

INTERNATIONAL BANDMASTERS FRATERNITY

ΦΒΜ



Life - Love - Music

Reflections and Anticipation



Greetings,
Brothers and Sisters of Phi Beta Mu!

I hope the arrival of summer and all the *promise* it brings has lifted your spirits and quickened your step! For most of us, this time of year brings reflections about how the school year has gone and anticipation

of the opportunity for a break (which seems shorter all the time) is almost at hand.

International Secretary, June Bearden, and the Board of Directors have been hard at work on various projects, including diligent outreach efforts to each PBM chapter, with the *promise* that steps now will make future work easier!

Since many of us make transitions this time of year, including job changes or retirement, please take a moment and verify that we have accurate contact information for you, including a current email. To do so, visit the [PBM website](#) and update your personal profile.

Very best wishes with whatever your summer entails!

Keith Rudolph, President
Phi Beta Mu International Board of Directors



Attendee registration for
The Midwest Clinic
music conference will open
August 1, 2023.

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PBM International Commission

Submitted by Cindy Lansford


In December 2023, the International Board of Directors voted to keep future commissions around a Grade 2-3 in hopes of making the piece accessible to more groups, thus increasing how frequently the piece is played. Last year's commissioned piece, *Alegría* by Carol Brittin Chambers, has already been performed several times across the country!

The next commission will be in 2024, consistent with the adopted timeline of every other year. Work on the project will begin this summer by compiling a list of recommended composers. The list will then be submitted to the International Board for consideration. Please email [Cindy Lansford](mailto:calansford@sbcglobal.net) (calansford@sbcglobal.net) by July 31, 2023, if there is a composer you would like to submit for consideration.



PBM Earl D. Irons Program of Distinction

Submitted by George Hattendorf



The Phi Beta Mu Earl D. Irons Program of Distinction (POD) award recognizes bands that exhibit and exemplify the founders' ideals of honoring superior achievement and moral uprightness. The award promotes the international development of bands and aims to challenge other groups to strive for these same levels of achievement. The year 2022 marked the return of this award as it was presented to the outstanding band program from Vandegrift High School.

The POD award is open to all high school band programs, where the director has been with the program for at least the previous five years. Any Phi Beta Mu member may nominate one program, with the exception that a member may not nominate their program or a program in their feeder system. The initial nomination is confidential, with the director unaware, just as potential members are nominated for state/province chapter membership.

Nominations are open yearly (for the current academic year) from January 1 through April 30. (The nomination period for 2023 is closed.) Directors are notified within a week of being nominated and are responsible for providing all required supporting documentation. However, directors are under no obligation to act upon nominations. All information detailing the nomination and submission process is detailed on the website. Note: Some video is required for a representative sampling of the band. Therefore, the earlier a nomination is received, the more time the director of the nominated program has to assemble the required material.

Visit the [PBM website](#) and look for Earl D. Irons Program of Distinction under the Awards drop-down at the top of the homepage. Additional information including the nomination form, submission requirements, and answers to frequently asked questions are available.

IMPORTANT: Beginning June 1, chapters may nominate one member to serve on the POD evaluation committee. Members will be responsible for evaluating submitted recordings and other materials. The nomination/volunteer window will close on July 1. It is our hope that as programs continue to recover from the challenges of COVID, we will see a growth in the number of nominations for this award from chapters across the country and internationally.



2023 Elections

Nominations will be open from June 1 to September 30 for two positions on the International Board and for Vice-President/President-Elect.



Terms of Office and Requirements

- All elected officers serve terms that are three years in length. Board members are limited to two terms (a total of six years).
- Board orientation occurs during the 2023 meetings at the Midwest Clinic with service running 2024–2026. Any individual who allows their name to stand for election must be able to attend all meetings of the International Board of Directors at the 2023 Midwest Conference [December 20-21, 2023]. Board and General Assembly meetings are scheduled on Wednesday afternoon and Thursday morning.
- Each board member will be responsible for a leadership role in our projects and outreach.
- Elected members attending Midwest meetings receive a \$600.00 honorarium.

Rules

- Each chapter may submit two nominations for the International Board of Directors and a nomination for Vice President/President-Elect.
- No election can result in more than two members from a single chapter sitting simultaneously on the International Board of Directors. The President, Vice President, and Executive Secretary are exempt.
- A candidate for Vice President/President-Elect must have been a regular member of the fraternity for at least three years prior to his/her nomination and may not hold the office of International President or Vice President while maintaining these roles at the chapter level.

Nomination Process

- Nominations should originate at each chapter's annual business meeting or by online ballot and must have the endorsement of the Chapter President and/or Secretary. Chapter secretaries can access Forms and Documents on the Phi Beta Mu website.
- All nominations must be accompanied by a brief biography and high-resolution jpeg photo for the ballot.

Timelines

- Nominations are accepted between June 1 and September 30, 2023.
- Nominations vetted and mounted on the International website by November 1.
- Polls close at 12:00 midnight on November 30, 2023 [PST].
- Election results announced on December 1, 2023.

Thank you for everything you do for our profession and fraternity. Please consider sharing your time and talents with Phi Beta Mu International. We welcome your comments and encourage you to participate in the upcoming Phi Beta Mu International election. If you have questions, please contact [June Bearden](mailto:june.bearden@pbmi.exec@gmail.com) (pbmi.exec@gmail.com).



Listening to the Band

Submitted by Elva Kaye Lance

Hearing is an action that is fortunately routine for most of us. But by definition, listening requires us to make a conscious effort to hear. The violinist, Nicola Benedetti says: "Listening well is a discipline, one that can become lazy unless we are reminded of the energy and focus that it requires." When we are in front of our bands – are we really listening? Are the students in the ensemble really listening? Have we given our students the information they need to know *how* to listen?

With tone quality as our top priority, we should assist our students in the identification and mastery of the concepts necessary to produce a consistently resonant characteristic tone. Phillip Jones, legendary trumpeter and impresario of brass ensembles said, "If you want to be a good musician on any instrument, you must go and listen to singers and to fiddle players. From them you can learn about line, about joining up the notes in interesting ways, which we are not taught on our instruments." As educators, we must guide our students' listening and understanding through various demonstrations, recordings, and performance opportunities.

