

**Dr. Carol Leone, Chair of Piano Studies, Professor of Piano
SMU Meadows School of the Arts, Dallas, Texas
<http://www.carolleone.com>**

“Having the opportunity to perform and teach on DS keyboards for the last 20 years has been an incredible gift! To fearlessly approach any significant work in the repertoire, knowing that it is within your grasp and that you needn’t fear injury has been a dream come true for me and for my students with smaller hand spans.”

“That this previously unimaginable breakthrough hasn't been fully embraced yet is inconceivable to me, but I hope that in the culture of the 2020's, inflexible tradition will give way to reason. When one considers that 87% of adult females, 24% of adult males, and 100% of young children are musically and technically limited by a keyboard size that is too large for them, and that injuries continue at a wholly unacceptable rate, the only logical solution is to offer alternative standards! I’m very grateful to the DS Standard Foundation for leading this initiative globally.”

Dr. Jessica Johnson, Professor of Piano and Piano Pedagogy, University of Wisconsin-Madison

“As a pianist with a small hand-span, I have spent my entire professional career seeking creative strategies for performing on conventional-sized keyboards. Since the life-changing moment I started practicing and performing on an alternatively-sized piano keyboard, I experienced a whole new level of artistic and technical freedom. Likewise, use of DS Standard™ piano keyboards has opened up new artistic realms for my students with smaller hand-spans, including expanded repertoire, enhanced musical possibilities, greater physical ease, and even recovery from pain and injury. The DS Standard™ keyboards offer all musicians, regardless of hand-span, the opportunity to focus on what matters most: making music with ease, imagination and joy.”

**Barbara Lister-Sink, Ed.D.
Salem College School of Music
Director, Graduate Music Program
Producer of DVD Freeing the Caged Bird - Developing Well-Coordinated, Injury-Preventive Piano Technique©**

"Playing-related injury in the piano world is persistently and tragically prevalent, consensus among researchers is that female pianists are twice as likely to develop an injury, and smaller hands are implicated. To address this devastating situation head-on, Salem College--the oldest continually operating women's educational institution in the US--developed a graduate certificate program and a Master of Music in piano and organ with an emphasis in injury-preventive technique. It seemed only fitting that we acquire a DS 6.0 upright and grand piano. I cannot begin to describe the career-changing, and even life-changing, benefits our students have reaped from having these instruments to practice on daily. Their first response though was, "Why did it take so long? Why did we have to suffer so unnecessarily?" And since the

NASM now requires some form of education in injury-prevention and musculoskeletal health, it seems almost imperative that accredited music departments in the US acquire such keyboards. Addressing this glaring inequity is long overdue."

Dr. Pamela Mia Paul

Regents Professor of Piano

University of North Texas College of Music

The UNT College of Music has had several 15/16 keyboards installed in practice building pianos. As well, we have a 15/16th keyboard that can be easily and quickly installed in the American Steinway in our smaller Recital Hall. Since the early 2000s, our Music and Medicine department has conducted ground breaking research on the relationship of hand pain in small-handed pianists to the use of the standard size keyboard. And simultaneously, hard evidence that for smaller hands, the smaller piano keyboard dramatically REDUCES this pain. It is incomprehensible to me that the major piano manufacturers have not seen the economic advantage to them of producing these smaller keyboards. And of course, we pianists and teachers can certainly see the pedagogical advantages of training a young musician on an instrument that "fits" their body, just as young violinists have access to smaller-sized violins. I would add, in closing, that one of my daughters-in-law, who is in the first violin section of the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra, STILL plays on a 3/4 size violin. So why can't pianists have wide-spread and easy access to a keyboard that fits their hand span?

Dr. Artina McCain

Assistant Professor of Piano

Coordinator of Piano Studies

The University of Memphis

Rudi E. Scheidt School of Music

"The DS keyboard has offered our piano students at the University of Memphis a wonderful opportunity to expand their repertoire. It has promoted talent inclusivity amongst different hand sizes. For those students with smaller hand spans, it has changed our lesson focus to artistic concepts of phrasing, color, and dynamic shaping vs. discussing the cumbersome aspects of a piece for their hands."

Dr. David Forbat

Professor of Piano

University of Central Oklahoma, School of Music

"In 2014, the School of Music at the University of Central Oklahoma was extremely fortunate to acquire both a Walter upright piano (equipped with a DS 6.0 keyboard) as well as a DS 6.0 keyboard action fitted to a Steinway D concert grand. Since then, students with smaller hand sizes have since been able to unhesitatingly take on and confidently perform repertoire which would normally have been off limits. Some students have performed degree recitals (in

portions or in their entirety) using the DS 6.0. It is our sincere hope that ESPK's (Ergonomically-Scaled Piano Keyboards) will be in widespread use throughout the world in coming years."

Christopher D. Purdy R.P.T.
Registered Piano Technician
School of Music, Ohio University

As the piano technician at Ohio University, I am pleased to add my voice to those praising the DS Standard keyboards. From a technical standpoint, these pianos are a joy to work on. The engineering is extremely accurate in all regards. I am continually impressed with the precision and manufacture of all the components. Also, the innovation of design is inspiring. The design of key leveling alone is genius and should, in my opinion, be adopted by every major manufacturer world wide. The simplicity and precision of leveling the keys has become a fifteen minute job. Thank you to the DS Standard Foundation for these amazing instruments!

Dr. Kathryn Ananda-Owens, Professor of Music [Piano], St. Olaf College, Northfield, Minnesota,

As anticipated, the DS keyboard at St. Olaf College has been an invaluable resource for smaller-handed pianists, and pianists returning to play following a playing-related injury. It has also become a beloved pedagogical resource for many other pianists on campus: when studying works by Rachmaninoff and Scriabin, for example, students often choose to initially explore their new repertoire on the DS keyboard to gain an understanding of the ease larger-handed pianists experience when performing these works. They draw on this understanding when they bring the repertoire back to a full-sized keyboard, approaching technical challenges with renewed creativity and a stronger commitment to playing with physical freedom and without undue strain. The DS keyboard has also increased the number of student collaborative pianists on campus, as our smaller-handed students are now able to perform a broader range of collaborative repertoire than they could if restricted solely to full-sized keyboards. It has been truly transformative for a significant number of gifted young artists, on campus and in our community.

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