



**FIND A MENTOR**

**+ CREATING A  
BALANCED BUDGET**

**DRUM CAMP  
IN FORT WORTH**



**YAMAHA**

**2019 VOLUME 2**

**ERIC  
SHIN**

**JAUVON  
GILLIAM**

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**EDUCATORS ★ PERFORMERS ★ ENTREPRENEURS**



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Cover photo by Rob Shanahan for Yamaha Corporation of America

## EDITOR'S NOTE

# Life Lessons at The Snowman

In my home office hangs a print that focuses on a little structure with a huge fluorescent snowman holding an ice cream cone. On a quiet corner of 114th Street and Fifth Avenue in Troy, New York, stands The Snowman ice cream store.

When I was in sixth grade, my mother told me that my family had no money to pay for drum lessons. If I wanted to learn how to play, I better find a job. I knocked on the back door of that ice cream store, and a short, burly ex-Marine opened it and stared down at me. I told him I needed a job to buy drumsticks. He asked me how much I wanted to be paid. I told him \$1 an hour.

That day started a mentor relationship that lasted until I spoke at Donald Baker's retirement celebration many years later. He was the toughest but most compassionate mentor in my life.

I don't think he tried to be a mentor. He never cut me an inch of slack! He

lived how he felt a man should live. He was faster than me at everything. He could outshoot me in basketball. He was much better than me in math and insisted that we do all the math in our heads for adding up our customers' bills. He was smarter and stronger than me and worked twice as hard. He showed me how to hustle and how to be kind to people regardless of how tired I was.

I laugh when I say this, but it's true: Everything I needed to know about life, I learned at The Snowman.

In this issue of SupportED, we have a wonderful article on finding a mentor ("Seek Guidance" on page 6). I hope you enjoy it, and I hope you are serving as a mentor for someone. But most of all, I hope that you will write a short letter to the person who has been your most influential mentor.

This "Editor's Note" serves as one of many letters I have written to Mr. Baker,



who passed away in 2008. Thank you, "Bake" — you kicked my butt and made me a better man.

Best,

*John Wittmann*

John Wittmann  
Director, Artist Relations and Education



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MUSIC EDUCATORS AND STUDENTS THROUGH  
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LIFE-CHANGING MUSICAL EVENTS AND THE  
SHARING OF GIFTED ARTISTS

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As a music educator, I look forward to every issue of SupportED because I know it will have a great mix of practical advice for instrumental instructors. I often look at older issues for helpful tips. For example, I loved the article on how to create a successful concert experience for your students that was in an issue from 2017. The tips on planning, choosing appropriate literature, engaging students during the preparation, and how to program the event are invaluable!

I highly recommend this magazine to teachers of every level of experience and size of school. It's a great way to feel connected, get practical advice and spark creativity. It's like a professional development experience wrapped up in one publication!



**Bethany Robinson**  
**Assistant Band Director and**  
**Jazz Band Director**  
**Noblesville (Indiana) High School**

**We want to hear from you!** Please let us know what you think of this issue and share stories about your music program. Write to us at [SupportED@yamaha.com](mailto:SupportED@yamaha.com).

DID YOU KNOW?



Yamaha and the DISNEYLAND Resort® have a long-standing relationship. Yamaha is the official supplier of musical instruments for the DISNEYLAND Resort®, and Yamaha has been the presenting sponsor of the DISNEYLAND Resort® All-American College Band since 2007. Find out about auditions and performances on the band's Facebook page, @DisneylandAACB.

NOTEWORTHY

Global Music Celebration

On June 21, Make Music Day will be celebrated around the world with more than 5,000 free outdoor concerts, music lessons, jam sessions and other music-making events.

This global celebration occurs on the summer solstice each year and involves hundreds of millions of people in more than 1,000 cities. In the United States, Make Music Day is presented by The National Association of Music Merchants (NAMM) Foundation and the not-for-profit Make Music Alliance. The 2019 event will involve more than 80 U.S. cities, including New York, Los Angeles, Chicago, Boston, Miami and Nashville.

Many landmarks and buildings will celebrate Make Music Day by glowing orange. Unlike a music festival, Make Music Day promotes the music maker in all of us. Musicians of all ages, playing abilities and genres are expected to celebrate by creating and sharing music.

All events for Make Music Day are free and open to the public. For more information and a schedule of events, visit [MakeMusicDay.org](http://MakeMusicDay.org).



Mobile Hip-Hop Classroom

The University of Illinois system is funding 14 projects through a \$2 million, two-year initiative to promote the impact and influence of the arts and humanities.

One of the projects that received \$150,000 in funding is the Hip Hop Xpress, an internet-enabled bus equipped with a sound system. The mobile classroom will travel across the state and teach students about African-American history, including hip-hop's role in cultural innovations like DJing, sound engineering and music production. The goal of the Hip Hop Xpress is to help develop hip-hop studies on all three University of Illinois campuses.

The Hip Hop Xpress is the brainchild of four faculty members, three from the Urbana-Champaign campus — Dr. Adam Kruse, Dr. William Patterson and Dr. Malaika McKee — and Tiffani Saunders at Springfield.

Find out about all the projects that received grants at [bit.ly/UllinoisGrants](http://bit.ly/UllinoisGrants).



New HQ for Atlanta Music Project

The Atlanta Music Project (AMP), which provides free music education for underserved youth in the Atlanta area, signed a 12-year lease on a former grocery store that is being converted into its first headquarters. In addition to office space, the plans include a 150-seat performance hall and 10 sound-isolated rehearsal spaces.

The building will be called the AMP Center for Performance and Education and is located in the Capitol View neighborhood.

Much of the funding for the renovation comes from The Next Movement Capital Campaign, which was launched by AMP in the spring of 2018. Major donors include Chick-fil-A Foundation and the Chestnut Family Foundation.

AMP, which was founded in 2010, currently serves 300 students who are provided instruments, classes and many performance opportunities. Classes include orchestra, choir, music theory, African drum and dance, and group lessons on various instruments.



**MUSIC EDUCATION SHOULD NOT BE A PRIVILEGE FOR A LUCKY FEW, IT SHOULD BE A PART OF EVERY CHILD'S WORLD OF POSSIBILITY.**  
— Hillary Clinton



Best Communities for Music Education Recognized

For the last 20 years, The National Association of Music Merchants (NAMM) Foundation has recognized school districts around the country as the Best Communities for Music Education (BCME). In March, The NAMM Foundation released its 2019 list, which honors 623 school districts in 41 states.

