



GIVE STUDENTS A  
**PASSION**  
FOR PRACTICE

**SURVIVE THE  
YEAR-END  
BUSTLE**

 **YAMAHA**  
2019 VOLUME 4



MINNESOTA'S  
**STAR**

**Emily Threinen**



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Cover photo by Rob Shanahan for Yamaha Corporation of America

**EDITOR'S NOTE**

# Behind the Scenes

In my job, I get to meet a lot of people — music teachers, students, performing artists — and tackle fun and challenging tasks, such as negotiating endorsement deals, helping produce Yamaha concerts and events, giving lectures at music schools and so much more.

One of the coolest parts of my job is directing video and photo shoots, which I learned by trial and error. So much goes into a photo shoot, and 90% of the work happens before the shoot.

Thankfully, I have gifted people on our team who help develop a theme for the shoot, provide suggestions for required photos, scout locations and secure access to these places. The perfect photographer and hair and makeup artist are critical as well.

Where do I fit into this process? I help create the right vibe with a subject, crucial in making or breaking a photo or video shoot regardless if all the other details are perfect. I keep things moving



PHOTO BY ROB SHANAHAN

Here I am standing in for Dr. Emily Threinen, so the photographer could adjust lighting and composition.

while never making people feel rushed. I make sure the subject is in the perfect head space even when the shoot may call for him or her to be outside of his or her comfort zone.

For this issue's cover shoot with Dr. Emily Threinen, all things aligned. A beautiful day, a beautiful campus and a team — photographer Rob Shanahan and makeup artist Amber Young — that worked seamlessly together. Most im-

portantly, we had an artist who showed patience, grace and flexibility (traits that make her an exceptional music educator!) during the two-day photo shoot.

Thank you, Emily!

Best,

John Wittmann  
Director, Artist Relations and Education



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INSPIRING, EMPOWERING AND EQUIPPING MUSIC EDUCATORS AND STUDENTS THROUGH FINELY CRAFTED INSTRUMENTS, ACCESS TO LIFE-CHANGING MUSICAL EVENTS AND THE SHARING OF GIFTED ARTISTS

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## MAILBAG

I study with Jauvon Gilliam and Eric Shin at the University of Maryland, and the article about them in SupportED 2019 V2 nailed it on the head in terms of how they operate as pedagogues. I would not be the player I am without them.

This article also recognized how much they actually do.

Jauvon has quickly cornered the market in D.C. with backline and percussion rentals. His attention to detail and constant desire to make sure clients are satisfied has made Capitol Percussion what it is. Eric has also created a name for himself with SEOULSPICE. The Korean fusion food is delicious (I know firsthand!), and you can get it to go or can experience a very modern, relaxed vibe in the restaurant.

I can't say enough about these two. They perform at the highest level in the orchestral world, teach, run businesses, take care of their little ones and have enough energy and dedication to check in with me to see how I'm doing as their student.

They put immense care into every facet of their lives. I look up to them as players and human beings. I'm grateful that you were able to share all that they do with music educators everywhere.

Lauren Floyd

Greenbelt, Maryland



## NOTABLE AND QUOTABLE



I cannot imagine my life if I didn't have a music program in my school."

— Beyoncé

## NOTEWORTHY

## Marcia Neel Wins Lifetime Achievement Award

Marcia Neel, the senior director of education for Yamaha Corporation of America, was recognized with a lifetime achievement award from the Nevada chapter of the American Choral Directors Association (ACDA).

Neel spent more than 35 years in public school music education, the vast majority of it in Nevada's Clark County.

"As far as the state of Nevada is concerned, Marcia is music education," says Kimberly Barclay Ritzer, past president of the Nevada ACDA and director of the Green Valley High School Choirs. "She is the epitome of what a music educator should be. Marcia has been a mentor to many young choral directors, and she also helps veteran directors like me by giving us a shot in the arm when we need it."

In addition to her work with Yamaha, Neel is the president of Music Education Consultants Inc. and an educational advisor to the Music Achievement Council.

"I am so very grateful to my Nevada ACDA colleagues for this most significant recognition," Neel says. "Working with music students and educators continues to be a genuine joy as well as my personal passion. To be honored with such a significant award for something that I utterly love doing is truly humbling."

Neel is the sixth recipient of the Nevada ACDA lifetime achievement award, which recognizes people in the state who have made a huge impact through their commitment to choral education. Neel received her award at a ceremony at Basic High School in Henderson, Nevada, on Nov. 2.



## Summer-Only Masters of Music Education

The University of Louisiana Monroe (ULM) School of Visual and Performing Arts has added a Master of Music Education to its program. The courses are taught in three summer semesters to complete the 36-credit program in either choral general music or instrumental music.

This one-of-a-kind program was designed for people who have their teaching credentials in music but want to further their education.

The first summer session was completed with seven students from across the state who studied choral techniques and methods, instrumental literature, foundations of music education, brass techniques, jazz history and more, according to Dr. Derle Long, the director of the ULM School of Visual and Performing Arts.

Go to [www.ulm.edu/music/master-of-music-education.html](http://www.ulm.edu/music/master-of-music-education.html) for additional information.



## Middle School Magnet Technology Programs

Horace Mann Middle School in El Portal, Florida, offers two unique magnet programs in music technology and entertainment technology. These three-year programs begin with sixth-grade students learning how to play instruments. By the time they graduate from eighth grade, they are "technically viable musicians" who can play music, compose their own songs, design album cover art and lay down beats, according to Carl Pinder, who leads the music program at the school.

