

What is Tri-M?

An Overview of the Program



The Tri-M Music Honor Society is the international music honor society for high school students. It is designed to recognize students for their academic and musical achievements, reward them for their accomplishments and service activities, and to inspire other students to excel at music and leadership. Through more than 5,500 chartered chapters, Tri-M has helped thousands of young people provide years of service through music in

schools throughout the world.

Tri-M shares and supports the objectives of every dedicated music educator—to increase student and school involvement with music and to make a stronger and more unified school music program. Tri-M offers a complete system of rewards that helps inspire students and recognizes excellence in individuals and chapters. With this system, the society builds self-esteem and provides a channel of personal fulfillment.

Tri-M is a program of NAFME: The National Association for Music Education, the largest nonprofit organization dedicated to the advancement of music education. Through its many programs, activities, publications, and conferences, NAFME addresses all aspects of music education and works to ensure that every student can be a part of a balanced, comprehensive, and high-quality program of music instruction.

Tri-M was founded in 1936 by Alexander and Frances Harley, incorporated and renamed Modern Music Masters in 1952, and recognized in 1983 as the Tri-M Music Honor Society, a program of NAFME: The National Association for Music Education.

History

- **1936**—Alexander Harley and his wife Frances founded the Maine Music Masters at Maine Township High School in Park Ridge, IL.
- **1952**—Maine Music Masters became incorporated and was renamed Modern Music Masters.
- **1954**—The first individual member recognition, known as the Top-Notcher Certificate of Achievement, was presented. This certificate was renamed Tri-M® Leadership in 2002.
- **1971**—First Master Musician Certificate was presented.
- **1983**—Modern Music Masters became a program of MENC: The National Association for Music Education and was officially renamed the Tri-M Music Honor Society.
- **1986**—The first year Tri-M was recognized by the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NAASP) as an approved program.
- **1989**—The first State Conference Achievement Recognition was presented to Tri-M members accepted to All-State Honor Ensembles. This certificate was renamed Honor Ensemble Achievement in 2003.
- **2002**—State Chapter of the Year recognition was given in addition to the National Chapter of the Year.
- **2002**—The Top-Notcher Recognition was renamed Tri-M Leadership.
- **2003**—The State Conference Achievement Recognition was renamed Honor Ensemble Achievement and was expanded to recognize Tri-M member participation in state, division, and national honor ensembles.
- **2003**—The first Tri-M Outstanding Service Recognition was presented.
- **2004**—The first Tri-M Alumni Achievement Recognition was presented.

Logo

TRI-M MUSIC HONOR SOCIETY



The Tri-M Music Honor Society logo is rich in symbolism. The three Ms stand for “Modern Music Masters,” the society’s original name. Music is

represented by the lyre and the scroll, which denote accomplishment and service. The five lines of the music staff indicate the five criteria upon which members are selected: scholarship, character, cooperation, leadership, and service.

If we strive to cultivate musical sensitivity and perception in our students, we must likewise give adequate recognition for their efforts and achievements, and we must inspire them to strive for higher goals. In what better way than by bestowing upon them life membership in a worldwide honorary organization for musical youth?
— Alexander Harley, Founder, Tri-M Music Honor Society

How Can I Become a Member of Tri-M?

Why You Should be a Tri-M® Member

- The Tri-M Music Honor Society® recognizes and rewards students based on their accomplishments and service activities. Isn't it nice to be thanked for all you do?
- Having a Tri-M chapter at your school gives a boost to your school music program. Don't you love helping your music teachers be recognized for their hard work?
- Chapter service and community activities show the entire community how important music is in your school. So, the next time it comes to budget cuts, your chapter activities can help make sure that music stays in your school!
- Tri-M is a chance for all members of your music program—meaning both the vocalists and the instrumentalists—to work together toward common goals under the leadership of school faculty. Isn't it great when we can all get along?
- Tri-M gives you the chance to learn new skills through service activities and taking leadership of chapter projects. Don't you love learning?

Tri-M Conferences

Many Tri-M chapters participate in local, division, and national Tri-M Conferences. As for the division and national events, they're held at the same time as or as part of selected MENC national and division conferences and feature special sessions just for Tri-M members. Many Tri-M conferences include chances for students to meet members from other chapters, hear special performances, visit music exhibits, and even perform themselves!

ASCAP JAM Program

All active Tri-M members can also be part of [ASCAP's Junior ASCAP Membership \(JAM\) Program](#). The program promotes musical composition and raises awareness about intellectual property rights among young musicians. Through the program, Tri-M members receive special discounts on wireless products, T-shirts, electronic gear, movie tickets, and video rentals.

Updates on Composition Competitions

If you're a Tri-M member, your advisor gets updates from the national office with information about upcoming composition competitions. You can also learn about these opportunities by checking the [Tri-M main page](#) or [Tri-M news page](#). If you're not a member, you're just missing out.

Want Scholarships?

Each year, Tri-M offers money for summer study programs to chapters that have received the national [Tri-M Chapter of the Year Award](#). These scholarships are awarded by the chapter advisors to deserving chapter members.

In addition, check out MENC's [Scholarship Resources for Music Students](#) page for information on scholarship opportunities from a variety of sources!

Membership Criteria (Union Academy)

Candidates are selected from school music students that exhibit exceptional scholarship, leadership, service, and character.

- **Music Participation**—Candidates must have been enrolled in a music class at Union Academy *for at least a year* AND for the current school year.
- **Grades/Scholarship**—Candidates must have maintained for the previous year at least an A average grade in all music classes, and a B average in all other academic classes.
- **Leadership**—Leadership roles in both school and community will be considered when possible.
- **Service**—Service roles in both school and community will be considered when possible. Service activities include any actions undertaken by the student that are done with or on behalf of others without any direct financial or material compensation to the individual performing the service.
- **Character**—For Tri-M consideration, character will be considered and will be free from speculation and rumor. One description of character is a person who demonstrates respect, responsibility, trustworthiness, fairness, caring, and citizenship. A student with good character always displays Cardinal PRIDE.

- **Individual Member Fee**—Each Tri-M member will be required to pay a non-refundable one-time fee of \$20 once they join. This will cover student insignia, Tri-M items, projects, field trips, etc.
- **Annual Review**—Members and their eligibility for Tri-M membership will be reviewed annually. If a current member does not or cannot meet the academic or music criteria necessary to be considered a Tri-M member, his or her membership will lapse in good standing. (Ex: if your grades fall).
- **Lapsed Member Rights**—Lapsed members are allowed to retain all insignia items earned during the year or years that they met all Tri-M criteria.
- **Reinstatement**—Lapsed members shall be reinstated upon once again meeting all Tri-M membership criteria established above (ex: bringing your grades back up).

If you have any questions regarding Tri-M, or are eligible and interested in becoming a member of our Union Academy Tri-M chapter, please contact Mr. Rowe.

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