The standout states were New York with 152 school districts on the list, Pennsylvania with 92 and Texas with 68. These top three states accounted for half of the BCME list.

The NAMM Foundation works with The Music Research Institute at the University of Kansas and evaluates schools and districts based on a number of criteria including support for music education as part of the core curriculum, staffing of highly qualified teachers, commitment to standards, funding and access to music instruction.

"It's worth noting that we have some school communities that have received this recognition year after year. A few have been [on the list] for 20 years," said Mary Luehrsen of The NAMM Foundation in a press release. "But, every year, new schools and districts are upping their game when it comes to music and the arts, often despite budget and curriculum pressures."

The BCME program recognized 100 school districts in 1999, its inaugural year. Since then, as the list of honored districts has grown, BCME has helped to raise awareness of quality music programs and assisted many districts in securing music funding when faced with budget cuts.

In addition to the 623 BCME districts, The NAMM Foundation also awarded 98 individual schools with a SupportMusic Merit Award (SMMA) for their school-based music education programs.

A complete list of BCME school districts can be found at [bit.ly/NAMM2019BCME](http://bit.ly/NAMM2019BCME). SMMA schools are listed at [bit.ly/NAMM2019SMMA](http://bit.ly/NAMM2019SMMA).







# BUDGET FOR SUCCESS

Many variables – including unknown elements – must be balanced in order to create a sound financial plan.

BY TERRY MOTSENBOCKER, CPA

Responsible financial planning by the booster club is critical to the short-term and long-term success of your music program. To optimize the budgeting process, I recommend involving someone who knows the organization and someone who has finance experience.

TAKE THE FIRST STEPS

Start early — at least six months before the year starts. Don't rush the process.

Organize a budget committee in order to gather fresh views and share the workload. Up to six people would be the optimal size for the group as too many opinions can cause timelines to stretch and create more ideas than the organization can fund.

Budget the income first, so you can then prioritize expenses. Consider income that will be generated from individual fees, donations, fundraising and other sources. Budget fundraisers based on realistic targets, not stretch goals. Use financial history when applicable — but always anticipate new situations.

BE REALISTIC

One of the most challenging elements of the budget process is anticipating uncollectible fees. The board and staff need to have honest and open conversations about this topic: Does your organization exist to educate and train all interested students or only the students who can afford to participate?

Use a financial aid process to assist parents who cannot afford the fees. The financial aid may be funded by sponsors, alumni programs or other sources. The budget process must capture all of the variables related to this area.

Be supportive of the directors' needs, but realize that the booster organization has a fiduciary duty to track and spend funds in the most responsible way for the program. Be prepared to offer alternatives or tradeoffs to requests, if needed, and always work hand-in-hand with the director on final decisions.

In order to stretch the funds further,



consider secondhand dealers for uniforms or equipment. Many large programs that have incredible funding will buy uniforms every five to 10 years, and their "old" gear can be a great investment.

Discretionary line items for supplies and for the director to use should be included to provide flexibility because every single item cannot be identified before the year starts. Put proper controls in place for approval of these items to have appropriate oversight on spending decisions.

LOOK AT THE HORIZON

Budget for reserves. Accumulate funds for future large purchases such as uniforms, instruments or trips. The capital purchases process must have a multiyear view and involve input from several stakeholders. It requires discipline by all involved but is a better approach than trying to use special fundraisers for these large purchases.

Build the expense budget based on the needs of your organization and not based on what other programs do in your region or state. Each program is different and must operate within its means. Your program must clearly define success, so that everyone understands what the budget is trying to accomplish.

REMEMBER ALL STAKEHOLDERS

A strong relationship with the school system administration is critical. Administrative support can often save large sums of money for boosters. For example, the school district may offer insurance, maintenance on vehicles, staff and facility use for performances and fundraisers. Quantify the dollar value of this school system support, so the organization understands the monetary impact from the administration.

The budget data should be presented in summary to the entire booster club. If certain stakeholders have interest in details, they can discuss matters with the booster club treasurer in a private meeting.

Determine key milestone dates to review actual results compared to budget expectations. Often there are timing differences, but if a variance is not going to align to budget expectations, the disparity needs to be identified and managed. If revenue is below budget or expenses are over budget, adjustments must be made in areas that are not yet committed in order to balance the year.

A sound financial plan can lower stress and allow more time for the booster club and directors to focus on musical objectives rather than balancing budgets.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Terry Motsenbocker, CPA, has 20 years of experience as a senior vice president of finance for a hospitality company. He served for seven years on the board of the Center Grove High School (Indiana) Trojan Band Boosters including two years as vice president of finance. He graduated from Ball State University in 1989.





Find a mentor who can help you navigate those confusing and isolating early years of teaching.

BY NICOLE ROBERTS

A small act of kindness can spark a decades-long mentor relationship. Dr. Reginald McDonald still remembers when Herb Cox, a former band director in Atlanta, graciously stepped up to help him tune his middle school concert band during his second year of teaching. McDonald says that several

of his students were not sitting correctly, making tuning stressful and labored. “[Cox] just politely asked me, ‘Do you mind if I do it?’ [and] ... he just came off so subtle and demonstrated to me and the kids how different they sounded,” recalls McDonald, now the director of bands and orchestra and associate professor at

Tennessee State University. “I respect him, and I appreciated [his] approach to taking a stressful situation and calming the waters.” McDonald still considers Cox a friend and mentor 25 years later, and he has tried to learn something new from Cox every time the two see each other. Between the valuable insight, strong

support and lasting friendships, mentor relationships are a must for new music educators.

## MATCHING MENTORS AND MENTEES

Professional associations can be great places to locate mentorship opportunities. For example, the California Music Educators Association (CMEA) created a mentorship program in 2015.

“If you’re teaching English or math, there tends to be several teachers in that subject area, but if you’re the music teacher, oftentimes you’re the only music teacher on that campus,” says Mark Nicholson, CMEA mentorship program chair. “So, many times they feel as if they’re on their own island, and they don’t have anyone to call upon who has that particular music expertise and background. That’s why we find it so necessary to offer this support that’s not there right now.”

After mentors and mentees apply, CMEA pairs the individuals, paying close attention to their disciplines, goals, teaching philosophies, backgrounds, experiences and geography.