Students hone skills that can be applied to other subjects, such as computer programs like Photoshop and Office. "It gives them the skills they need to be successful — not just in music, but in life," Pinder said in an interview with NBC Miami.

The music technology and entertainment technology curriculum is part of Horace Mann's overarching applied technology magnet program, which also offers classes in digital journalism, STEM and business applications.

## Montana Senator Recognized by NAFME



Montana Senator Jon Tester has been named the 2019 Music Education Champion by the National Association for Music Education (NAfME). The senator, a former elementary school music teacher and school board member, has been a long-time supporter of equitable, well-rounded educational opportunities.

In a press release, NAfME said that Tester, a member of the Senate Appropriations Committee, has consistently advocated for adequate spending levels that support public education.

At the NAfME Hill Day Rally in June 2019, Tester said, "The fact of the matter is, if we're going to have well-rounded students coming out of school and kids with self-confidence, music and the arts are a big part of that."

In 2018 and 2019, Tester introduced a bill in the Senate as a companion to the Guarantee Access to Arts and Music Education (GAAME) Act in the House of Representatives. Tester's bill pushes for adding language that would encourage school districts to use Title I, Part A funds to improve access to music education for disadvantaged and low-income students.

NAfME's Music Education Champion Award recognizes "personal commitment to the promotion of music education, both through engagement with policymakers and outreach to potential music education supporters," according to the NAfME website.

## West Chester University Band Wins Sudler Trophy

The "Incomparable" Golden Rams Marching Band from West Chester University (WCU) in Pennsylvania received the John Philip Sousa Foundation's Sudler Trophy, one of the top awards for collegiate marching bands.

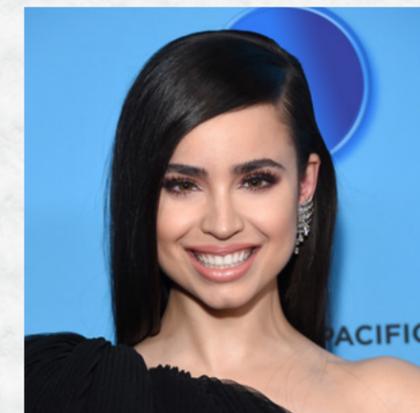
The trophy was presented during the Sept. 21 WCU football game. In addition to current director of bands, Adam Gumble, three previous directors were on hand for the presentation along with hundreds of current and former WCU band members.

WCU is the 32nd recipient and first Division II school to receive the Sudler Trophy, a biennial award that is known as the Heisman of the collegiate band world.

In addition to the Sudler Trophy, the "Incomparable" Golden Rams Marching Band was featured in an episode of the documentary, "Take the Field."

GLOBAL AMBASSADOR

## Sofia Carson



The Latin GRAMMY® Cultural Foundation has named actress and singer-songwriter Sofia Carson as its first global ambassador. Carson, who is of Colombian descent, is known for her role in the Disney Channel movie "Descendants." She also performed the Spanish-language version of "Circle of Life" from "The Lion King" for the digital soundtrack for Latin America.

"Sofia Carson is an exceptional role model for all," said Becky Villaescusa, vice president of strategic planning and corporate development for the foundation, in an official statement. "Her education, discipline and dedication inspire the music makers of tomorrow, and we are incredibly thankful for her passion and generosity toward the Latin GRAMMY Cultural Foundation. We know she will be an outstanding ambassador, helping us make strides in our awareness efforts and growth."

As global ambassador, Carson will advocate, promote and increase awareness of the foundation's primary focus: to provide scholarships to students interested in Latin music and grants for the research and preservation of diverse Latin music genres and music education programs.

Since its establishment five years ago, the foundation has donated \$5 million toward scholarships, grants, musical instrument donations and educational events.

# \$IMPLIFY PURCHASES

**Instrumental educators who build relationships with school music dealers can enhance their programs and save money in the long run.**

BY SAVY LEISER

**W**hen working with Paige's Music in Indianapolis, Indiana, local band directors give the game "red light, green light" a new twist.

Tim Dawson, director of school sales at Paige's, works with band directors to put together presentations about instrument inventory based on red, yellow and green traffic lights. All "red-light" instruments are not to be used anymore; "yellow" instruments need repairs or may need replacements in the future; and "green" instruments are in good condition. Directors then present this information to their school administrators to break down what services and instruments they need and why.

"It's important that directors know their inventory [and] get their hands on the instruments to see what they have, what's usable and what's not usable," Dawson says. "When a presentation is that clear, [it's] more likely the directors will get what they need from the school."

Like Dawson, school sales representatives

at music stores work with directors to ensure they have the proper supplies to run their programs. Educators can reap the benefits of a strong relationship with store reps.

## FOCUS LOCALLY

Working with local music stores has financial and strategic benefits for a music program. "We typically know the solutions and the brands that will serve the director's program," Dawson says.

Dealers can play a key role during the student membership and recruitment process. During back-to-school season, Quinlan & Fabish (Q&F) in Burr Ridge, Illinois, runs a Recruiting by the Numbers program. Representatives from the company visit schools throughout the Chicagoland area and set up stations for students to try instruments.

This process not only gets students excited, but it also helps with instrumentation. "Many students are immediately drawn to saxophone and percussion," says Paul Ramsaier, school sales representative at



Q&F. "Some of the instruments might not grab a student's eye right away. With this recruitment program, each student will try at least one instrument from each instrument family including low brass and strings."

