

THE JAMES M. WEAVER PRIZE

The James M. Weaver Prize, named for a distinguished former executive of the Organ Historical Society, awards those who show exceptional skill in engaging and teaching audiences about the pipe organ, via lecture and musical performance. The prize recognizes the ability to communicate and educate effectively, encouraging organists to advocate through their own narrative the significance of their instrument's place in history and culture.

Eligibility

- Applicants must have reached their 25th birthday by **the application deadline of November 1, 2026** and reside in the United States or Canada.
- Applicants may be performers, advanced students, educators, church musicians, or independent scholars.
- Membership in OHS is not a requirement for eligibility.
- A non-refundable application fee of \$50 is required.

The competition

Preliminary round

Each applicant must submit a curriculum vitae or résumé in PDF format that documents their education and professional status, as well as any speaking engagements and noteworthy concert performances.

Each applicant will demonstrate their ability to communicate through both oral presentation and performance.

Oral portion.

Each applicant must design a hypothetical program of about twenty minutes about an existing American organ of the applicant's choice and record an unedited 5–10-minute video presentation delivered to a hypothetical lay audience. The talk should address the relationship of the musical program to the chosen instrument as well as aspects of the instrument's history and context, and any details that in the applicant's judgment contribute to an informal yet engaging presentation. No notes or presentation slides are permitted.

Performance portion.

Each applicant must submit about twenty minutes of recorded performance, with or without video, consisting of three contrasting works representing different periods and styles. Pieces may be submitted individually and performed on different instruments provided they have been recorded within the last two years. Transcriptions are permitted, but improvisations are not allowed.

All videos must be submitted as YouTube links (public or unlisted). Please upload submissions here: <https://forms.gle/bPVr3zpcN5b7d9YM6>

Final round

Three finalists will be invited to compete in the final round, held during the 2027 OHS National Convention in Boston. Each finalist will be assigned a historic instrument for a live, forty-minute public demonstration consisting of twenty minutes of spoken remarks and twenty minutes of playing, though playing and speaking may be interspersed as the finalist chooses. As in the preliminary round, the live presentation should connect the chosen program to the history and context of the instrument, with a similar emphasis on engaging the audience with a high-level scholarly presentation. Both repertoire and spoken commentary must differ from those of the preliminary round.

An open moderated question and response session will follow each presentation.

Finalists will receive complimentary convention registration, reimbursement for travel to Boston, and per diem support. To ensure sufficient preparation time, finalists will be announced and assigned a convention performance instrument by December 1, 2026. Prizewinners will be announced during the convention at the final recital.

Awards

First Prize

- \$7,500 (\$5,000 + \$2,500)
- Publication in *The Tracker* of an edited transcript from the final-round presentation.
- Video of the final-round presentation posted on the OHS YouTube page.
- Invitation to serve a two-year term on the Publications Advisory Committee.
- Invitation to present a lecture-recital at the next OHS Convention. (\$2,500 paid upon completion of the recital)
- Two-year paid membership in the OHS.

Second Prize

- \$5,000
- Publication in *The Tracker* of an edited transcript from the final-round presentation.
- One-year paid membership in the OHS.

Third Prize

- \$3,500
- Publication in *The Tracker* of an edited transcript from the final-round presentation.
- One-year paid membership in the OHS.