“Maybe a music teacher has to lead a guitar class and isn’t familiar with that situation, so it’s important to find a mentor who has specific experience in guitar ensembles,” Nicholson says. “It’s also important that we find a mentor who’s fairly close in proximity to the mentee, so that they can get into the classroom and develop more of a personal relationship.”

New teachers can also find their own mentors through their prior student teaching, current school district, music conferences and other national organizations. A good resource is the Music for All Interstate-65 Corridor Project that helps urban music educators along I-65 in the Midwest and South share resources, network and participate in professional development.

For relationships to prosper, mentors and mentees must have communication and trust. Through CMEA’s program, educators sign a partnership agreement that includes their goals, expectations and communication



Reginald McDonald



Mark Nicholson



Michael Stone



Zachary Harris

BETWEEN THE VALUABLE INSIGHT, STRONG SUPPORT AND LASTING FRIENDSHIPS, MENTOR RELATIONSHIPS ARE A MUST FOR NEW MUSIC EDUCATORS.

strategies. They also sign a confidentiality agreement, something band directors say is a must to facilitate open and honest discussions without fear of repercussions.

Mentors must also assure their mentees that they are on “equal footing” and are approachable, says Michael Stone, CMEA’s past president and its current music supervisors representative.

## GUIDING THE NEXT GENERATION

Even though college classes and student teaching equip new educators with several tools, some situations must be learned in the field, and mentors can fill those gaps, says Zachary Harris, concert band director and low brass instructor at William Carey University in Hattiesburg, Mississippi. For instance, mentors can coach young professionals on how to set up their events calendar, plan their trips, create budgets, pick music for their performances and work with band parents.

McDonald adds that a mentor can also “minimize the depth of mistakes” when new

teachers do make errors in their classrooms.

New teachers shouldn’t expect one person to provide all the help they need. Stone, who is also the visual and performing arts coordinator at Bakersfield (California) City School District, says he learned different lessons from different mentors. One offered advice on how to inspire his students and community while another helped Stone learn the details of various instruments, and a third mentor helped him develop his philosophies about music education.

## RECOGNIZE WHAT WORKS FOR YOU

A mentor’s advice may not always work with the new teacher’s program or community, notes Harris, who also chairs the Urban Education Advisory Committee that oversees the I-65 Corridor Project. If new teachers “try to model after this person, and your community isn’t accepting the way they do it, then that could be damaging to your program,” he adds.

While mentors should listen and give advice, they should also let new teachers spread their wings and learn what works for their music programs. For example, teachers can provide general advice on tuning a band correctly but let the new teachers experiment with different warm-up techniques for tuning, Harris says.

Mentorship relationships typically don’t evaporate into thin air once new educators gain their footing. Harris still has weekly or monthly conversations with two of his mentors. “Once you establish that relationship, you have it for life because you never stop learning,” Harris says. “There’s always going to be something new or something different.”



# OPENING



# DOORS

Percussionists **Jauvon Gilliam** and **Eric Shin** juggle teaching, performing, family and their own businesses with a special blend of talent, passion, positivity and determination.

BY ELLYCE ROTHROCK / PHOTOS BY ROB SHANAHAN

Jauvon Gilliam and Eric Shin aren't well acquainted with the oft-repeated saying, "When one door closes, another opens." For this powerhouse percussion duo, opportunity repeatedly knocks, and doors keep opening wide. Shin's and Gilliam's plates are more than full. Both are percussion lecturers at the University of Maryland School of

Music, where Gilliam is also co-director of percussion studies. Both are principals — Shin on percussion and Gilliam on timpani — for the National Symphony Orchestra (NSO) in Washington, D.C. Both are also fairly new successful entrepreneurs, and both have equally successful spouses and young children.

There's no big secret behind their

success — just an old-fashioned combination of passion and grit as well as "uncompromising determination and a positive attitude," Shin says. "I like doing many things at once and being engaged in them all at a deep level."

Gilliam's philosophy — "working harder and smarter, so that when the time comes, your average is better than everyone else's

best" — worked well for him when he landed the NSO timpanist position.

In 2009, he packed his drums into a rented minivan and made two 26-hour cross-country trips once for the initial NSO audition and a second time for the callback. He prepared for the latter by contacting and playing for several major timpanists between Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada, and Washington, D.C.





# Reflections On Each Other

Jauvon Gilliam and Eric Shin work together — a lot. Both teach at the University of Maryland School of Music and perform as principals in the National Symphony Orchestra. They shared their thoughts on each other as colleagues and friends.

## ERIC ON JAUVON

“Jauvon’s spirit is so strong. He’s the coolest dude in the world and one of the most positive people I’ve ever met in my life. I feel fortunate to have known him for some time now. He’s just so consistently positive, no matter what’s going on in his life, and I have so much respect for him and his ability to do that.

“No matter how tough times are or things get, he’s just Jauvon. He’s got that insurmountable force of positive energy. It’s truly a rare thing.

“He’s just a great, great guy. His spirit is a great reminder for me to always be positive no matter what’s going on. I’m the luckiest guy in the world that I get to work next to him almost every day.”

## JAUVON ON ERIC

“Eric is a great colleague, a great musician and my closest friend in D.C. We have similar teaching styles. I love how driven he is and how smart he is with managing his time. He’s just very intelligent. Period.

“The greatest thing I learned from Eric is how he deals with conflict: resolving it quickly in the easiest, most thorough way. I want to resolve it thoroughly, too, but I have no problem engaging, and that doesn’t always work out well. Eric’s smart about reverse-engineering to get a result that is most advantageous.

“We both want to make each other look good, which is why we work together so well on stage. When one of us makes a mistake, we’re both really quick to say, ‘My bad.’ When something’s wrong, we look internally first, not looking to lay the blame at someone else’s feet.”

## IN THE MUSIC ROOM

Gilliam won his first national piano competition at age 11 and received a full scholarship in piano performance to Butler University in Indianapolis, but he switched to full-time percussion at the urging of Jon Crabiel, one of his teachers.

Shin started off playing the piano too, but it didn’t capture his imagination like the drums.

Gilliam and Shin met in 2001 at the Cleveland Institute of Music, where they both studied with renowned timpanist Paul Yancich, a “perfectionist who has figured out every technical aspect of playing timpani and at the same time is a total natural,” says Shin.

“[Paul] instilled in me this ‘sponge’ mentality,” says Gilliam about his teacher turned friend and colleague. “He is a very cerebral man of few words when it comes to teaching, but he knows so much. You have to listen up. It might be subtle, but he’ll teach you what you need to know. You learn more by watching him than during lessons because he’s so good.”