Buying instruments locally can save replacement and repair costs. While inexpensive instruments outsourced from abroad may look appealing to a music department's tight budget or to unaware parents of young musicians, working with a local store can be the most budget-friendly decision.

"Sometimes it becomes very hard to pass up the too-good-to-be-true deal, [instruments] made in another country and imported at a wonderful price," Dawson says. "[But] it's going to show in the quality and longevity of the instrument."

Savings in purchase price can be wiped out if the instrument does not arrive in playable condition. "Maybe you save \$50 on a cello, but you have to spend \$100 to \$150 to get that cello set up in playing condition," says Cris Behrens, manager of Summerhays Music in Murray, Utah.

## TRACK INVENTORY AND REPAIRS

Behrens recommends that teachers view their music programs like businesses, which includes putting instrument purchases, repair costs and all other expenses into a spreadsheet.

Too often, Behrens has seen music directors repeatedly pour money into repairs on the same instrument when buying a new one would be more cost-efficient. "I'm surprised when teachers don't keep track of repairs on their instruments," Behrens says. "[If] you add up how many times [an instrument has] been in the repair shop, they could've bought a new one over that five-year period."

Directors should also understand the

school's budgeting process. "The director has to know the ins and outs of when budgets are created, reevaluated, presented to the board and passed," Dawson says.

## COMMUNICATE CLEARLY

To best serve their programs, teachers should provide details to their purchasing departments. For example, in bid requests, educators should specify brands or models. If left open, the lowest bid might win, and the instrument quality may not be what the directors want.

"Communication is key," Ramsaier says. "Make sure we know exactly what you're looking for; don't be afraid to be specific."

A good relationship with a music store requires teachers to ask for help. "While I understand an educator's need to assert independence, the purchase of new instruments is definitely a collaborative process," Ramsaier says.

However, Ramsaier explains that educators should balance that need for independence with a desire to learn more.

Because music stores have relationships with many different school music programs, teachers can tap into that wealth of knowledge to learn what works for other organizations. If directors pay attention to aspects they like about another school's program, they can work with the music dealer to follow that example. "If we have a director who comes in and says, 'I want to outfit my wind ensemble with tubas, what does [this other] school use? I've heard them, and they have a wonderful tuba sound,' we can guide them toward that model," Dawson says.

Overall, think of instrument dealers as collaborators. "The music store can be your partner, a resource," Ramsaier says. "Capitalize on that. Ask questions. Let them share their experience with you." 



Paul Ramsaier



Cris Behrens



Tim Dawson

# Managing Year-End Commitments

Music educators can beat the hustle and bustle of a busy holiday season at work and at home.

BY LISA FIELDS

# D

December is hectic for Jason Robb, director of bands at Rouse High School in Leander, Texas. He runs two high school holiday concerts, six middle school concerts and a pancake dinner fundraiser for his booster organization.

He also holds student auditions for local band placements, participates in All-Region Band auditions and is involved with Rouse's lock-in day of fun activities before winter break. Robb has learned, through trial and error, how to schedule events throughout the month without overwhelming his students or himself.

"One year, we had a concert on Thursday, lock-in on Friday and hosted a region band clinic and concert on Saturday," Robb says. "It was so brutal. We now try and not have any events back-to-back."

When the end of the year comes into focus, your schedule may be packed as you prepare students for concerts and events. Factor in other school commitments, such as submitting end-of-semester grades, and personal commitments like holiday shopping and entertaining, and you may become overwhelmed and overstressed.

"You come back from Thanksgiving break, and you basically have three to five weeks, and there isn't that much time to get that stuff done," Robb says. "As teachers, our job is to inspire these young leaders. If your cup isn't full, you have nothing to pour into their cups."

Here's how to get through the busy month of December with grace.

## PLAN AHEAD

Figuring out your schedule weeks, months and even an academic year in advance will help things run smoothly.

"I really look at the calendar: How can we be more efficient, get more done



**FIND THE RIGHT TOOLS:** Jason Robb uses various apps to stay organized.

without being at work all the time?" Robb says. "Be creative about ways to smush it down. ... For example, how can you combine meetings?"

To stay on top of grading, Robb collaborates with his assistant directors, and everyone uses Google Sheets to stay organized.

Jenna Yee, band director at Stiles Middle School in Leander, Texas, inputs grades weekly, including in December, so she doesn't fall behind.

In December, Yee balances two evening concerts, daytime winter assemblies, performances at the elementary schools, and a Region Band Clinic and Concert on a Friday/Saturday that she chaperones.

## ASK FOR HELP

Seek assistance at home from relatives or at school from colleagues, students and boosters — even if you're not accustomed to seeking help.

"As musicians, we've been competing since we were little, so we don't like delegating," Yee says. "Ask for help, regardless of who you're asking it from."

See if your partner can pick up the slack at home when you'll be busiest, and return the favor when he or she is swamped.

"I feel like it's a sliding scale," Robb says. "I'm all in for the family sometimes,

and sometimes it slides down, and I'm deep into work. When do I need to work? When do I need to pause and spend a lot of time at home? ... It's all about communicating."

At O'Fallon (Illinois) Township High School, Dr. Melissa Gustafson-Hinds, director of bands and music department chair, relies on her assistant band director and an administrative assistant who was recently hired for her booster organization.