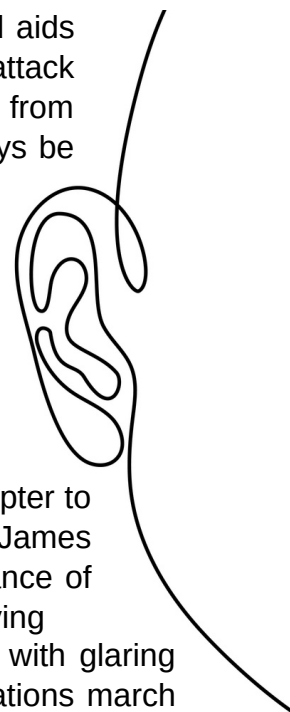
All ensemble members should be able to assess their playing for consistency of tone in all registers of the instrument and in various dynamic settings. We should never allow students to play with an unacceptable tone quality – *especially* in the warm-up and *even* when they are performing technique exercises. We should always insist on resonant and controlled tone quality as the ensemble sound that is produced in the warm-up period sets the tone for the ensemble sound for the remainder of the rehearsal period.

Vertical alignment of the music as printed on the score is an absolute necessity for clarity. We often achieve a measure of success in this area. However, we must be careful that the focus on vertical alignment does not overshadow our attention to the horizontal line of the band, adversely affecting the expression of the music. Clarity of the vertical alignment must complement the horizontal musical line for an expressive performance.

While bopping the notes on the marching field helps to improve rhythmic inaccuracies and aids our students' awareness of precision, we must not allow this shortened tone or overblown attack to become a characteristic of the tonal concept of our ensemble. Producing a resonant tone from the individual players, the sections, the different choirs, and the full ensemble should always be our top priority.

The acoustical properties of the rehearsal space may also contribute adversely to our critical listening of our ensembles. A block wall classroom with limited or very little acoustical treatment often results in a very vibrant rehearsal space. In our effort to align the band vertically and improve precision, perhaps we have allowed our initial articulation to become too explosive and our notes too short, often interrupting the shape and flow of the musical line.

In *Effective Performance of Band Music*, composer Francis McBeth devoted a complete chapter to the responses from composers and conductors to inquiries regarding articulation markings. James Neilson, long time Director of Education for the G. Leblanc Corporation, said "the appearance of articulated notes must be controlled carefully. For herein lies a conductor's success in achieving stylistic authority. Like a nova in the heavens, some accented notes burst forth suddenly with glaring brightness. Others steal on the scene gently, like stars dim in a distant sky. Some articulations march across silence with measured tread, the space between the notes controlled as rigidly as are the notes themselves... If a nova-like entrance should be golden-hued, what sonorities and timbres should dominate? Certainly not those of shrill soprano-voiced instruments." (*continued*)





Listening to the Band...continued

Overplaying or harshness of the left edge of the note is problematic for all wind voices. Certainly there are musical settings that call for an accent or emphasized attack. The interpretation of the accent should be determined by the style and tempo of the piece. All accents are not to be short and separated. Some accents just indicate stress. The interpretation and performance practice of the accent is of particular concern for the bell-front brass. Accents seem to be often played as a *forte-piano* and often out of character with the style of the piece. Careful interpretation and matching of articulations by the ensemble players should result in a musical line free of unnecessary interruption and a performance that gives attention to the ebb and flow of the phrase.

As educators, we frequently assess our students' knowledge of the academic definition of the markings dealing with expression. In addition to developing this academic understanding, we must then provide opportunity to explore specific application examples. Devoting a small segment of the warm-up to varied applications of the expressive markings in music will help us make great strides in developing comprehensive musicians who are able to make mature musical decisions.

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As we strive for an expressive musical line, we must first establish the desired rise and fall of the musical phrase. Then we must give our careful attention to the harmonic and rhythmic voices, insisting that they support the musical phrase idea with similar intensity and understanding. Students should develop listening skills that help them identify their role in the ensemble, i.e. melody, countermelody, harmony, rhythmic accompaniment, harmonic rhythmic accompaniment, etc. As the sustained harmonic voices exit and re-enter in lyrical playing, they should re-enter as a part of the existing sound, careful not to overplay their entrance. Improving the listening awareness of the parts

that make up the whole and giving attention to appropriate performance practices of these different musical roles will result in ensemble members with increased sensitivity to musical details.

As we devote careful attention to the horizontal musical line, it is desirable to give added attention to the end of the musical phrase being careful not to clip the ends of the phrase. Note lengths morph over time and typically become shorter, particularly at the ends of the phrases or preceding a breath, and often without our notice. Identification of all transitions and careful attention to the phrasing in these transitions will also improve the musicality of our performance.

Interpretation of the color impact is also important in developing an expressive ensemble performance. The impact (sfz, fp, fz, etc.) should be in context of the style and dynamics of the musical passage. Typically, these impact moments should only be expressed one dynamic level louder than the existing dynamic. (Ex. If the line is marked mezzo piano then the application of an sfz would typically be mezzo forte.) This marking is frequently over-played.

(continued)



Listening to the Band...continued

Just as we use changes in volume with the human voice to help convey our message, any dynamic changes from the ensemble should enhance the musical line and should always be in context with the character of the piece. We frequently have a tendency to overplay the crescendos. A crescendo - diminuendo of short duration typically should be accomplished by a slight swell and should move to only one dynamic level louder. Careful monitoring of the pacing of the longer crescendo is necessary to maintain good ensemble balance in an expressive performance. The percussion (particularly the suspended cymbal) often arrives at the peak of the crescendo too early.

Young bands often perform music that utilizes block scoring with a large number of voices sharing the same line. It is the responsibility of the conductor to develop a clear concept of the desired ensemble sonority and to assign appropriate dynamic levels that mix the tonal colors into a well-balanced and sonorous sound. As the orchestration of a line changes, i.e. more voices added or removed, adjustments should be made in the volume of the individual players. If all of the upper woodwind voices and the trumpets have a unison/octave line at a *forte* dynamic level, then individual playing volume should be adjusted to maintain good ensemble balance. If all voices in the winds and all percussion have the same rhythmic figure at the end of a piece or section, individual playing volume should be adjusted so that the unison figure is not overstated. The ensemble should also guard against the age-old problem of allowing volume changes to affect the tempo (rushing as we play louder and dragging as we play softer.)

