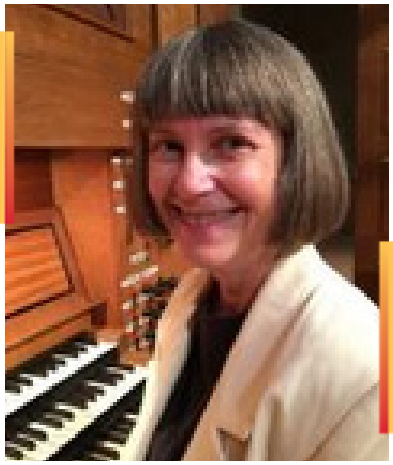
Charles and Mary B. Sukup Faculty Support

2026



Thank you, Charles and Mary, for your vision and generous support of the Iowa State University organ program!

— Miriam Zach

Miriam Zach

Charles and Mary Sukup Endowed Artist in Organ
Adjunct Associate Professor in the Department of Music and Theatre

How has this position empowered you to take on bold, innovative, interdisciplinary, or high-impact research, teaching, and service?

This honored named position has enabled me to initiate and continue bold, innovative interdisciplinary research, teaching, and service. My Iowa State University students and I examine complex problems from various points of view and make original contributions to the body of knowledge. We integrate theory, history, and practice of composers, musicians, organ builders, linguists, health professionals, visual artists, acousticians, and architects.

Highlights from the 2025-26 ISU Organ Studio concerts and events:

- September 20, 2025 | International "37th Organist of Iowa" program by my Iowa State organ student Stephen O'Baker at the Martha-Ellen Tye Recital Hall.
- October 30, 2025 | Intergenerational "Going for Baroque" concert, performing European repertoire (1600-1750) with the Brombaugh pipe organ at the Martha-Ellen Tye Recital Hall.
- December 6, 2025 | Interdenominational "Advent, Christmas, and Epiphany" concert at St. John's Episcopal Church, Ames, Iowa, featuring Piper, a one-manual pipe organ from the Central Iowa American Guild of Organists.
- February 21, 2026 | Annual 30th International Festival of Women Composers at the Martha-Ellen Tye Recital Hall.
- April 18, 2026 | Interdisciplinary music and health concert, "Sight and Sound: Creations by Blind Composers" at the Martha-Ellen Tye Recital Hall.

How has this position supported your efforts to advance your field, strengthen your department, or contribute to university-wide initiatives or collaborations?

This position has meaningfully supported my efforts to advance the field, e.g., including works by composers who are women or blind, and strengthen contributions to both departmental and broader university initiatives and beyond, as well as through collaborative performance and pedagogical work. A few highlights include:

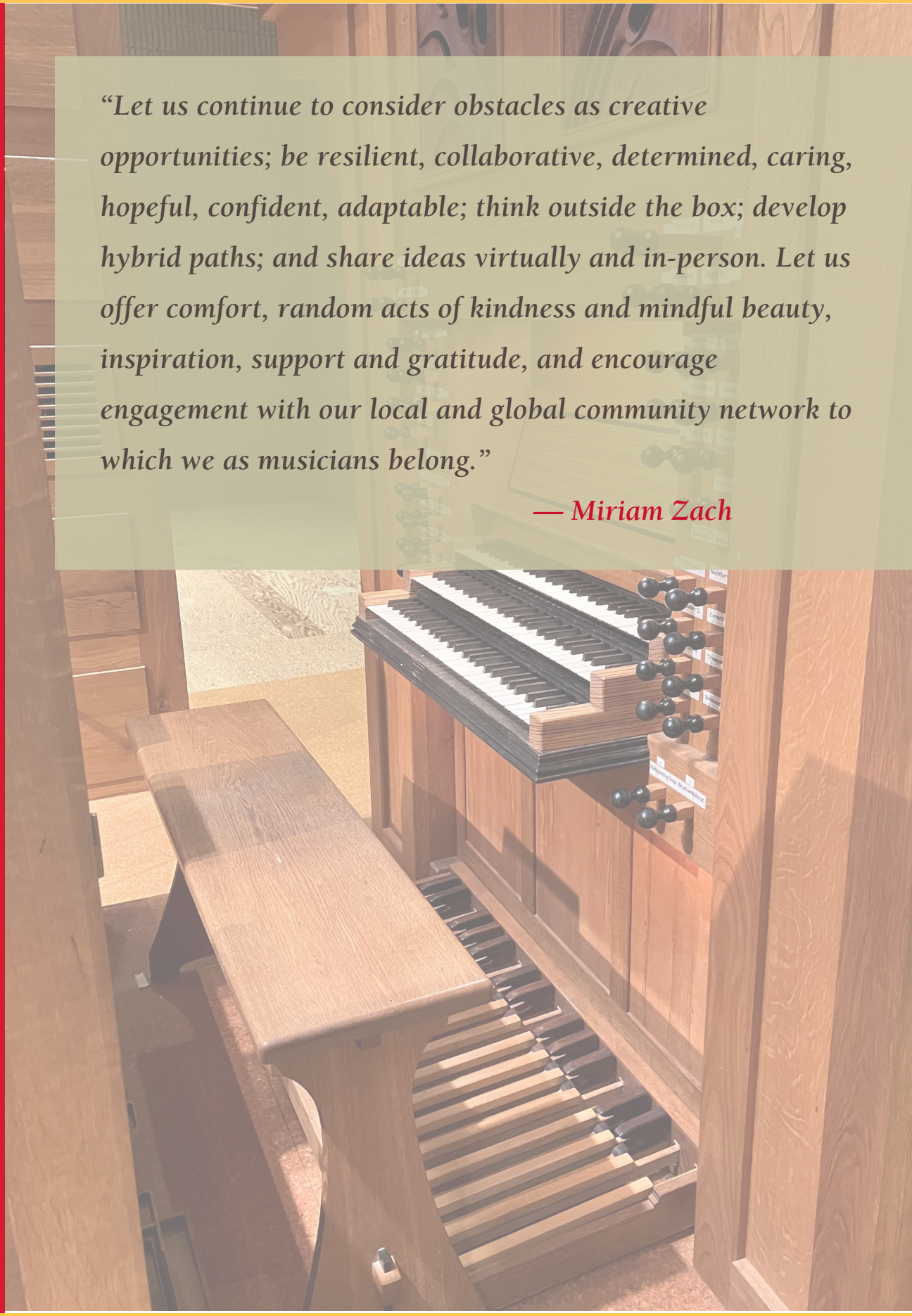
- I established new organ and harpsichord ensembles with Iowa State string students, culminating in performances such as Gabrielle Summers' senior recital (March 1, 2026), and founded an Organ Scholar scholarship program in partnership with a flautist and vocalists at St. John's Episcopal Church.
- My organ performance has contributed to both departmental and community collaboration through concerts and events, including "Fanfare" (September 14, 2025, Martha-Ellen Tye Recital Hall), the "Ames Town and Gown Musicale" (February 28, 2026), and as an invited presenter for the AGO Pedagogy Conference Virtual College Fair (October 10, 2025).
- My Iowa State organ students are extending the program's reach internationally and professionally by studying in Germany, South Africa, England, Poland, and the Netherlands, as well as pursuing careers in organ building (Dobson Pipe Organ Builders), church music leadership, and ordained ministry in the United States.

Looking ahead, I'm excited to explore and prepare Iowa State University organ and harpsichord students for their life journeying, and to share their talents in 2026-27 concerts, including "Vive la France" and the 31st International Festival of Women Composers. I continue to figure out ways to access musical thought with physically challenged musicians, serve as an elected executive committee member of the Central Iowa American Guild of Organists, and record every week as director of music for St. John's Episcopal Church in Ames, Iowa.

Scan the QR codes to learn more about Professor Zach's work:

miriamzach.com

iwclib.org



"Let us continue to consider obstacles as creative opportunities; be resilient, collaborative, determined, caring, hopeful, confident, adaptable; think outside the box; develop hybrid paths; and share ideas virtually and in-person. Let us offer comfort, random acts of kindness and mindful beauty, inspiration, support and gratitude, and encourage engagement with our local and global community network to which we as musicians belong."

— Miriam Zach

The Charles and Mary Sukup Endowed Artist in Organ has played a vital role in advancing the artistic and scholarly life of the Department of Music and Theatre at Iowa State University. Under the leadership of Miriam Zach, the position supports ongoing research, performance, and interdisciplinary engagement, increasing the visibility of organ studies within the university and the broader musical community. This endowed position also enhances teaching and mentorship by giving students direct access to an accomplished artist-scholar whose work bridges performance, musicology, and creative exploration.

During the past academic year, the Sukup Endowed Artist in Organ helped sustain a vibrant series of organ-centered learning opportunities and performances, including the Organists of Iowa recital in September 2025 and several ISU Organ Studio programs, such as Going for Baroque and the spring program, Sight and Sound. These events provide students with meaningful opportunities for performance, collaboration, and artistic exploration beyond the classroom.

The impact of this mentorship is reflected in student achievement, including that of organist Jarod Hart, who was recently named one of the department's two outstanding seniors. Jarod will attend the San Francisco Conservatory of Music this fall to study composition, a path shaped in part by Professor Zach's guidance, encouragement, and commitment to nurturing students' creative and scholarly ambitions.

— Brad Dell

Department Chair and Professor in the Department of Music and Theatre

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