"If I didn't get help, we wouldn't be as successful as we are," she says. "It is too much for one person to handle alone — almost impossible."

If your staff is tapped out, look to volunteers. "It could be a parent or a super-smart student," Gustafson-Hinds says.

Leading into winter break, Gustafson-Hinds manages several madrigal performances, a joint feeder concert with more than 700 musicians, a choir concert, a band concert, various community events, pep band events, concert band auditions, two district festivals, a parade on Thanksgiving weekend and four boosters meetings.

### PRIORITIZE YOUR TIME

You may feel like there is always more to do to meet your year-end obligations, whether that means staying late after



PHOTO BY HEATHER CABRERA

**SEEK HELP:** Melissa Gustafson-Hinds says getting help from others is the key to her program's success.

rehearsals or answering every email in your inbox. Instead, end your workday at a set time, then focus on your personal life.

"Once I started realizing the workflow never stops, you do what you can get to, and then you go home," Robb says.

To stay organized each day, Robb relies on different apps, including Wunderlist, Spark email, Google Docs and iCal. "If any one of these tools were taken away, I would not be able to survive," he says.

Finding work-life balance is essential. "If you are at school, be all in at school.

... Do [your tasks] well, so that you don't have to redo them," Yee says. "Then, when you're at home, be home. There will definitely be occasions where a little bleeds through in both directions, but if there is a balance between school and home most of the time, it definitely makes things easier."

During this busy time, you may not have as much time to prepare for the holidays as you'd like. But you can check everything off your list without compromising.

"I do almost all my shopping online. At this point, our Christmases are sponsored by Amazon Prime," Yee says with a laugh. "When it comes to cooking and hosting, ... my husband is more of a cook than I am. He deals with the food; I deal with the presents. It's the delegation thing."

Yee's husband, Christopher, copes with his own busy work schedule as associate director of bands at Cedar Park (Texas) High School.

### SCHEDULE SELF-CARE

With so many obligations, you might be tempted to skip me-time to ensure that you meet all of your responsibilities. However, finding ways to pamper yourself can help make everything else easier to endure.

"If you're a teacher, you're giving year-round, but at the holidays, you're giving more," Gustafson-Hinds says. "You have to sometimes be the one [to say], 'I've got to give to myself a little bit.' [So] maybe I'm going to the gym, or I'm having dinner with friends. It's scheduling a couple of things for yourself ... just to cleanse yourself because we get so immersed in what we do."

For best results, schedule self-care before you think you'll need it. Whether you define self-care as daily workouts, reading in bed or getting a luxurious massage, add self-care appointments to your calendar and honor them as you would any other work commitment. 

PHOTO BY ASHLEY CANFIELD



**STAY BALANCED:** Jenna Yee, with her husband and two sons, maintains a good balance between work and family throughout the year, which makes the year-end whirlwind easier to manage.

# THE INSIDE SCOOP: ELIZABETH LOLLI



As the superintendent of the Dayton (Ohio) Public Schools (DPS), Dr. Elizabeth Lolli oversees an urban district of 14,000 pre-K to high school students. In 2016, she took the bold step of bringing back the DPS Music Education Program after a 10-year absence. In addition to funding the purchase of new instruments for the district (some of which came through ESSA Title IV-A), Dr. Lolli hired full-time band and choral directors for every secondary school. She also hired two arts education administrators to facilitate the adoption and implementation of an articulated, standards-based curriculum.

Today, every DPS elementary student takes music while enrollment in secondary programs has grown to more than 1,000 participants — 17.5% of secondary enrollment overall! Dr. Lolli is the embodiment of "making a difference."

### Q. When did you know that you were going to make music the focus of your professional life?

A. As a young child, I knew that I wanted to be a teacher. I loved to sing and participated in church and school choirs. It was in high school that I decided I wanted to be a music educator.

### What book is on your nightstand right now?

"Behold the Man" by Bodie and Brock Thoene.

### What piece of music do you wish you had written and why?

Bach's "Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring" because it is simply a beautiful piece of music. The melodic line and repetitive rhythmic pattern make my heart sing!

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

I would like to talk to Abraham Lincoln about his presidency and his strategy and beliefs about the Civil War.

### Why is music important to humanity?

Music expresses the soul of the population. It expresses our cultural ideas and beliefs.

Music also supports brain development and learning. We know the research on how music education affects math and reading. I have seen it in my own personal experience.

### What is the most embarrassing musical moment of your life?

It happened on the practice field during summer marching band camp. As a trombone player, I was always in the front row surrounded by boys. On this particular day, all I could think about was the fact that I would be taking my driver's test right after band practice. Our director called on me to play the music as a spot check. It was the classic "Get It On" with the trombone slides in the beginning. I was so distracted because of my pending driver's test that I couldn't make my lips, tongue, lungs or slide work! I was so embarrassed! Luckily, I passed the test later that

afternoon, so I was able to turn my energy back to practicing. The next week when I was spot checked again on the field, I was ready and nailed it!

### What is your biggest pet peeve?

People who do not respect children enough to teach their very best every day, all day.

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

Music is vital to the whole child. Music education is an opportunity for children to learn about their culture, their heritage and their own preferences for listening. Rhyme, rhythm and repetition are all part of learning to read. Where else besides reading are these items taught? Music!

Read the full interview with Dr. Lolli on [yamahaeducatorsuite.com](http://yamahaeducatorsuite.com). 