## IN THE CLASSROOM

Yancich and other early mentors helped mold Shin’s and Gilliam’s teaching styles.

Gilliam figures out what makes students tick and uses that to fuel their individual fire. The most successful students are those who soak everything up, he says.

“I’m a pretty enthusiastic, all-in, hands-on, engaging teacher,” Gilliam says. “I like to dive deep into the hows, whys, wheres and whens — the synesthesia of it all — hearing colors and seeing palettes. All these things create an atmosphere of timpani culture, and my students just eat it up. They’re fast, eager learners who immerse themselves in the culture, attend concerts, listen to recordings and ask the right questions.”

Gilliam’s definition of professional success is simple. “I want my students to achieve excellence with a happy heart,” he says. “I have a great passion for music, obviously, but also a passion for showing students how awesome it is to do what you love. As long as they’re happy and decent human beings, then I’ve done my job.”

# Artists at a Glance

## Jauvon Gilliam >>

Bachelor’s in arts administration, Butler University  
Graduate studies at the Cleveland Institute of Music  
Timpanist for The All-Star Orchestra on the Public Broadcasting Service

Former timpanist for the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra and the Manitoba Chamber Orchestra

## << Eric Shin

Bachelor’s in music,  
Cleveland Institute of Music

Graduate studies at The Juilliard School  
Former principal percussionist with the Detroit and Honolulu Symphony Orchestras

Shin describes his teaching approach as “relaxed,” but says he can be very demanding. “If you take what [students] bring to the next level, they’re refreshed, energized and curious, and they return prepared to learn more,” says Shin.

He reminds his students to nurture their curiosity and passion for music and seek musical experiences to keep them focused and engaged. It’s easy for students to get stressed, so Shin encourages them to recast their mindset to “busy” rather than “stressful.”

“Everything becomes easier as soon as a student views something as positive,” Shin says.

Shin tells his students to connect with music by attending a performance or using their time in a practice room “almost as

meditation, an escape.” He emphasizes the importance of practice and often repeats the famous words of Vince Lombardi, the legendary Green Bay Packers coach: “Practice doesn’t make perfect — perfect practice makes perfect.”

Shin values honest, transparent communication with his students. “It’s a balance as educators that we’re all trying to achieve. I will always work with [students] and respect where they are mentally,” he says.

## IN THE FRONT OFFICE

If performing and molding future professional musicians weren’t enough, both Gilliam and Shin work overtime as successful business owners.

Shin became a restaurateur in 2016 with

SEOULSPICE, a fast-casual Korean restaurant that now has three locations and is soon to be franchised. It serves as a way for Shin to flex his artistic muscles in different ways, from creating the menu and designing interior spaces to launching the website, and creating branding elements, marketing and more.

Opening day was a little insane. About 30 minutes prior to opening, a line wrapped around the block, so the fire department was there. To make matters worse, they ran out of food in four hours. “It was crazy, exciting, fascinating and busy in all the best ways,” says Shin.

Shin adds that the diversion of opening SEOULSPICE served a definite purpose. “I had only been with the orchestra a few years,” he says. “Being an orchestra musician can be very stressful, especially when you’re a principal. You have all these responsibilities. I found that having other commitments eased that pressure.”

Gilliam’s Capitol Percussion, founded in 2014, offers instrument, backline and sound equipment rentals, which is perhaps a more logical, natural extension for a

“I TRY TO BE IN THE MOMENT  
WHERE I’M AT, BUT THE HUSTLE  
NEVER SLEEPS.” — Jauvon Gilliam



musician. But he, too, makes no bones about the hard work that's required. "Educators and business owners have to be good time managers," he says. "You can't half-ass anything. If you don't do the work, nobody else will. You just put your head down and do it."

### IN THE CLOUD

Both Shin and Gilliam use various tools to keep it all together.

"You grow a business, then you hire people who are smarter than you to eventually do the things you don't need to do," Gilliam says. "I'm getting to that point. I'm a busybody, and I embrace it."

Gilliam also emphasizes the importance of technology. "Having the tools in front of you to be able to do what you need to is vital," he says. "The fact that I've held the NSO job for a while gives me some leeway to put more energy into my business. I'm up early. I'm up late. I work during orchestra breaks and lunch hours. Everything is mobile; my business is on the cloud. I work whenever I can to reach out to a client, send an invoice, ensure we have the right equipment or talk to my operations manager."

Shin also harnesses the power of technology to help manage his time and keep everything running smoothly. "Apps and calendar alerts are my lifelines," he



**WORK FASTER AND SMARTER:** Eric Shin makes every second count. He trained himself to do things faster by using a kitchen timer set for two minutes. When it went off, he moved to the next task. "My mind and body adapted to the constraint," he says.

says. "I also use a free web-based program called Trello for the restaurant, and I use Google Drive to plot out orchestra stuff in advance and share it with my colleagues and NSO management."

### IN PERSONAL SPACES


No one man can go it alone, and both Gilliam and Shin know this.

Teamwork among family, colleagues,

friends and employees help make the dream work, according to Shin. "Surround yourself with the best employees, and take better care of them than yourself," he says. "Respect fellow musicians, spend quality time with friends and family, and be consistent with sacred times together. It's important to be connected with everyone in your life."

Strong human connections keep Gilliam going as well. "I surround myself with people and mentors who know more than I do," he says. "That's how I grow. Also, a mantra from Nelson Mandela works well for me in business and in the orchestra: 'It is better to lead from behind and to put others in front, especially when you celebrate victory when nice things occur.' I try to be in the moment where I'm at, but the hustle never sleeps."

Both strongly believe that their music backgrounds make risks less intimidating.

"So many of my friends said I was crazy to open a restaurant," Shin says. "They said it was risky to enter an industry where so many fail. My response was 'What possibly could be riskier than going to school and getting a music degree and trying to land an orchestra job?'" 



**LIFE LESSON:** Jauvon Gilliam applies the same philosophy to teaching, performing and work. He says, "Life is going to come at you hard. You have to be prepared and react as best as you can."

# THE INSIDE SCOOP: MARK AMODEI



I chose to interview Congressman Mark Amodei from Nevada because it's important to emphasize that arts education is a nonpartisan issue. Amodei, a Republican member of the House of Representatives since 2011, speaks joyously about his former music teacher as well as his memorable music-making experiences as a public school student in northern Nevada. Each year, he makes time to meet with me in his Washington, D.C., office, and he remains one of music education's ardent supporters. Learn more about Amodei's work in Congress at [amodei.house.gov](http://amodei.house.gov).