In order for our students to develop proficiency at making appropriate pitch adjustments as they play, it is essential that all wind players develop an intonation chart to assist with awareness of pitch tendencies. Once that knowledge is in place, students must then be given information about how to make appropriate adjustments to improve their pitch level. Then we must assist our students with developing an awareness of how volume affects their intonation. As a general rule, the flute pitch will push sharper as they play louder and the clarinet pitch will flatten as their volume increases. During a diminuendo and in pianissimo playing, brass players will often tense the embouchure (pinch) causing the pitch to sharpen. If students are aware of the inherent pitch tendencies in their playing and of the impact of various dynamic settings, they can proceed to adjust their tuning as they play. Otherwise, they must wait for instructions—"push in, pull out, etc."

As educators, one of our goals is to develop comprehensive musicians who have a passion for and an understanding of the skills required to be an expressive musician. Developing listening awareness is an essential element of this musical journey. Whether in our noisy world or in our ensemble setting, to be able to really listen is a challenge for us all and requires skill, practice and patience.

Walker, Timothy. *Understanding and Developing Listening*. Keynote Address.
Incorporated Society of Musicians. May, 2010.

Cichowiz, Vincent. "*Phillip Jones, The Prince of Brass*."
The Instrumentalist Conductor's Anthology. Vol. 2. Second Edition.
(p. 1009-1014) Northfield, Illinois: The Instrumentalist Company. 1993.

McBeth, W. Francis. *Effective Performance of Band Music*. San Antonio, Texas:
Southern Music Company. 1972.



Presenting a Professional Assessment/Festival Performance

Submitted by Cindy Lansford

Tips and Suggestions to Help Your Performance Be the Very Best It Can Be!

As the assessment/festival season draws to a close (along with the school year), here are some observations and considerations that should help your students be their very best during a performance that can be, at times, stressful! Tuck these suggestions away for next year, and best wishes for a year full of successful performances, no matter what the situation is.

1. Use the warm-up room for... **WARM UP!** This is not the time to teach the music or make changes that your students will likely not be able to achieve with much success. And remember, don't play so much that you "leave it all" in the warm-up room and have nothing left for the stage performance.
2. Limit on-stage tuning... if you do too much, then **EVERYONE** will know your "secrets". On the flip side of that, if tuning is very problematic during a piece that is not your last selection, address it quickly and quietly in between pieces. The adjudicator should appreciate the fact that you have heard the problem and are taking steps to correct it.
3. Communicate with students on stage if necessary... but no louder than mezzo piano. If the event is your formal assessment, then speaking out loud where everyone can hear is just not appropriate. And again, you don't want to reveal your "secrets".
4. Prior to the performance, organize your percussion changes and timpani tuning to avoid "awkward gaps of silence". If your assessment has a time limit, this could take up valuable time.
5. Conduct in a manner that is appropriate for the maturity of the ensemble. The conducting demands in a Grade 1 piece are considerably less than in a Grade 5 piece. (This could be a whole discussion in and of itself. Just be mindful of what the audience is seeing and what is coming from the ensemble!)
6. Proceed through your pieces in a timely fashion... there is no need to wait on a sign from the judges to proceed unless that has been requested. Because of lighting, glare from stage lights, and distance, it is often very difficult to see the judges. Avoid confusion by simply moving along after an appropriate amount of time in between pieces.
7. Acknowledge audience applause... but save soloist recognition for another occasion. It is appropriate to acknowledge applause after your group is introduced, in between pieces, and certainly at the end. Your assessment performance may not be the right time to make a sweeping grand entrance from off stage, but certainly let the audience know that you appreciate their support before you turn and face your students.
8. Educate your parental/student audience about proper concert etiquette...this is a formal event (and not an athletic event!) Applause is the correct way to respond and show appreciation for the performers. Remember to educate them on music with multiple movements!
9. Whatever the nature of your assessment/festival (more formal or more casual), be sure that both you and your students are dressed appropriately for the occasion. Remember that this is an assessment... not a fashion show!
10. Lastly, remember that your performance ends **AFTER** you exit the stage or sight reading room... and not a minute before! Adjudicators are likely still giving feedback as you make your exit, and you do not want to give them any reason to change their minds.

PBM Chapter News



ALPHA CHAPTER

Greetings from Alpha Chapter!

On behalf of the membership of Alpha Chapter of Phi Beta Mu, you are cordially invited to attend this year's Texas Bandmasters Hall of Fame ceremonies. This year there will be one ceremony at 2:00 p.m. on Saturday, July 22, 2023, in the Stars at Night Ballroom of the Henry B. Gonzalez Convention Center in San Antonio, Texas.

2023 Hall of Fame Inductees

- | | | | |
|-----------------|------------------|--------------------|----------------|
| • Scott Coulson | • Cheryl Floyd | • Betty Pierce | • Bob Vetter |
| • Greg Dick | • Kathy Johnson | • Carroll Rhodes | • Jolette Wine |
| • Wayne Dorothy | • Jonathan Kelly | • Charlotte Royall | |

Membership in the Hall of Fame originates with nominations received from a variety of sources. There is a standing committee that investigates potential candidates that are received from the general public, music educators, and Phi Beta Mu members. Candidates do not have to be a member of Phi Beta Mu to be eligible. Requirements are that the candidate is at least 65 years of age (or deceased) and retired, have taught a minimum of 10 years in the state of Texas, and have produced and maintained a consistently outstanding band program.

This ceremony is one of the premier events of the Texas Bandmasters Association (TBA) Convention. We recognize the contributions of music educators who have made a difference in the bands of Texas. Visit the PBM [website](#) to view the biographies of past inductees. Here, you will find a wealth of Texas band history. These eminent men and women made our band programs today possible. You will be inspired by their commitment to excellence and their perseverance in overcoming obstacles.