### 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).

# FIND YOUR NORTH STAR

Acclaimed conductor Emily Threinen returns to Minnesota, the North Star State, as a professor and guiding light for students looking for support and excellence.

BY ELIZABETH ANDERSON LOPEZ

PHOTOS BY ROB SHANAHAN

**A**s part of her True North approach to instructing, Dr. Emily Threinen sees opportunities to abandon the stick. Specifically, the director of bands and associate professor of music at the University of Minnesota recognizes when the baton is going to be helpful and when she needs to leave the podium to address an issue — especially with developing ensembles.

## A BRIGHT LIGHT

Often, Threinen makes teaching rather than conducting her priority. “If an ensemble is having trouble hearing and playing with a steady internal pulse, a beautiful stick technique will likely not solve the problem,” she says. “With developing ensembles, I think much less about my conducting and much more about my teaching. Certainly, the two work together, but if the musicians need attention on fundamentals,

especially related to hearing beyond themselves, I have to put my own desire to conduct aside to ensure we are achieving what is most important in the moment.”

Threinen has officially gone from student to teacher — full circle at her alma mater, no less — but she’s not done learning. Her style is creating a positive teaching approach, preferring the carrot to the stick.

“I have high standards for my ensembles and for myself, and I try to show this through my enthusiasm, joy and passion for the work and not with disappointment that it doesn’t sound as excellent as it could,” Threinen says. “Certainly, there are rehearsals where I get frustrated, but I *try* not to use my frustration as a motivator. I have discovered that sometimes this can make the learning process more about my goals and less about the students, the composer or the music. Finding ways to stay

positive in my teaching is one aspect that keeps me growing.”

This thinking furthers Threinen’s view of what it means to be a music teacher. “At the core, I believe the role of a music educator, conductor and music advocate is that of a servant,” she says. “We serve those who are in our classrooms, ensembles, community, institutions and beyond.”

Threinen’s passion and overall approach hasn’t gone unnoticed by her peers. “She is tenacious in pursuing, uncovering and unleashing the potential within the players to realize what she has imagined the music to be,” says Threinen’s friend, Dr. Travis J. Cross, the chair of music at the University of California, Los Angeles.

## DIRECTIONAL AID

A positive approach doesn’t mean ignoring details or problems. While Threinen’s delivery is direct and efficient, she focuses on being encouraging, clear and purposeful with communication.

She is not afraid to tell students when the work isn’t their best. With developing ensembles, she shares how musicians can practice to improve and what specifically needs to be addressed instead of just saying that a passage doesn’t sound good or accurate.

“My goal is to create a productive, engaging and professional environment,” Threinen says. “I don’t like to have tension in the rehearsal space for me or for the ensemble. I’m quite intentional in my verbal directives, and I try never to make an individual feel bad about themselves. I strive to be positive and encouraging with every group I stand in front of, regardless of ability, age or experience.”

When it comes to working with students with varied capabilities, teachers and conductors have a tough decision of where to set the bar. “I try not to set my standard to the lowest or highest denominator; I shoot for three-fourths of the way up,” Threinen says. “I don’t want to make our collective goals unattainable, but I want to push all of my students and ensemble members beyond what they think they can do. People tend to rise when they’re challenged.”

# Inclusive Repertoire



Music educators have an opportunity to strive for inclusive musical experiences and repertoire for students and audiences. “Our music selections highlight our values. Making decisions on programming is incredibly personal, complicated, sometimes controversial and critical,” says Dr. Emily Threinen, director of bands and associate professor of music at the University of Minnesota. According to Threinen, contemporary concert programming features

repertoire that “celebrates our past, defines our medium, challenges and inspires us, expands our aural expectations and includes multiple voices of representation. We may not always hit the mark, but I believe it’s important to try.” Threinen, who currently serves on the council of the Institute for Composer Diversity at the State University of New York at Fredonia, says she has recently started to intentionally include lesser-known

compositions into her programs. She cites the institute’s **Composer Diversity Database ([www.composerdiversity.com](http://www.composerdiversity.com))** as a useful resource for finding repertoire and composers. “My advice is to continue to expand knowledge of repertoire and composers; have discussions with colleagues, community members and students; be aware of implicit biases; and consider how our repertoire choices may impact individuals or groups,” Threinen says.

For those students at the top, Threinen encourages teachers to help them find ways to branch out and excel outside of school by taking private lessons, auditioning for competitions and honor ensembles, and performing with regional youth or community ensembles. When she was a high school teacher, Threinen worked with high-achieving students

through chamber ensembles and the International Baccalaureate music program, which focused on critical and independent thinking. She also mentored students to use their active listening and other skills to identify composers, cultures, periods and styles in the Minnesota Music Listening Contest.

Threinen knows firsthand the importance

of teachers, particularly in the arts. She credits her high school music teacher, Tim Smith, for encouraging her to pursue a career in music. “I can’t thank all of my music teachers enough or express how much they changed my life,” she says. “I wouldn’t be the same person if it wasn’t for each of them. It’s important that all teachers and professors know that they make an incredible impact on students’ lives, often in ways they may never know.”

## PIVOTAL POINTS

When it comes to working with students at different stages in their musical careers, Threinen uses her own experiences as a guide to decide when to focus on inspiration and when to look at the realities and challenges of the job market.