### Q. Why is it important to protect access to a musical education?

A: I'm a product of my experiences — we all are. My experience in public schools in Nevada was well-rounded because all of us had music starting in elementary school. My grandmother had a violin, so in 4th grade, that was the instrument I learned to play. I was certainly not what one would consider a cultural icon, but a group of cellists and I would often get to go to a separate room and practice together. In fact, I once got to play a solo on the family "Stradivarius." I was so proud to have actually learned a song that I could play on that particular instrument.

When the music teacher, Nonie Gardner, came into class, we always had fun, but she commanded our respect. Nonie was a lady of culture, and she was passionate about music. You not only respected her but also her subject.

Music is part of the fiber of growing up and going to school. In high school, you always knew the name of the football coach and the band director. It's just part of having a well-rounded education.

### Which person from history, dead or alive, would you want to have lunch with and what would you discuss?

Any of the Comstock key figures — for example, John Mackay or Abe Curry (a.k.a. the founding father of Carson City) — to

talk about what happened in those days and why, especially the establishment and eventual closing of the mint in Carson City. Turns out that much of Nevada's silver was shipped to San Francisco to be minted because of an issue with the mint in Carson City. I would have loved to have been a fly on the wall to learn more about what was really going on during the Comstock Lode days.

### What is your most embarrassing moment that you can share?

As an up-and-coming 5th-grade basketball player, I got the ball and promptly dribbled to the other team's basket and scored. Oops!

### Other than music, what brings you inspiration?

When I was 40, the answer would have been different than what it is now. Now that I'm 60, I'm more introspective. I'm inspired by people who have not had an easy way in life because of major challenges (physical, environmental, etc.) and yet have persevered

and achieved success. These people set a higher standard in life for all of us because of what they have accomplished in spite of their personal situations.


### What is your biggest pet peeve?

The older I get, the less tolerance I have for arrogance. There's just no place for it.

### Why is music important to humanity?

In my experience, regardless of what kind of day you're having — good, bad or indifferent — music will enhance your mood. It can be relaxing and soothing or energetic and motivational. It helps us with perspective because it can do so much for our attitude.

### What is your favorite guilty pleasure food?

When I'm in the right mood, I want a juicy hamburger with all the goodies. One of the best burgers around is at a place called Scoopers in the city of Sparks. I'm also a breakfast guy — more of a sausage links guy than a bacon guy. 



### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Marcia Neel is senior director of education for Yamaha Corporation of America. She is president of Music Education Consultants Inc. and serves as the education advisor to the Music Achievement Council. She presents sessions with practical success strategies for music educators at state music conferences, district in-service days and dealer workshops. To inquire about Neel hosting or attending a session in your area, contact [marcia@musiceducationconsultants.net](mailto:marcia@musiceducationconsultants.net).



# DRUM CAMP

## TEXAS-STYLE

An army of volunteers and community partnerships transform an opulent opera house in Fort Worth into a tuition-free classroom for a summer percussion camp.

BY FRANK DIMARIA

PHOTOS COURTESY BRIAN WEST

You can feel the enthusiasm and hear the reverberating sound of music and movement. Every summer, 75 high school students in Fort Worth, Texas, can hone their percussion skills at one of the most opulent places in the city, the Nancy Lee and Perry R. Bass Performance Hall.

The beautiful, European-style performing arts venue is home to the city's symphony orchestra and opera as well as the Texas Ballet Theater. It also hosts Broadway shows, concerts and more. But Bass Performance Hall is much more than a stage. It is a champion of arts education and serves as the "classroom" for its Children's Education Program, which offers tickets to matinee shows and four summer camps to area students — all free of charge.

The summer camps — two choral, one percussion and one theater tech (in which students learn about backstage mechanics) — are underwritten by Performing Arts Fort Worth (PAFW), which operates Bass Performance Hall, and made possible through private donations and foundations.

### A VILLAGE OF PARTNERS

The five-day High School Percussion Camp brings 75 students from Title 1 schools to Bass Performance Hall. The camp is built on a strong partnership between PAFW and the Fort Worth Independent School District (FWISD). Local educators support the camp while sponsors such as Yamaha, Innovative Percussion, Marimba One, Sabian and Remo provide financial support.

Oftentimes, the camp participants have no dedicated percussion instructor on staff at their schools. "They [have] never worked with a professional musician other than their band director or choir director," says Sue Buratto, The Children's Education Program director.

The camp recruits well-regarded local educators as volunteer instructors. "We have an amazing staff of top educators from around the Fort Worth area who teach at the camp," says Dr. Brian A. West, the camp's director as well as the coordinator of percussion at Texas Christian University. "These include university professors and

public school educators from FWISD and from other local school districts."

The camps also receive support from friends, family and foundations. "Our development department has been very successful in finding families and foundations in the area that want to help with these kinds of programs," says Buratto, who started The Children's Education Program 20 years ago.

Most camp participants are in the free or reduced lunch program at their schools, so PAFW feeds the students as well as transports them to and from the camp. Feeding 75 campers can be an expensive undertaking. Luckily, area food banks and college cafeterias are always searching for ways to keep their staff employed during the summer. They donate sandwiches and