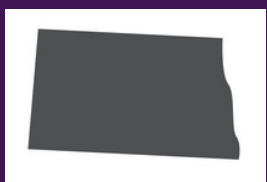
Alpha Chapter is sponsoring two clinics at TBA.

- "Beginning Your Career with the End in Mind: What Does a Long-Term Career in Band Directing LOOK Like?" - This session will be a panel discussion with three band directors who will discuss how to deal with work and personal issues that arise and sustain a career as a lifelong teacher. The first panelist is Katie Fehr who is in her 6th year of teaching and can address issues of the young band director just starting off. The second panelist is Corey Graves who is in the middle of his career, and the third panelist is Kerry Taylor who has well past 30 years of experience.
- "The Power of Planning: Why planning daily, weekly, monthly and yearly helps your program stay on track for your year-end goals" - The clinicians will be Ryan Johnstone and his team of directors in the Rouse High School cluster.

Alpha will also present the Phi Beta Mu Directors Band for New Concert Music: Grade 3 and 4 - conducted by Beth Bronk; Grade 2 music - conducted by Cindy Lansford; and Grade 1 - conducted by Corey Graves.

Submitted by Scott Coulson, Secretary-Treasurer

PBM Chapter News



ALPHA GAMMA CHAPTER

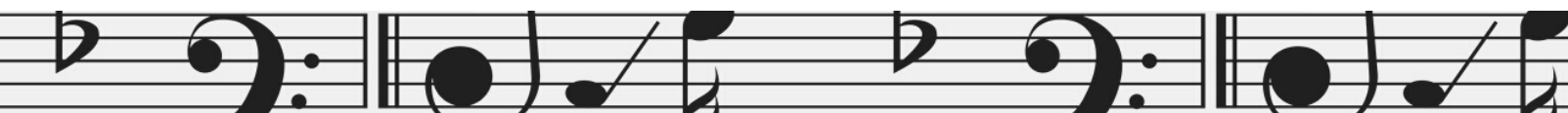
The Alpha Gamma Chapter held its 2023 Annual Board of Directors Meeting on March 23, 2023, and the Membership and Initiation Breakfast Meeting on March 25, 2023, during North Dakota's Music Educator's Conference and All-State Honors Celebration. It is our 20th year of Phi Beta Mu ~ Alpha Gamma (ND) chapter, and we initiated four new members! We are SO very PROUD of our accomplishments!

We are a very busy chapter and held four raffles to fundraise for commission pieces. We commissioned Tyler S. Grant to pen a piece for our 2023 North Dakota Jr. High All-State Band. He titled it "Now and Forever." Our Chapter dedicated the piece to our PBM - Alpha Gamma chapter Founder, Brother Joseph T. Alme.

Our chapter helps sponsor a \$1,000 Scholarship to a senior high school student who will be attending an in-state college/university pursuing music education (band). There are three music store companies in North Dakota (Eckroth Music - 4 stores; Popplers Music - 1 store, and Schmitt Music - 1 store) that sponsor this scholarship. The 2023 Scholarship recipient is Rylie Schick, trumpet (4 yr All-State Jazz Band member) from Mandan High School and her Director is Brother Jon Baumann. Rylie is undecided as to attend the University of Mary or North Dakota State University in fall to pursue her music education.

Our 2023 Outstanding Band Student award recipient was Katelynn Albers, Alto Saxophone, Center-Stanton High School and is under the direction of Sister Lacey Hanson.

Submitted by Rochelle Feldner, President



Rho Chapter held its second of two lunch meetings on April 28, 2023, in Huntsville, Alabama. This meeting coincided with the Alabama Bandmasters All State Band Festival. We had 68 members attend the luncheon along with 12 guests.

The highlight of the meeting was the induction of two of our members into the Alabama Bandmaster Hall of Fame: John Bradley and Harry McAfee. They were inducted during the meeting and had their families in attendance. Both members are retired band directors, each with over 30 years of experience.

Three members were inducted into chapter membership: Gene Butler, Deana Rizzo, and Justin Ward. Dr. Frank Buck was also pinned as an Honorary Member. Two of our outstanding members, John Hillsman and Regina Raney put together a framed picture of each of the hall of fame and new members including a bio of each. Each is a wonderful display and fabulous memento for each.



RHO CHAPTER

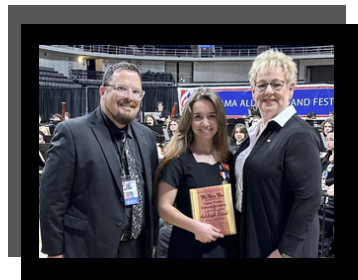


PBM Chapter News

Rho Chapter, continued

Attending the luncheon as guests were the clinicians for the Alabama All-State Bands:

- Frank Ticheli - Red Band
- Dr. Arris Golden - MS Red Band
- Dr. Rebecca Phillips - White Band
- Jack Wilds - MS White Band
- Dr. Ben Lorenzo - Blue Band



Our Scholarship Committee chair, esteemed past Secretary Treasurer, Glenn Spiller announced that Ashleigh Kiesel from Daphne Alabama had been awarded the \$500.00 Lamar Triplett Memorial Scholarship. This scholarship goes to the most deserving band student who will enroll in a Music Education program next Fall. Ashleigh will be attending Jacksonville State University in the fall to start her quest to become a band director. She was selected for the Red Band this year and won 3rd Chair in the auditions. Pictured are ABA President Joel Henson, Ashleigh Kiesel, and Vice President/incoming President, Lori Hart.

Our Vice President, Kim Bain is chairman of a new committee to spearhead the new mentoring project. This project will pair members of Rho Chapter with new band directors in their district. This is another chance for our members to give back to the band community in Alabama. This new program was suggested by Lori Hart our Vice President of the Alabama Bandmasters Association.

Dr. Phil Min is Chairman of the Guidebook Committee. His committee is working on improving or updating the new band director guide. This guide is a great resource for new directors that are teaching on their own. The guide is outdated for the changing of the times and the committee will bring into the 21st Century.

Jim Knight, Commissioning Project Chairman has been given the go-ahead to have his committee select a composer for the commissioning project. Our criteria are that the composer should come from the state of Alabama and then they must decide the difficulty of the new composition. We have several outstanding composers that are not only in the state but are members of the Rho Chapter.



