

In 2010 I requested a grant from the Ann Arbor Area Piano Teachers Foundation to attend a several day instructional on jazz piano playing taught by Ann Collins. The Ann Collins Invitationals were a once-a-year gathering of college professors and instructors from all over the United States. Over the years Ann taught this small group of classically trained musicians to realize lead sheets, voice extended chords, improvise over chord progressions and much about the various styles of jazz.



In addition to learning these skills it was an opportunity to connect with people from across the country and get to know them in a more relaxed setting. 2010 was the last time I participated in the Invitational as I went on to study jazz year around by participating in student jazz combos at EMU. But I wouldn't have had the courage and knowledge to do that if I had not first worked with Ann. Since 2010 I have taught many of my students these same skills and now I am preparing to teach a class of the same components to students at EMU. I very much appreciate the support and grant from the Ann Arbor Piano Teachers Foundation in 2010 as it turned out to be a very pivotal year in my jazz piano study.

*--Brenda Marshall*