Dr. Brian A. West

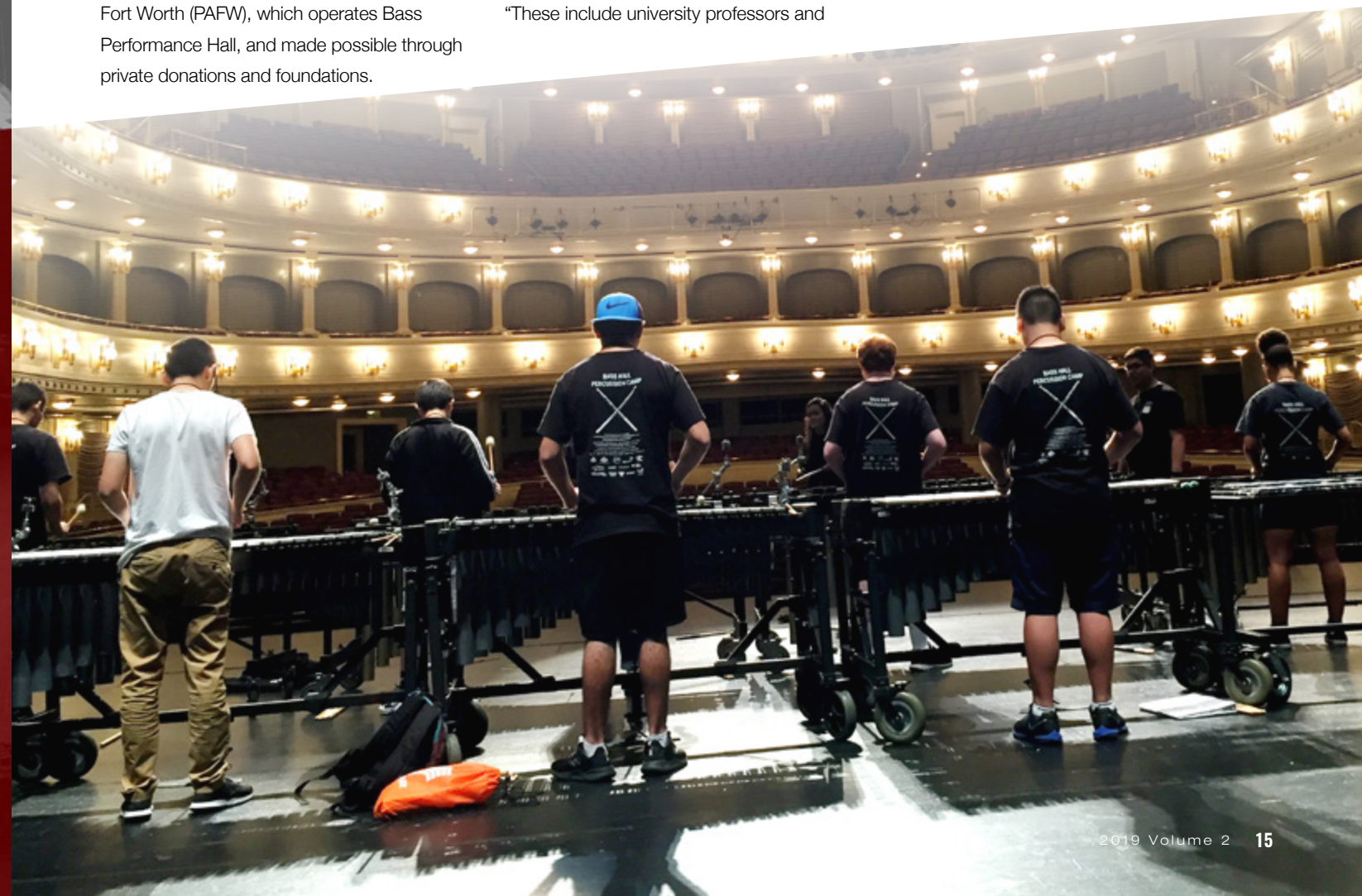






PHOTO COURTESY KAYCE PULLIAM

bottled water to the camps. Corporations donate snacks. “It is a total partnership; it truly takes a village,” Buratto says.

West advises music directors who want to form similar camps to partner with local educators, school districts, universities, performing arts organizations, local music vendors, music corporations and anyone else who could support their endeavor. “Having support from a broad variety of sources is very helpful with this kind of project,” he says.

## BLOOD, SWEAT AND VOLUNTEERS

PAFW and FWISD staff members work together to coordinate the transportation of campers to and from Bass Performance Hall,

**DRUM CAMP:** Bass Hall’s High School Percussion Camp began in 2014 with only 25 students but now accommodates 75 percussion students from the Fort Worth area each summer.

meeting throughout the spring to strategize on pick-up and drop-off locations and bus routes. Logistics, Buratto says, is one of the most laborious facets of running the percussion camp.

Each year Emmanuel “Manny” Flores, director of percussion at Southwest High School in Fort Worth, secures all the equipment necessary to run the camp. He is also one of seven volunteer instructors. “Without Manny, our camp would have a very hard time running,” West says. “While the camp does own a wonderful set of Yamaha drums, we need many more

instruments for the students to perform on. We borrow instruments from some of the FWISD schools. This is a key partnership and a large part of our success.”

West and the instructors are not the only volunteers on hand for the week. Over the years, a dedicated core of volunteers, some of whom have grandchildren in the camp, work to distribute music, paperwork and food during camp hours. They also guide students to sectionals.

“[Volunteers] create a safe environment for students, so all they have to worry about is making music,” Flores says.

## STEADY GROWTH

Buratto started Bass Performance Hall’s summer percussion camp in 2014 after learning about the frustrations of band directors, who “felt that many times the rhythm section, which is, after all, the backbone of a large ensemble, was a little lost in the shuffle of trying to get the clarinets to play on pitch and getting the trumpets to attack together,” Buratto says.

Only 25 students signed up that first year. “Students didn’t want to give up a week of their vacation,” Buratto says. Now percussion camp is “a thing to do,” she says.

The camp has been successful for two

reasons, according to Dr. Jim Yakas, who directed the camp until 2016.

First, Bass Performance Hall and FWISD bought into the concept from the beginning. “This made the job of the camp directors and staff very easy,” says Yakas, who is now the director of percussion studies at VanderCook College of Music in Chicago.

Second, the camp’s staff comprises local music teachers, who then encourage students to attend. “We understood the importance of providing a great experience for the students the first year, so the word would get out that this was an amazing camp,” he adds.


Yakas advises young teachers to connect with students outside of their own schools. “Find ways you can use the power of the arts to have a lasting, exponential effect on your community,” he says.

## MORE THAN JUST MUSIC

Music instruction is not the only thing that the percussion students receive during their week at camp. “The staff at PAFW, the camp staff and all of the volunteers shower these students with attention, education and love,” West says.

The Children’s Education Program summer camps have served more than 4,000 students since their inception. The success of the percussion camp, however, is not measured solely by the number of students it has served. Campers grow as musicians and as individuals, rising above challenging personal situations.

“We work hard to discuss leadership skills, professionalism and a much broader array of topics,” West says. “We’ve seen so many students grow into leadership positions at their schools and continue to develop as young adults.”

Some students, says Flores, come from schools that don’t have percussion directors, making their percussion units auxiliary to the band. “When they come to camp and start to really dig in, they see all the great things that percussion provides,” he says. 