With high school students, Threinen encourages the love of music. “When I work with high school students, I try not to think about the responsibility of them getting a job,” she says. “My excitement for the art form is what I always try to

impress upon them. The practicality around a career in music is real, but I aim to put that second to inspiration. With this age, I believe that fostering desire through encouragement is essential.”

Younger students have their own challenges. Threinen says it takes special and talented people to teach elementary and middle school. “There are so many other things younger students are thinking about at this stage when comparisons and self-identities start to take shape,” she says. “In middle school, music programs start emphasizing assessment and competition, which can change students’ perception of the essence of music and ensemble participation. Wouldn’t it be great if all music and ensemble programs could focus only on the music and the individuals creating it?”

With college-age musicians, Threinen remembers what she learned: Success has no singular definition and looks different for everyone. “At the end of college, I started to see that there was more variation in what success looked like than I originally believed,” Threinen says. “I have learned that there are infinite ways to be successful, and a career in music has many paths. I am practical with my collegiate students on the realities of the highly competitive job market, but I also try to encourage an open and opportunistic mindset.”

## STEADFAST AND SURE

Threinen considers herself a lifelong student. As a music educator, she continues to use the skills that she has learned along her journey, including adaptability to varied situations.

“We all have our own barometer of what we will accept in a situation,” Threinen says. “Certainly, I have expectations, especially with musical elements in a score, but I also try to be flexible. I walk into every environment and try to adapt my expectations to what is in front of me. Each day in my job, each guest conducting engagement and each opportunity to teach is a chance for me to modify, refine and learn.”

# Women In Music

Marin Alsop was the first woman appointed to head a major orchestra in America (the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra) in 2007 — not that long ago. As a female director of bands and associate professor of music at the University of Minnesota, Dr. Emily Threinen is aware of milestones like this one and its importance in music.

“I believe that representation matters and it is important for women and under-represented people to hold positions of leadership and to be treated fairly and equally in all areas of the music industry — and beyond,” Threinen says. “Representation in such positions can empower younger individuals to see themselves in similar roles.”

While Threinen acknowledges gender imbalance and has experienced bias in her own career, she focuses her energy on striving for excellence through the lens of service. “As conductors, I believe our primary goal is to serve composers and their intent to the best of our ability,” she says. “As educators, we serve our students, our institutions, our communities and our profession. As advocates, we strive to connect outstanding work beyond our walls.”

Threinen understands the importance of having honest, open and sometimes uncomfortable conversations about topics related to women and under-represented people in the industry. “When asked questions about my gender, I tend to shift the question or change the perspective,” she says. “This is because in my work, I want people to see me as a conductor and educator foremost. However, I do recognize that identities and experiences are integral to who we are as artists.”

Knowing exactly how to address diversity and inclusivity in music programs and classrooms is not easy. “As educators, thinking critically of how we can continue to grow, support and be inclusive of all is essential,” she says. “Music rehearsals and classrooms are perfect spaces to unite people of varied identities, backgrounds and cultures to come together for one common goal — to make music.”

In addition to acknowledging that there is still work to do regarding representation, Threinen appreciates the groundwork that has already been done. “As a woman in my 40s, I stand on the shoulders of many women who have inspired me and paved paths ahead of me,” she says. “I also stand on the shoulders of men who have been instrumental in the advancement of women and under-represented people. We have much to do, but I believe we are in a better place today than we have ever been.”



Threinen adds, “What do I give to the music community? I give me as I am in the moment. I share my passion for music, my joy of teaching and my care for the people I am with. I do my best to be wholly present from our first introduction to the last double bar.”

When it comes to the trajectory of her career as well as those she nurtures, Threinen is proof that through hard work, dedication and flexibility, stars — North and otherwise — can be made, not just born. 



**OPEN COMMUNICATION:** “Always be humble and honest with students. When something is tricky for me, it might be tricky for them. Let the students know that we’re all in this together,” says Threinen.

# MUSICAL OUTREACH

The Music Academy hosted by Mater Dei High School brings music, camaraderie and performance opportunities to Southern California private school students.

BY KAREN MCDONOUGH

**W**hen busloads of middle school students with the Mater Dei Music Academy pull up to Disneyland or Knott's Berry Farm, motivated young musicians disembark, ready to perform and have fun. After their

concert, they enjoy the rides at these Orange County, California, theme parks.

Playing at Disneyland or Knott's is just one aspect of the Mater Dei Music Academy, an after-school program started by Mater Dei High School in Santa Ana during the 1970s. Attracting 300 to 400 students each year, the academy offers 4th- through 8th-grade students an ensemble music experience that they may not otherwise have.

With opportunities to participate in summer camps, a recorder class, beginning band, advanced band, jazz band, drumline and string ensembles, the students showcase their work at community centers, the Southern California School Band and Orchestra (SCSBOA) Association Festival and at the Segerstrom Center for the Arts, the county's renowned concert hall.

Giving students performance experiences at a range of public venues is an important part of this program, says Taylor Smith, director of the Music Academy and associate band director at Mater Dei High School.

Justine Kadota joined the Music Academy for summer camp, then stayed with the program for two years playing trumpet in the advanced and jazz



PHOTOS COURTESY OF MATER DEI HIGH SCHOOL

**TRILLS AND THRILLS:** At Knott's Berry Farm amusement park, Mater Dei Music Academy students experience the fun of performing as well as riding rollercoasters.

bands. "There is so much competition for kids' attention that music often gets overlooked, which is to the detriment of their development," says Susan Kadota, Justine's mom. "The camaraderie and opportunity [at the academy] to put your musical ability to the test was great. This model is key to having kids appreciate music and set their sights on high school music."