One of our honorary members, Robert W. Smith, was presented with the Kappa Kappa Psi Distinguished Service to Music Medal Award on Monday, May 4th Concert by the Southeastern Community Band Performance held at the Troy University Auditorium. Troy University is the only school to have three recipients of this outstanding award. The first two were Paul Yoder and Dr. John M. Long. Pictured below is Mr. Smith holding a painting of Paul Yoder, Dr. Long and Robert Smith. Also pictured with Robert is Dr. Clifford "Ski" Winter, Robert's high school band director at Daleville High School. Congratulations to Robert W. Smith as he was also elected as President Elect of the American Bandmasters Association for the next two years. He again follows Dr. John M. Long, long time band director of Troys' Sound of the South, as President Elect/President of the ABA.

Submitted by Clifford Winter

Tending the Garden: Chapter Activities & Outreach

Submitted by Elva K. Lance

In a class discussion many years ago I asked the students how they might identify and describe the responsibilities of a “band director.” One of the students answered with thoughts that I have not forgotten. This student drew a comparison between the role of a band director and a gardener on a large estate. His description reflected a wide range of responsibilities of the gardener including designing the gardens and identifying which plants might be best suited for a particular area. Additionally, he spoke of the gardener’s added responsibility of planting and nurturing the plants to maturity so that they will blossom. Additionally, he described the gardener’s essential need to have information about how much water and sunlight would be required to make each plant flourish and how cold temperatures or harsh sunlight could potentially wither the plants. After nurturing growth in a myriad of ways, the gardener eventually opens the estate for the public to come view and enjoy the beautiful gardens.

There are similarities – we plant seeds (ideas). We nurture our ideas with patience, professionalism, and love. This growth, sometimes slower than we wish, eventually produces mature young people and musicians who can engage in making beautiful music.

I was reminded of this analogy as we explored all of the activities of the various Phi Beta Mu chapters for the Chapter Profiles on our website. It was inspiring to me to see all of the ways our fraternity members are indeed working to tend our gardens. This article does not attempt to showcase an exhaustive list, but rather just provide some food for thought that might give us all new ideas for involvement.

- Commissioning new music for the profession(both for concert band and jazz band) is something that our membership is involved in, both at the chapter level and through chapter and individual participation in international commissioning opportunities.
- Providing scholarships for high school seniors planning to major in music education is a priority for many.
- Sponsoring Band Director Workshops and professional development activities for both new and seasoned teachers is a regular offering for more than half of our chapters.
- Hosting a mentoring program including a forum for young teachers with less than five years of experience is a key component of our outreach.
- Developing a handbook for new teachers that includes sample forms and important dates in the state band association is an initiative for some of our chapters.

- Offering podium exchange opportunities between veteran teachers and inexperienced teachers is effective in some areas.
- Sponsoring a composition contest to recognize a young composer is a frequent occurrence.
- Providing articles, resources, videos and links through our Teaching Tips

platform on the international website as well as individual chapter websites gives another resource of “Best Practices” for young teachers.

- Recognizing excellence in teaching and service through various awards including the Outstanding Young Bandmaster, Outstanding Bandmaster, or Outstanding Contributor recognitions continues to allow individual chapters to support and recognize teachers in their immediate area.

(continued)





Tending the Garden...continued

- Hosting a Reading Band to allow directors to preview new publications continues to be a service by Phi Beta Mu members.
- Providing monetary support to programs that have experienced unusual hardships demonstrates the spirit of the fraternity and is a project that is sponsored by one of our chapters.
- Funding student scholarships for camps and staff participation in numerous summer camps continues to be a popular activity for our membership.

As you can see, we are active in the profession. While our efforts are laudable, we must not rest. Feel free to borrow some of these ideas and implement them with your chapter. We must continue to invest our talents in developing new initiatives that will resonate with the next generation of students and teachers that are joining us in our profession.

You Lead, They Lead: A Philosophy of Student Leadership (Part 1 of 2)

Submitted by Scott Harrison

When our students graduate and move on to bigger and better things, what do we hope they take with them? The obvious answer is musical skill, but the reality is that the vast majority of our students will not play their instrument after high school. It took me a few years of my career (since the first few are a crazy time) to realize that being a functional adult and contributing member of society is what I want my students to be. But, how does one teach that? There are many ways through curriculum and large ensemble practice to make this happen, but through student leadership a more acute sense of responsibility, ownership, and care can be attained.

I often look back at the influence past leaders have had on me, and the life experience I have had taught me how to lead. Past department heads, administrators, fellow board members of the Ontario and Canadian Band Association, and taking care of little kids has given me nuggets of wisdom on how to lead, and how not to lead. From the experience with other leaders I have realized that there are two different styles of leadership... those who micromanage and control those who are under them, and those who empower their teams.

Why Is Student Leadership Important?

Engaging your students in leadership opportunities adds an important element of ownership and commitment to your program. Creating a space for students to lead their peers, organize events, or even clean the room allows for a sense of ownership they may not typically have if just playing saxophone in the band. Engaging your students in leadership is a mutually beneficial task. It allows students to grow in ways they may not be able to through their regular timetable. It can give them experience working with adults, leading small teams of students, and possibly most important, taking tasks off your to-do list! That being said I am not a proponent of sitting back and watching the kids work. *(continued)*





You Lead, They Lead...continued

Giving the students the responsibility of leadership means you will be working alongside them, not as supreme leader/teacher, but more as colleagues. This is a very special dimension to be in because they will develop a comfort of speaking freely about issues with someone “of authority.”

When I asked my students to tell me why they think student leadership is important Maya K, a grade 12 student told me this:

Being a student leader has been very beneficial in my ability to develop my confidence and social skills. I have had a wonderful time working with people on my team and leading them, whether that means in meetings, conversations, or organizing events. I greatly value inclusion and as a student leader, I am given the opportunity to hear the opinions of others and share my own, and work towards the common goal of the music department.