# TRANSPORTING THE DRUMLINE

Coordinating the transportation of 75 students to and from Bass Performance Hall High School Percussion Camp in Fort Worth, Texas, is a challenging task. But that feat may pale in comparison to coordinating the transportation of the equipment that those 75 students need in order to participate in the five-day camp.

For the past four years, that job has belonged to Emmanuel “Manny” Flores, who is director of percussion at Southwest High School in Fort Worth and a volunteer instructor at the camp. Flores starts by taking inventory of the equipment that he can access at Southwest High School. His inventory

includes four Yamaha Acoustalon marimbas, two xylophones, four vibraphones, two glockenspiels and a full set of Yamaha marching equipment. What Southwest can’t supply, Flores borrows from a middle school he works with and then adds his own personal equipment.

As the first day of the percussion camp approaches, Flores gets a handle on exactly what equipment he needs. “We start to really look at numbers,” Flores says. “We look at instrumentation. How many snare drummers are coming to the camp? How many bass drummers? Then I start filling in the gaps. If I’m out of equipment, I start reaching out to other percussion directors in the school district. [My goal is to] make sure that every student has an instrument by the time camp starts.”

Percussion directors around the Fort Worth school district are always willing to help Flores with his instrument needs. “They’re on board with the Bass Hall Percussion Camp,” Flores says. “They have students attending. Even those who don’t have students attending, for whatever reason, are at full support.”

The weekend before the camp meets, Flores rents two 26-foot box trucks. One carries front ensemble equipment like keyboards, auxiliary equipment and stands. The other carries the battery percussion.

Flores enlists the help of Southwest High School students and percussion instructors from around the district to load the trucks. “We literally just put it inside those two trucks,” he says. “It’s worked every year getting all that equipment in those two trucks.”

Flores and another percussion director drive the two trucks to Bass Performance Hall on Sunday. When Monday rolls around, Flores and the campers unload the trucks and get to work.

When the percussion camp is over, the various pieces of equipment are loaded up and returned to their original schools.



**LET’S MOVE:** Manny Flores (right) transports equipment to the percussion camp using two 26-foot box trucks.



PHOTO COURTESY BRIAN WEST

**A BATTERY OF HELPERS:** To operate efficiently, the percussion camp relies on community support from volunteer instructors, sponsors and even college cafeteria employees.



# STRINGS

# STARTUP

## FOR BAND DIRECTORS

The skills you have honed to be a successful band director and performer can be applied to tackle strings education.

BY KAREN MCDONOUGH

Even the most accomplished band directors can feel a bit out of their league when teaching strings for the first time. Both Dean Westman, performing arts department chair and orchestra director at Avon (Indiana) High School, and Glenn Fugett, director of bands and orchestras at the Nashville School of the Arts, remember having an uneasy feeling when they were asked to create new orchestras at their respective schools. However, both successfully extended their

achievements in band to build extraordinary strings programs.

Dr. Paula Krupiczewicz, an accomplished viola player who has performed with artists such as Plácido Domingo, Joshua Bell and Sir James Galway, started from the beginning when she was asked to teach orchestra. At the time, she didn't have an education background but instead leveraged her talents as a musician to advance students' skills. Now Krupiczewicz has spent more than 10 years as the

orchestra director at North Cobb High School in Kennesaw, Georgia.

Westman, Fugett and Krupiczewicz share their tips for teaching strings with success.

### 1 SURROUND YOURSELF WITH MENTORS

Find a mentor, whether a private lesson teacher or an orchestra director who also started with a band background, and "start picking their brains," Westman says.

Westman launched the Avon orchestra program in 2007 with just 40 6th-grade

beginners. Since then, it has grown to more than 600 students in grades 6 to 12. In 2018, the symphony orchestra won its first Indiana State School Music Association Concert Orchestra Championship, and Westman was inducted into the Bands of America Hall of Fame.

In 2015, when Fugett began teaching strings at the Nashville School of the Arts, he turned to Westman for advice. "Find somebody you can reach out to as a mentor, somebody who speaks your language, who you can hang out with and talk [to], preferably somebody who has done this," says Fugett who spent the previous 29 years developing successful band programs at two Texas schools — Westlake High School in Austin and Legacy High School in Mansfield.

### 2 TAKE LESSONS

Acquire a fundamental understanding of string instruments by taking lessons, which will also foster an appreciation for the difficulty of learning how to make a great sound, Westman says. He took violin lessons years ago with his daughter when she was in elementary school to observe the teaching method while learning as a beginner himself.

"Going through that process was a game changer for me to have the most basic level of understanding," he says.

### 3 START WITH THE BASICS

Last summer, when Krupiczewicz taught a symposium to band teachers, many of them said they were told they would have to teach string instruments in the fall. Krupiczewicz, who regularly performs with the Georgia



**STRINGS CHALLENGE:** Don't fret if you've been tasked with teaching strings for the first time. Apply the same teaching fundamentals that you use as a successful band director.

Symphony Orchestra, set them at ease.

Producing the right tone is a big challenge for students, Krupiczewicz observes, and the right sound starts with instrument setup and hand position. "I tell my students, 'It's like pulling water out of the well; pull the sound from the bottom of your instrument,'" she says. "It's a happy medium of bow weight, bow speed and the left arm pulling down to let the strings vibrate and the instrument resonate to create a rich, warm, big sound."

### 4 DO DAILY WARMUP EXERCISES

Practice and warmup exercises are key. Fugett suggests using the book "Daily Warm-Ups for String Orchestra" by Michael Allen. The first exercise in the book focuses on tuning, which Fugett uses for the first six weeks. "I use the book to develop sound quality, tuning, articulation and stylistic bowings," Fugett says.

### 5 HIRE TOP CLINICIANS

Bring in the best string players and clinicians to work with students. Guest artists not only help students improve but also inspire teachers to study how the experts rehearse their students.

"To become the best, surround yourself with the best" is an adage that Westman lives by. He says, "Make [your students] as great as you can."

### 6 DEVELOP THE INDIVIDUAL PLAYER

Encourage students to take private lessons and use the competitive All-State process in your area to further develop individual musicians, Fugett suggests. Intensive training for students allows them to become better players. "If they master those etudes, they're becoming a fine high school player," he adds.

### 7 GIVE YOURSELF CREDIT

And finally, remember that band director skills apply to teaching strings. Westman says that he was afraid that students wouldn't want to join the orchestra because he was a tuba player. He soon realized that they didn't care what he played; they were all making music together.