## OPEN-DOOR POLICY

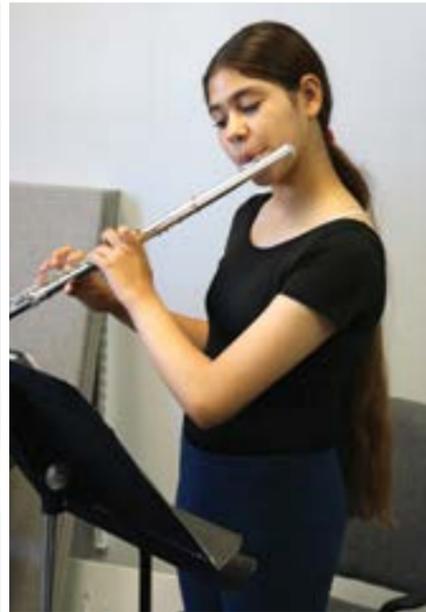
Each year, Smith contacts 10 area private Catholic elementary and middle schools as well as homeschooled students to let them know about the Music Academy. "I have a very open-door policy," Smith says. "Any student from another school or homeschool kids can find a place here."

Mater Dei instructors teach Music Academy students at their local schools during the day and two evenings a week at Mater Dei High School. "The goal is to have the students play their instruments at least four times a week," Smith says.

Finding the right days and times for rehearsals and events can be challenging, says Fernando Martinez, Mater Dei's director of instrumental music. But with careful planning and consistent communication with



Taylor Smith



PHOTOS COURTESY OF MATER DEI HIGH SCHOOL

parents, students, principals and instructors, the scheduling works out.

The Marian Alliance, three Catholic schools in inner-city Santa Ana neighborhoods, is among the schools served by the Music Academy. Overall registration at the Marian Alliance schools has been climbing, in part because instrumental music is a requirement in the curriculum through the Music Academy, Smith says.

Marian Alliance students receive scholarships and financial assistance to attend the Music Academy. Other students pay a small annual “suggested donation,” Smith says. “Through collaboration and partnerships with our local parish schools, benefactors and parent support, we’ve been able to establish something valuable. But there’s always room for growth.”

### A NEW STAGE PRESENCE

Smith joined the staff at Mater Dei High School in 2016 and has made a concerted

**OFFERING MUSICAL OPPORTUNITIES:** Students like Adreanna (right) who attend Southern California Catholic schools as well as homeschooled students receive instrumental instruction through the Music Academy, created by Mater Dei High School to spread music to the private education sector.

effort to bolster the Music Academy’s image and experiences.

During Smith’s first year as director and with only a handful of days to prepare, Music Academy students were invited to perform an opening piece at the annual Mater Dei High School choir spring concert at the Segerstrom Center.

The students quickly learned and memorized the theme music from “Star Wars.” They performed on stage without formal attire or music stands and received a standing ovation. “We were able to talk about the program for about 30 seconds,” Smith recalls. “A couple of people were interested in donating to the program and wanted to know more.”

Today, Music Academy students still open the spring choir concert at

Segerstrom, but they are more rehearsed, have a more polished stage presence and are set up as a concert band, wearing performance attire and playing seated while using music stands.

“When they get on stage, they handle themselves very well,” says Bruno Cilloniz, a Marian Alliance band director and Mater Dei percussion director. “It is awe-inspiring. As a director, it’s great to watch them savor every moment.”

Looking ahead, the Music Academy jazz band will be performing and competing during the Reno Jazz Festival at the University of Nevada for the first time in April 2020.

### RECRUITMENT SUCCESS

In 2019 the Music Academy won the silver award in the Music for All Advocacy in

Action Award’s Beginning Recruitment Program category. “The award meant a lot to me, and the administration was excited,” Smith says. “It made me feel like I’m on the right track. My goal is to get music education in the private [education] sector in our area.”

That objective isn’t always easy, especially when public and private school funding for the arts is faltering in California. Some 88 percent of the state’s schools are failing to meet the California Education Code requirement of providing arts education, according to the arts advocacy group [CreateCA.dreamhosters.com](http://CreateCA.dreamhosters.com).

The Music Academy helps to fill this gap as well as serves to keep the arts thriving in Mater Dei High School’s instrumental program, which includes a marching band, color guard, concert band, wind ensemble, symphonic band, percussion ensemble, jazz band, string orchestra and a newly added guitar program.

Some Marian Alliance students, who enrolled in the Music Academy in the 5th grade, are now seniors at Mater Dei.

“We’re starting to see the fruits of our labors,” Cilloniz says. “They are amazing musicians and want to major in music and get scholarships at prestigious music schools around the country. The families are very appreciative.”

A key factor in the Music Academy’s success is that it brings students to the high school campus two nights a week, allowing them to get comfortable there. The 8th-grade Music Academy students get exposure to higher level music by performing with the high school band. The high school band directors also have an opportunity to watch the students who show the most promise.

Some, like 8th grader Derek Cornejo, who plays trombone, baritone and tuba, are invited to play in the high school marching band. He will attend Mater Dei High School next year.