A student population that has ownership over a product or service will automatically create a sense of belonging for those students. But how do you do that? If you do not have an existing student leadership component, start one! It can be as easy as taking over the social media for your program. Our social media is a vibrant digital space that allows students current, past and future to engage in the way young folk do these days... on a device. Memes, funny pictures, live-streamed performances, information, and anything that will grab alike contributes to the environment of your program. While the students would be in charge of content creation, you remain an administrator on the account so nothing offensive or “bad” gets out there.

The students can take charge of organizing guest musician visits, large scale performances, talent shows and even year end banquets. It creates pride that the younger students see, and will carry on for their next generation of students.

What Should You Remember When Developing Student Leaders?

It is very easy to say that the student leaders are there to make your life as a teacher easier, and in some ways that is true. While the student leaders have a hand in everything, it does not make it okay for you the teacher to not be involved as much as they are. One of my mentors once told me to not expect the students to do something that you would not do.

How can this be related to the band room? Well, it's simple, really. Something as simple as putting chairs and music stands away after a rehearsal... I am the first to help with this and I have never had to question why it was not getting done as every student sees the importance of it. Leader, or not.

This next point can be a little confusing... through developing leaders a teacher must always understand that it cannot, under any circumstance be about themselves. Everything that is done in the walls of the music department MUST be student focussed. Because as soon as the teacher thinks “well, what about me” it can all come crashing down.

While it's not (and should never be) about you... it's absolutely BECAUSE of you the students are there. You offer a safe place, great music and a place they fit in. Harness that when developing your leaders. Take them under your wing and teach them how to plan events, how to speak to adults, how to be a contributor to the world, it will pay off in every imaginable way. *(continued)*



You Lead, They Lead...continued

Nevin, a grade 11 bassoonist, told me "Student leadership offers numerous benefits to both the students and the wider school community. As a student, we develop important skills such as communication, problem-solving, and decision-making, which are essential for success in both academic and professional settings. Additionally, as role models for their peers, our job is to push the community to thrive for the better."

What's the End Goal?

When you start a student on an instrument the goal is of course, years of performing that will likely end up in a halt of playing after they graduate high school. Some will continue on to University to major in music, most will stop playing altogether. But that doesn't matter. Would it be nice for every student to play for the rest of their life? Sure. But it's not a realistic goal. This is why I make leadership a huge part of my program because not only will it pay off musically (lessons, extra help, sectionals, peer mentoring) which makes the band better, it will also benefit the kids as they go off into the world.

What life skills am I trying to get the kids to develop? Compassion, ownership, leadership style, embracing differences, how to deal with a challenge, how to have difficult conversations, time management, meeting skills, and even though there are many more, perhaps the most important skill is communication! After all, there can never be enough communication.

In our leadership team meetings, we loosely follow Robert's Rules. Students sometimes don't understand why, and that's okay. Students will wonder why we vote to make decisions, and that's okay. It all has an end goal of running an amazing department, but also giving the kids involved a taste of what is to come in their future on boards, in council meetings, or when they are ... Prime Minister! Or, President for my American friends.

It's All In A Name

I don't like the word 'council'. I think it's hierarchical and archaic. I think it has a presumption of top-down leadership and does not even hint toward teamwork, or positive leadership. Within the council there are expected roles of Presidents and Secretaries and such... but, why? What is the point of putting that workload on one student to be the Treasurer or the President? The strength of a healthy student leadership group comes from the sum of the parts, not one person who is alone at the top.

When I started at the school at which I currently teach, the student leadership group was called a council and it was a drop-in club for party planning. It had non-music students on it... which to this day I still don't understand. They were referred to as a club, the same as any other group of students. I changed all that with a name change. Out went the Music Council and in came the Music Leadership Team. And, immediately after the name change came more productivity, more ownership, and a better product. I cannot accurately put into words how this simple change impacted the entirety of the program. And, now the other leadership groups in the school (Peer Mentors, Athletic Council, etc) are now changing their names, and structures to reflect that of the team approach of the Music Leadership Team.

Stay tuned...I'm going to end this there. I will go deeper into the structure of the Leadership Team in the next article. If you want info before that just shoot me an email (scott.harrison@yrdsb.ca) and I will send you the slides from a presentation I did at the Ontario Music Educators Association conference last fall. Email is the best way to reach me.

Special Projects

Submitted by Lois Wiggins

Conn-Selmer has granted our membership a discount code to use for the Summer of 2023 Conn-Selmer Institute. The price for the institute will increase on June 1 and registration will close on June 9.

If your chapter is interested in sponsoring a young director, please email [Lois Wiggins](mailto:loisuwiggins@gmail.com) (loisuwiggins@gmail.com) ASAP, and she will share registration information and the discount code. She can also answer any questions you might have.

For more information and to register, please visit [Conn Selmer Institute 2023](#).



Conn Selmer Institute

June 11-14, 2023

Conn Selmer Institute (CSI) is a three-and-a-half day professional development conference for college students, directors, and music program leaders. Our world-class faculty leads a curriculum with specialized tracks focusing on college students, new music educators, middle school directors, high school directors including marching arts, and music administrators. We love the traditions and personal connections made in-person at Bethel University and are thrilled with the success of the virtual option to attend as well - the best of both worlds!

Educational Outreach

Submitted by Travis Weller

Educational Resources

- ["Community Bands: Ensembles That Encourage the Musician in Everyone"](#)
- ["Great Teachers In Action"](#)
- ["Student Leadership Monthly"](#)
- ["Teaching Tip Tuesday" \(#teachingtiptuesday\)](#)
- ["Marching Arts Education"](#)

Clinics, Camps, and Symposiums

- [Phantom Regiment Academy](#)
- [Duquesne University Summer Band Symposium](#)
- [West Carolina University Summer Symposium](#)
- [Kennesaw State University Summer Band Symposium](#)
- [Kentucky Band Organization Summer Symposium](#)
- [Tennessee Bandmasters' Summer Symposium](#)
- [West Chester University Summer Symposium](#)

"When You Get to a Fork in the Road, Take It"

A Mid-Career Music Teacher Looks Back

Submitted by Jason Worzbyt



Choices. It seems like in this current pandemic we are being bombarded with choices. How will we choose to do our shopping, pay our bills, keep our children safe, do our jobs, visit with family, etc.? Even before this life-changing public health emergency, all of us had to make choices ranging from the mundane to the most consequential, and everything in between. Perhaps it is due to the pandemic, or the fact that I turned 50 this year, but I have spent a lot of time thinking about the choices that I have made as a music teacher, and how those choices have determined the pathway that I have carved out over time.