Fugett agrees. "If you're successful as a band director, you're going to be successful with strings as well. Music is music."



Dean Westman



Glenn Fugett



Dr. Paula Krupiczewicz



Every issue of SupportED will close with a letter written by a Yamaha Master Educator to his or her younger self. These letters will offer advice, anecdotes and inspiration for a fulfilling career in music education.

Dear Younger Doug,



Douglas Droste  
Yamaha Master Educator  
Director of Orchestras  
Associate Professor of Music  
Ball State University

As I reflect on my 23 years as a music educator, I want to share my knowledge and give you six pointers that will help you as you start your career.

**Stay Organized:** Keep a constant to-do list and write things down so you don't forget. Stay ahead of your classes and always be prepared for rehearsal.

**Delegate:** Find tasks (setting up chairs and stands, organizing music, etc.) that responsible students or parents can handle to free up your time to prepare for rehearsal. Use (or organize) a parent booster group to help with fundraising and other support.

**Communicate:** Make sure to communicate with everyone more than once. Your students, colleagues, coaches, administrators and parents are juggling a million things. Consistent reminders of concerts, extra rehearsals and trips — through different channels (website, email, letters home, face-to-face meetings, etc.) — will help. Sure, you will always have kids say, "I didn't know we had a major festival performance this weekend," but they will be the minority.

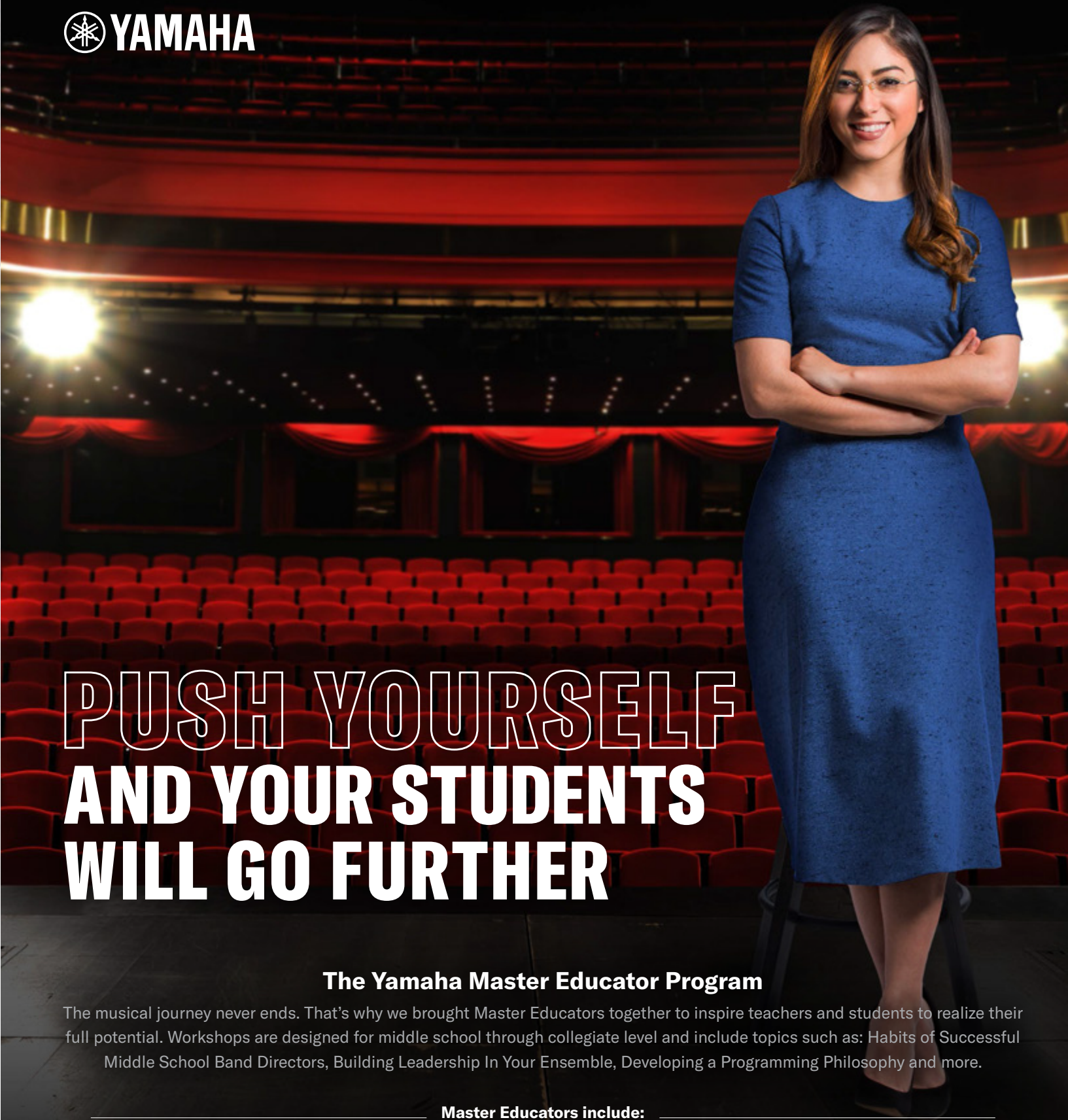
**Stay Positive:** You will lose your cool early on and get frustrated with students who don't seem as interested or intense about music as you are. You just graduated with a degree in music education, landed your first job and are ready to change the world in small-town Ohio. But you have to understand that students have a lot going on in their lives. If they have a bad attitude, it could be a personal issue at home, hormones, hunger, being scared or intimidated, ... and often it has nothing to do with you or music. Stay positive and calm. Take a deep breath and realize that these are children who are still learning how to deal with their emotions. You most likely will win them over, but as Theodore Roosevelt said, "Nobody cares how much you know until they know how much you care."

**Document:** It's vital to document everything, especially disciplinary situations or difficult meetings with students or parents. Stay professional during parent meetings — listen without interrupting, speak with a caring tone and cite your documents if needed. (My principal once told me this very thing after a parent meeting.) You are there to help the student, not prove who is "right" or "wrong."

**Keep Growing and Learning:** Last but not least, keep growing as a musician! Observe fellow directors as much as possible, score study more advanced music, keep working on piano and other instruments you teach, make time to play and perform on your primary instrument, go to concerts and listen to great music.

Remember, you have chosen one of the greatest and most rewarding professions in the world.  
Good luck!

*Douglas Droste* in 2019



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