, a book-keeper, and a part-time housekeeper. My group piano studio has grown so much that we have converted the garage into another music studio. I’ve also purchased nine more electronic pianos. With the additional teaching space, my group piano school can easily double its enrollment.

I love THE MAYRON COLE PIANO METHOD because it is so well laid out. I tell the teachers who work for me: “Do exactly what Mayron’s teacher manuals say, and you’ll do it right!” I think of myself as a born entrepreneur because I like to take chances and work hard! If I had known about this piano method while I was still in my twenties, I would now have group piano studios all over Texas because I love it! And the parents love it! And best of all, the students love it. I will never teach any other way.

*“I now have about one hundred sixty-five students enrolled...”*



*ABOVE: Some of Stacy Caldwell's students work independently with headphones as Stacy (standing) monitors their progress.*



*LEFT: Stacy uses theory game time to teach and reinforce musical concepts.*



*ABOVE: Stacy's students enjoy taking piano classes with their friends.*

## WHAT'S NEW?

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# WHAT'S INSIDE THIS EDITION OF MUSE NEWS®?



*LEFT: Colette Fallon's great "advertising on a budget" helped build THE MUSIC FACTORY into a profitable music school. See Front Page.*

*BELOW: Stacy Caldwell's studio enrollment has increased dramatically. She uses BLAST OFF WITH PIANO® to do it! See Page 6.*

*BELOW: Stephanie Derrick made a career change with dramatic results! See Page 3.*



**Picture yourself as a successful group piano teacher!  
Attend one of our Year 2000 certification seminars!**

**Registration Form on Page 5.**

**Call Toll Free to Register:**

**800/527-6873**

  
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