Individuals much wiser than I have often stated that where we are in this very moment is the culmination of all the choices we have made. I agree with that to a large extent, although I must confess, I'm not sure what I did to have the hair on the top of my head get thinner! As a fan of Start Trek, I vividly remember Captain Picard saying in the movie Star Trek: Generations, "I rather think that time is a companion who goes with us on the journey and reminds us to cherish every moment because it will never come again." Time is a great companion, as well as a patient teacher, if we are willing to listen in. As a music teacher that is in the middle of his career, I thought it might be interesting to share some of the forks in the road that I encountered over the course of my career, and how I eventually programmed my decision-making GPS to make better choices.

For those of you that love quotes, you probably noticed right off that I was borrowing a phrase often attributed to Yogi Berra, legendary manager and player with the New York Yankees. I purposely used this quote, because in many cases "success" can be found by going down either fork in the road. However, what I later found out as I gained more wisdom (and gray hairs), is that there is a big difference between success and fulfillment with ourselves, our students, and the communities in which we serve.

Humanity vs Envy

This might be the most important decision that I make every day, and it extends far beyond my work as a music educator.

In fact, I "fight this dragon" daily in almost every corner of my personal and professional life. I have referenced The Musician's Soul by James Jordan in this column before, and I want to share the biggest gift that I received from this book that I use on a daily basis. Jordan makes the point in this book that

the greatest enemy of all musicians is envy. Envy of the perfect sound, flawless technique, pristine intonation, etc. I would argue that envy can permeate our personal lives as well in form of comparing our houses, financial standing, the cars we drive, and our personal appearance just to name a few. Envy is a dangerous path to follow, because it creates an insatiable and unrealistic demand for perfection and pedestal seeking that cannot be realistically fulfilled. It damages relationships, both with ourselves and the people in our immediate community, whether they be our students or our loved ones. So what is the solution? Jordan makes the point in his book that if we can remain in a caring, loving, and understanding place within ourselves when these situation arise, we can choose a path that is focused on giving, empathy, and the shared experience of music making. *(continued)*

“
...there is a big difference
between success and fulfillment
with ourselves,
our students, and the
communities in which we serve
”



When You Get to a Fork in the Road...continued

I simply call this humanity. We must remember that if we are honest and pure in our intentions for becoming a conductor/teacher/musician, all of us have a unique perspective based on our own personal journey. These perspectives are valid, needed, and contribute mightily to the education of our students when they are delivered in caring, compassionate, and nurturing way. We must constantly remind ourselves that all of us as teachers have something important, unique, and positive to contribute to the education of our students. The moment that we try to become someone else, or blindly accept philosophies from others without honest introspection, we lose our individuality and humanity in the process. Said in another way, "Don't try to become someone else - those spots are already taken!"

Love vs Fear

I often discuss motivation with my undergraduate students, and this semester has presented multiple opportunities to do this due to the life-changing and unique challenges of this pandemic. For those of you that have done a lot of online teaching (as have I), keeping our students motivated through a small web camera seems like an almost insurmountable challenge. That being said, these situations remind me about what motivates human behavior, and how we can give ourselves positive messages to counteract some of the biggest challenges we face as educators and humans. I learned a long time ago through a wonderful book by David Burns (*Feeling Good*), that people are only motivated to action through love or fear. I, like many of you, have experienced both of these situations and would likely agree with me that making love-based decisions leads to a happier personal and professional life. However, most of these situations are not so "cut and dry" that we can make these choices on the spot. I am reminded back in 2007 that I had a minor health scare that required me to change my eating and exercise habits. When this situation occurred, I initially was acting out of fear to improve my health. Over time, however, I realized that my new healthy behaviors were really motivated by my love for my wife, my family, and my health over the long term. The powerful lesson that I took away from this experience is that while we cannot control what happens to us, or the choices we must invariably make, by making love-based decisions we often received clarity of thought, positive reinforcement for our actions, and a brighter outlook on life.

Perfection vs Excellence

As a graduate student and young faculty member, I struggled mightily with this as a bassoonist in the formative years of my career. One of the reasons I love playing the bassoon is that I find it enjoyable to solve the unique challenges and idiosyncrasies of the instrument, as well as the art of reed making that continues to fascinate and (at times) frustrate me! As a young graduate student, I did not have this view. While I loved playing the bassoon, the technical and musical prowess of my colleagues on many different instruments simply blew me away, leaving me often frustrated that I could not replicate my hard work in the practice room in my lessons or on stage. I'm sure they were having the same struggles as I was, but I was completely oblivious to that as I was making my "umpteenth" bassoon reed in the reed room, begging this inanimate piece of wood to come to life. After a lot of personal work, and the guidance of my very patient doctoral advisor, I came to realize that what we shouldn't be aiming for is perfection, but rather excellence. I consider these two words to actually have different grammatical and philosophical functions: I regard perfection as a noun and excellence as a verb. (*continued*)



When You Get to a Fork in the Road...continued

The explosion of YouTube and digital recording techniques has made finding and making flawless recordings rather easy. While I believe that these recordings are helpful to preserve our repertoire, and bring music to the masses, it creates an unrealistic expectation for performers that can have devastating mental effects. For that reason, I consider perfection to be a packaged and marketed object that has tremendous value, but it should not determine our success or self-worth.

I would much rather chose to focus on excellence. To me, excellence is collection of deliberate actions that we take every day that promote consistency, dependability, professionalism, and a work ethic that does not waver depending on conditions outside of our control. Whether it be showing up to school early, having a score prepared in advance of the first rehearsal, or a commitment to continued growth through attendance at workshops and clinics, the quest for excellence feeds us as musicians/conductor/teachers, and can be a constant and supportive companion through our our careers. Excellence is never judgmental like the specter of perfectionism, that can hang over our heads in constant judgment over what we do and do not accomplish. Excellence supports us, nurtures us, and brings the reality of a successful teaching career for all who embrace this philosophy.

