

Ajero

OLIVIA • ANTONIO • MARIO

FAMILY PIANO



Bios

Dr. Mario Ajero, NCTM is Professor of Piano at Stephen F. Austin State University in Nacogdoches, TX where he teaches applied piano lessons, group piano classes, and piano pedagogy. He holds Bachelor's and Master's Degrees in Music from Temple University in Philadelphia, PA and earned his Ph.D. in Music Education with a concentration in piano pedagogy from the University of Oklahoma. Dr. Ajero has served as Coordinator of Class Piano for Temple University's Music Prep Division and served as Lecturer in Piano for Temple University's Boyer College of Music and Dance in Philadelphia, PA. He currently serves on the Board of Advisors for the Disklavier Education Network through the Yamaha Corporation of America. Internationally recognized as an authority in incorporating technology in piano pedagogy and music education, he is frequently sought as a presenter for conferences around the world. In addition to presenting at every major piano pedagogy conference in the United States, Dr. Ajero has been invited to perform and present in Canada, Australia, Brazil, Germany, and China.

Born in Norman, Oklahoma, 14-year old pianist, **Antonio "Nio" Ajero**, started piano studies around the age of 3 with his father, Dr. Mario Ajero, Professor of Piano at Stephen F. Austin State University in Nacogdoches, Texas. He is currently one of only fifteen students from the state of Texas to be awarded a scholarship grant from the Texas Commission of the Arts and

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Ajero Bios, Continued

Texas Cultural Fund under their Texas Young Masters Program. As a result of the scholarship grant, Nio participated in the Cremona International Music Academy and Festival in Cremona, Italy. He also attended the PianoTexas Festival at Texas Christian University where he performed in concerts, masterclasses, and lessons with Vladimir Ovchinnikov and Igor Resnianski. Nio was a featured pianist on NPR's From The Top with host Christopher O'Riley. He has won numerous competitions including the Steinway & Sons Junior Piano Competition in Dallas, the Baylor/Waco Piano Competition, Texas State University's Young Artist Piano Competition, the SMU Institute for Young Pianists Competition, and the Red River Radio Young Artists Competition. One of Nio's highest distinctions is that he is a two-time National Gold Medalist from The Royal Conservatory for earning the highest marks in the United States for the Level 9 and 10 Piano Exams. This past year, he made his orchestral debut with the Marshall Symphony Orchestra under the direction of Kermit Poling. He currently takes piano lessons with Andrew & Linda Parr at Stephen F. Austin State University. Nio has performed in piano masterclasses with Alexander Kobrin, Tamás Ungar, Kenny Broberg, Alex McDonald, Carol Leone, Andrey Ponochevny, and Jane Magrath. In addition to piano, he is a black belt in Tae Kwon Do at Nacogdoches Blackbelt Academy.



Olivia Ajero is 10-years old and attends Raguet Elementary School in Nacogdoches, TX where she is in the 4th grade. She studies piano with her father, Dr. Mario Ajero, Professor of Piano at Stephen F. Austin State University. This past summer, Olivia won first prize in the Steinway &



Sons Junior Piano Competition in Dallas and also earned First Class Honors on her Level 7 Piano Exam from The Royal Conservatory. She was a winner of the 2018 Red River Radio Young Artist Competition and performed *Children's Corner Suite* by Claude Debussy on the air as part of the winners' concert. Olivia has also won honorable mention in the Young Artists Piano Competition at Texas State University and gold medals in the All-Star Festival at the Texas Music Teachers Association Convention. She holds the rank of yellow belt in Tae Kwon Do at the Nacogdoches Blackbelt Academy.