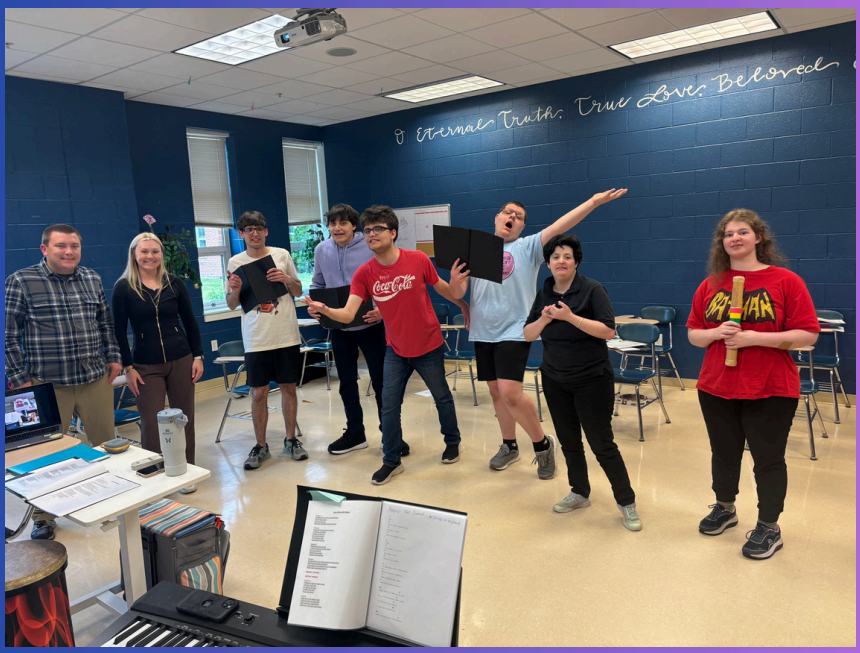
The Musical Autist

Music | Community | Empowerment



The Musical Autist (TMA), a 501c3 non-profit organization, dedicated to empowering autistic people through engagement with the arts, specifically music.

Certified through the Standards for Excellence Institute with Maryland Nonprofits, The Musical Autist is trained to achieve the highest standards of ethics and accountability in nonprofit governance, management, and operations.

The Musical Autist has been a recipient of Maryland Nonprofits Basic Enhanced Standards for Excellence Accreditation since 2020.



Standards for Excellence · BASICS ENHANCED ·

Mission

To provide access to artistic platforms of self advocacy for autistic musicians of all ages and abilities.

Vision

To create places in the community that bolster the arts and empower autistic people, giving them an opportunity to work, perform, and build relationships.



Our History

The Musical Autist was founded in April 2011 with the intent to bring Sensory Friendly Concerts to the community. These concerts were designed to allow autistic people and their families the opportunity to enjoy musical performances with accomodations for sensory needs not offered in most public venues. In fact, TMA was the first organization in the United States to launch Sensory Friendly Concerts!

Over the last 15 years, TMA has expanded its programming with four other program offerings focused around music.





What is a Musical Autist?

Our name often confuses people, because they don't know what an "Autist" is.

A musical autist is anyone on the autism spectrum who likes music. It's that simple! You don't have to be a savant. You don't have to have perfect pitch. And you don't have to know how to play any instrument. All you need is an interest in music.





Our Programs

We offer a range of programs:

+ **Sensory Friendly Concerts**
+ **Musical Autist Troupe**
+ **Empowerment Jam Sessions**
+ **Creators Guild**
+ **Elevating Autistic Musicians**

Our programs are offered year-round and are inclusive for all abilities!

Sensory Friendly Concerts



“SFCs” are inclusive performances of the fine arts that celebrate neurodiversity. Local musicians are often featured as headlining performers.

Sensory accommodations are provided during the concert, such as keeping volume levels low, lighting soft, and providing noise-reduction headphones. There is always a sensory-quiet room or area, with support staff available, outside of the performance space. Tactile fidgets are available during the performance, and audience members are allowed to move freely around the room if desired.

Additionally, the experience gives parents/caregivers an opportunity to hear public music performances in an accepting environment free of judgment.



Musical Autist Troupe



Musical Autist Troupe is an inclusive group of individuals with and without disabilities who meet weekly to participate in music making and community building through musical performance. The group is facilitated by a board-certified Music Therapist.

Each semester participants select songs to rehearse which are performed during public concerts in the community. Weekly sessions give participants opportunities to share a live performance of a musical composition with their peers.

Many of Troupe's performance songs emphasize acceptance and empowerment. The program fosters meaningful friendships in both personal and public settings.

Troupe is designed for ages 16 and older.

Empowerment Jams

Empowerment Jams are inclusive, community building experiences that bring together neurodivergent and neurotypical musicians to enjoy the spontaneous, improvisational art of music making.

Each Jam is led by an autistic self-advocate. People who do not formally play instruments are welcomed and encouraged to participate alongside trained musicians during this empowering event.

