

A REPORT ON THE AVS STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

July 13, 2013

2012 – 2013 AVS Strategic Planning Committee

Ed Klorman, chair

David Bynog

Adam Cordle

Hillary Herndon

Michelle Sayles

Kathryn Steely

Shelly Tramposh

Over the past several years, the AVS Board has been actively engaged in a process of strategic planning to ensure continued growth and development of our organization into the future. The world in which the AVS was founded has been rapidly changing with the rise of the Internet, social media, and YouTube. As such, the time is ripe to examine how our mission, programs, and procedures need to adapt to best serve the current needs of the viola community.

The strategic planning process was initiated by past AVS President Juliet White-Smith and resulted in a two-year-long comprehensive self-study which was completed in spring 2012. Since that time, we have been hard at work implementing the study's most immediate recommendations. Today we would like to update you on our progress and to lay out an agenda for the next phase of strategic planning. Your input and participation will play an important role.

The strategic planning process targeted the following topics for discussion:

- (1) Revisiting and updating our mission statement to reflect the diverse interests of our membership
- (2) Developing resources and programs to help attract and retain new members, including individuals from groups currently underrepresented within AVS (e.g., music educators, young professionals, amateurs)
- (3) Developing new approaches to development and financial planning
- (4) Review of approaches to local, regional, and national viola gatherings within the US
- (5) Ways to further develop collaboration with our sister organizations
- (6) Technology improvements
- (7) Creating new opportunities for pre-college students, young professionals, and non-professional violists within the AVS

Strategic Planning Phase I: Our Progress To Date

As a result of this process, the AVS board has already initiated and completed a number of significant projects this year. Several additional projects have completed an initial phase of preparation this year and will be a major focus over the next year.

2012 – 2013 Initiatives and Completed Projects

- **Membership** - Successful membership efforts resulted in an increase of 225 members since June 2012. This is an ongoing project and one that will continue to be a major focus, including initiatives to attract and retain members from groups currently underrepresented within AVS (including music educators, young professionals and amateur players). Membership is the lifeblood of AVS, and vigorous efforts to attract and retain members are essential to our organization's financial future.
- **Development** - Secured a major lead donation of \$5,000 to establish the David Dalton Viola Research Competition Endowment. Working closely with David Dalton, promotional

materials have been developed for the fundraising campaign, which will launch in July 2013. Our goal is to raise \$20,000 to fund the competition in perpetuity.

- **Technology** - Major fundraising effort within the board to raise lead gifts for development of more advanced website and integrated database software. This upgrade will confer many benefits that will help the AVS attract and retain members, including a streamlined membership renewal process, improved communication between AVS and its members, and the creation of a “premium content” section of the website with special resources and materials for current members only. Similar “premium content” sections exist for most of our sister organizations’ websites and not only provide valuable resources, but also serve as an incentive for sustaining membership. This upgrade will be funded by donations only, not from the AVS general budget. AVS board members have already contributed over \$6,200 for this project, demonstrating our enthusiasm for this important AVS project. [Click here](#) to make a contribution toward the remaining \$2800 required for this project. Once we have achieved our fundraising goal and construction begins, the new site should be functional in 4-6 months.
- **International Orchestral Excerpt Competition** – This new program attracted a talented pool of students and emerging professionals aged 18-28, who submitted recordings for the two rounds of this “virtual” competition. The Joseph de Pasquale Grand Prize winner, **Blake Turner** receives a fully paid week performing with the San Antonio Symphony. Second prize winner **Batmyagmar Erdenebat** and third prize-winner **Emily Basner** receive online lessons with principal violists and cash awards. All finalists received detailed comments from our jury of distinguished principal and assistant principal violists.
- **From the Studio Blog** – Inaugurated this year by Heidi Castleman’s Juilliard studio, the new [From the Studio blog](#) has garnered wonderfully positive feedback and more than 21,000 visits to the blog.
- **AVS Publications and Viola Scores** – Our online scores project continues to expand its offerings to the viola community, including original compositions and arrangements in a wide range of styles for viola solo, chamber, and multiple-violia ensembles. Over 70 scores are [currently available on our website](#), and 17 additional scores have already been prepared for the premium content section of our upgraded website, with more to come.
- **New recording project** - Seven compositions available through our [American Viola Project](#) have been recorded by Scott Slapin. This recording will be available to AVS members through the “premium content” section of our upgraded website.
- **Web traffic** - The AVS website has seen a significant 10.9% increase in traffic over the course of the last year.
- **Mission Statement** - Our board has reviewed the AVS mission statement, with an eye toward adopting updated, more inclusive language that reflects the broad range of violists and viola enthusiasts that we serve with our programs and those we wish to attract as members. Stay tuned for a separate message on this subject, since the proposed revisions to our mission statement must be approved as a bylaws amendment.
- **Board Materials and Organization** - The AVS board has met quarterly in order to facilitate higher productivity for our strategic planning agenda. Orientation materials have been developed for new board members. New board committees have been formed, including the Strategic Planning committee and Health and Wellness committee. We are discussing the formation of new committees focusing on Young Professionals and Music Educators; these committees would develop programs and resources that serve these groups and lead recruitment efforts to reach out to these groups.