Work vs Life

To me, excellence is a collection of deliberate actions that we take every day that promote consistency, dependability, professionalism, and a work ethic that does not waiver depending on conditions outside of our control.

If I had to chose the fork in the road that I have failed at the most, it is this one, hands down. I suspect I am not alone in this realization. Music teachers seem to be highly susceptible to imbalances in work vs life. Why? I have my own opinions which I am happy to share here. For me, it all began in undergraduate school with the academic and musical demands of earning a music education degree. I think all of us have stories of the long hours we put in at the library, practice room, and computer lab (showing my age here!), satisfying the multiple demands our chosen degree. Then, when we begin our career as teachers, the learning curve is precipitously steep trying to learn all of the complex and overlapping tasks involved in education, many of which have to be learned on the job. The situation that we inherit as teachers can often provide additional challenges, further adding to the demands of the job.

The current pandemic has only magnified this challenge in ways that we could not even conceive of at the beginning of 2020.

An additional challenge that all music teachers face is that we often equate our self worth as a human being with the success we have in the profession, instead of valuing ourselves as people first and musicians second. This is often difficult, because those patterns often start when we become serious as performers in high school or earlier. I have vivid memories as a student of falling short of my expectations as a performer, and then being very upset at myself for days, questioning my choice of career. All of these above circumstances can create problems in our personal and our professional lives. As a young teacher, my zeal for my profession created multiple problems in my personal life, costing me several romantic relationships because I was never truly present away from school. These were painful lessons to learn, but the crucible it created allowed me to make significant changes in my personal life that led me to my future wife and eventually the birth of our son.
(continued)



When You Get to a Fork in the Road...continued

So, what is the solution? I think it's different for every person and every teaching situation. I do think that there are times in our professional life that we do need to be focused and selfish with our time. Music education demands that, and open communication with our loved ones can help to negotiate this focused periods.

However, we must remember, and be committed, to feeding ourselves away from the job so that can be healthy and happy multidimensional human beings. Some of the greatest advice I ever received about work/life balance was from my father, John Worzbyt, who is a retired university professor. He told me: 1) Work hard / Play hard, and 2) While you will temporarily be a faculty member in your chosen field, you will always be a husband to your wife and a father to to your son. It is so important to nurture those relationships throughout your career as that will be your constant source of strength, understanding support, and love.

Expectations vs Reality

I could have very easily included this conundrum in several of the topics I have already discussed, but since it cuts across so many things we do as teachers I am choosing to include it here. How many times as musicians/teachers/conductors have our expectations fallen well short of the standards we have set for ourselves? I know I have. Despite the number of hours I practice a part, the number of reeds I scrape at my desk, or the detail I spend in an ensemble rehearsal, sometimes things just don't work out like we want them to. If we then make the choice to beat ourselves up, or compare ourselves to others, it can create a dangerous downward spiral (see Humanity vs. Envy).

How then can we negotiate this choice? I suggest doing two things. First, reverse these two words so that the reality of our unique situation guides the musical and pedagogical choices we make for our students. Here is an example of this: a first-year teacher takes a job as a high school band director and wants to program Gustav Holst's First Suite in Eb. That is a terrific choice of literature, but this teacher is not accepting the reality that the students are currently playing literature at a 2.5-grade level. If this teacher chooses to not accept his current reality and go ahead with performing this work, it will create frustration for all involved. By honestly assessing what we and our students can accomplish given all of the variables involved, it exponentially increases the opportunities for success. Secondly, I would replace the term expectations and replace it with outcomes. By deciding ahead of time what we want our students to accomplish, we create a pedagogical and philosophical pathway that will guide the education of our students. Now we have the concept of our own individual reality working in tandem with clear and concise outcomes specific to the needs of our students. It places the process as the driving force in our teaching, rather than the product.

Please take a few minutes while PMB is on your mind and mark these items off your list! It is imperative we follow the best routines and adhere to deadlines in a timely manner. It will be a big help as I navigate my new position of serving our chapters. We are making efforts to clarify dates and improve the procedures, especially following COVID. Annual forms on the [international website](#) are quick and designed to create invoices for you automatically.

- Annual business report due each January - provides officer contact information - fill out now & send if you have not already done so.
- Annual per capita report and dues online within one month of your chapter meeting.
- Annual dues payment mailed with invoice created online with your per capita report within one month of your chapter meeting.
- Credentials payments due within two weeks of placing your order.
- Member profile updates - be sure to organize your chapter member roster online.
- Chapter websites - keep those updated & let me know if you need help creating one.
- Nominations will be open from June 1 to September 30 for two positions on the International Board and for Vice-President/President-Elect. Nominations should originate at each chapter's annual business meeting or by online ballot and must have the endorsement of the Chapter President and/or Secretary. Chapter secretaries can access Forms and Documents on the Phi Beta Mu website. All nominations must be accompanied by a brief biography and high-resolution jpeg photo for the ballot.
- Col. Irons Program of Distinction evaluation committee nominations - Beginning June 1, chapters may nominate one member to serve on the POD evaluation committee. Members will be responsible for evaluating submitted recordings and other materials. The nomination/volunteer window will close on July 1.
- Additional details on nominations, voting, POD can be found in our constitution & bylaws located on the website.
- Attendee registration for The Midwest Clinic music conference will open on August 1, 2023. Our hope is to have every chapter represented at our breakfast & business meeting. Hope to see many of our leaders in attendance this year!

Phi Beta Mu is a non-political, non-profit fraternity organized to promote fellowship among its members, to encourage the building of better bands and the development of better musicians in schools throughout the world, to foster a deeper appreciation for quality wind literature, and to encourage widespread interest in band performance.

Questions or comments?

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Please contact me with any questions, suggestions to make your job easier and our communication its best. I look forward to lots of emails in my box soon. I appreciate the interaction I have had with each of you and look forward to our future activities. Best wishes for a restful summer!

INTERNATIONAL BANDMASTERS FRATERNITY

ΦΒΜ

Life - Love - Music