Simple percussion instruments, such as rhythm sticks and shaker eggs, are provided for participants who are not musically trained.

Engaged and focused on building a sound that is in-the-moment, the Jam musicians experience the powerful uplifting community of creativity in song, music, and drumming.

Creators Guild

Musical Autist Creators Guild focuses on the compositional aspect of music-making. The program will teach the foundations of musical structure and arrangement in composition. Participants may choose to create original pieces on sheet music or through digital-music software (such as GarageBand or LogicPro).

All original compositions will be recorded and group members will be invited to showcase their pre-recorded musical creations at a culminating end of semester concert.

Creators Guild is designed for ages 14 and older.

The program's facilitator, who is a board-certified music therapist, guides the group's activities.

No prior musical experience is necessary — just a measure of curiosity and enthusiasm.





Elevating Autistic Musicians

EAM is our newest program, and comprises two distinct divisions:

The EAM Fellowship, launched in 2025, is a 12-month funding opportunity for an autistic musician to accomplish a personal musical project--which they design and implement.

Recipients help select a mentor who supports them throughout the fellowship.

Recipients have weekly meetings with their mentor to help keep them on track, and they also must provide weekly summaries to an oversight team that highlight their achievements and growth.

The EAM Showcase is still in development. The goal is to offer a platform to spotlight the musical talents of autistic people. Musicians will submit original compositions to a professional musician, who will then curate the pieces, and provide a short descriptive overview of the piece, its genre, and degree of sophistication.

Selected works will be featured on The Musical Autist's web page, so these musicians can have their work heard by a wider audience.

Sponsorships and Donations

The Musical Autist invites you to join our 15th anniversary extravaganza event!

TMA 15th Anniversary Showcase Performance: Spring 2027

Consider becoming a **sponsor** for our extravaganza performance, as well as the rest of our programs throughout 2026 and 2027.

Help us exceed our **$25,000** fundraising goal!

Donation tiers are outlined below, as well as exact steps on how to donate.

TMA thanks you for your support!

Sponsoring our non-profit is a great way to show your support for the community, while promoting your business!

Please consider sponsoring and partnering with us at one of these levels.

Silver Level - $250-$499

Business name / logo posted on the TMA website, Facebook/InstaGram, and Newsletters through 2026 and 2027.

Quarter-page business Ad placed in the Showcase Performance Concert Programs.

Gold Level - $500-$999

Business name / logo posted on the TMA website, Facebook/InstaGram, and Newsletters through 2026 and 2027.

Half-page business Ad placed in the Showcase Performance Concert Programs.

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Platinum Level - $1,000+

Business name / logo posted on the TMA website, FB Page, and Newsletters through 2026 and 2027.

Logo printed on extravaganza t-shirt to be worn by students and volunteers.

Online Banner Advertisement with business link on TMA Web Page.

Full Page Ad placed in the Showcase Performance Concert Programs.

Go to https://www.themusicalautist.org click on "Become a Sponsor or Donate" button for credit/debit card or Venmo.

Scan to donate

If you prefer to mail a check, send to:
The Musical Autist, LLC, 8137 Equestrian Dr, Severn, MD 21144

Donation receipts for contributions can be provided for your tax records.

Participant Testimonials

“I greatly enjoyed spending time with friends and making music together.”

“I love knowing that there is a space for neurodivergent people that I know and care about to create and perform for others.”

“It was such a warm and friendly atmosphere.”

“The joy and enthusiasm of all the performers really inspired me! Also, all of the performers and audience members were very supportive. It was a wonderful evening.”

“Creators Guild is a great service providing the gift of participation in the arts in a peer-friendly model that offers a great outlet for creativity and friendship.”

“I could be myself & sing along with everyone.“

“As a parent of a young adult who uses a wheelchair, I appreciated the welcoming environment of this performance. It felt like we belonged there instead of standing out like we often do at public events.”

The Musical Autist
2025 Annual Summary

Events/Activities

- Sensory Friendly Showcase Concert with 11 neurodivergent performers (May)
- Two Semesters of Musical Autist Troupe and Music Explorers programs with concert performances (May and December)
- Sponsored music leadership fellowship for an Autistic Musician
- Six Empowerment Jam Sessions (Jan, Mar, May, Jul, Sep, Nov)

**** Thank you to the Chesapeake Region Accessible Boating (CRAB) organization and Community United Methodist Church of Crofton for donating support staff and free spaces for our programs and activities to thrive!! ****

Finances

2025 Beginning Balance: $24,149

Income
+$5,654 Personal Donations
+$5,729 Program Tuition
+$2,000 Arts Council of Anne Arundel County Grant for 2026 Troupe Program

Expenses
-$10,284 Musical Autist Troupe/Music Explorers (currently Creators Guild)
-$2,000 EAM Fellowship
-$635 Empowerment Jam Sessions
-$1,526 Sensory Friendly Concert
-$1,935 Website/Marketing/Insurance/Fees

2025 Net Income (Loss): -$2,997

2025 End of Year Balance: $21,152