“As a parent, music is an important aspect of [my son’s] education,” says Ed Cornejo, Derek’s dad. “It’s made him a



# MENTOR PROGRAM FOSTERS FAMILY ATMOSPHERE

**M**iddle school Mater Dei Music Academy students join Mater Dei High School band students — a close-knit group of about 50 — for several performances throughout the year. To form a cohesive unit among students from a variety of schools and ages, Taylor Smith — director of the Music Academy and associate band director at Mater Dei High School in Santa Ana, California — created a mentorship program.

High schoolers, many who were once Music Academy students, partner with the younger musicians during weekly practice sessions. They work with the middle schoolers in their instrument sections on basic fundamental skills. The high school students receive service hours by participating in the mentor program.

“Even just sitting in the [younger] ensemble and playing along with them really helps,” Smith says. “The older students are working with students who are often just trying to make a sound. They get to inspire those students in getting comfortable with playing.”

This kind of student leadership reflects Mater Dei High School’s goal to “consistently raise the bar through positive reinforcement and motivation,” says Fernando Martinez, director of instrumental music at Mater Dei High School.

Music Academy students perform with the high school band at a football game in November, a Christmas concert, and at the high school choir concert, at which the high school band also participates, in March.

Smith hopes the mentor program perpetuates itself: As mentors become seniors and graduate, the incoming freshmen become new mentors to the younger students.

“We depend on that family atmosphere,” he says. “There’s not a whole lot of needing to inspire these kids. They’re just thankful to be here and perform with the high schoolers.”

well-rounded person. He’s enthusiastic. Derek comes home very excited about what he’s learned.”

As the Music Academy program continues to receive wider recognition, the most rewarding aspect for Smith hasn’t changed. He enjoys seeing the students’ excitement as they develop their musical ability and values building

personal connections with the kids and their families.

“They always come up for a hug and their families do too,” Smith says. “Seeing the students light up and achieve something in their stressful world is gratifying. Some of these kids are the rocks of their family. ... They need a place to feel comfortable, grow and stay connected.”

**“WHEN THEY GET ON STAGE, THEY HANDLE THEMSELVES VERY WELL. IT IS AWE-INSPIRING. AS A DIRECTOR, IT’S GREAT TO WATCH THEM SAVOR EVERY MOMENT.”**

— BRUNO CILLONIZ, MATER DEI PERCUSSION DIRECTOR AND MARIAN ALLIANCE BAND DIRECTOR



IGNITE A

# Passion

## FOR PRACTICE

Directors guide, inspire and equip students to be in charge of their own instrumental improvements rather than forcing compliance.

BY FRANK DIMARIA

Rather than relying on external motivation, successful teachers inspire students to fuel their own flame to attain a higher level of mastery. To this end, Chris Gleason, instrumental music educator at Patrick Marsh Middle School in Sun Prairie, Wisconsin, taps into “the deeply human need to direct [one’s

life] and to learn, create and do better.”

Instrumental educators must teach students how to practice and encourage them when they are reluctant to do so. “Teaching practice methods in fundamentals may be one of the most important things I do from the podium,” says Nolan Jager Loyde, assistant director of fine arts

over instrumental music at Round Rock (Texas) Independent School District.

Directors can promote a burning desire in students to practice with the following ideas from Loyde, Gleason and Dr. Travis J. Cross, professor, director and chair of music at the Herb Alpert School of Music at the University of California, Los Angeles.

### FIRE THEM UP

Teachers need to create opportunities for autonomy, mastery and purpose — the three keys to intrinsic motivation. “Autonomy means to allow students to have a say in what they do, when they do it and how they do it,” says Gleason, who was named the 2017 Wisconsin Teacher of the Year and a semifinalist for the 2017 GRAMMY® Music Educator Award. “Mastery means becoming better at something that matters. Purpose means finding a cause [that is] greater and more enduring than themselves. I teach my students that talent is not born, but rather created.”

Nothing motivates students more than sounding good. “There needs to be an opportunity in every rehearsal or practice session to sound good,” Cross says.

### SPARK IDEAS

Teachers can guide students toward productive practice routines by asking questions to inspire reflection and self-assessment. Questions also empower students by encouraging critical thinking.

The best teachers ask the best questions. “They rarely tell learners anything but rather lead them to understanding,” says Gleason, who frequently gives presentations on “Lighting a Fire in Kids.” “I ask [students] things like, ‘How did things go this week?’ ‘Did you make the improvements?’ ‘What did you do to overcome challenges?’”

Gleason also ensures that students have spaces to practice throughout the day. “Our kids have access to practice



rooms before and after school, during resource or study hall, and lunch,” he says.

If a high school or middle school doesn’t have dedicated practice rooms, directors can divide students into groups and have them practice in a windowed office that a director can monitor from the podium. “[This separation] allows students from one section to practice individually ... while the conductor works with different sections,” Cross says.

### KINDLE THE RIGHT HABITS

Loyde assigns traditional practice logs but also finds value in student journals. “Students describe their methods of problem solving, tempos, measures, etc.” says Loyde, who presented a

session to educators on “Teaching Students How to Practice” at the 2018 Music for All Summer Symposium.

When Cross was a graduate student, he realized that his most successful peers carried notebooks into every music lesson and rehearsal. Afterward, they would list their goals for the following lesson in their notebooks. “I watched a graduate performance major transcribe his goals to six pages of his notebook, which he used as a starting point for what he assigned himself to practice,” Cross says.

Neither Loyde nor Gleason require their students to practice for a specific amount of time. “It’s all about efficiency for me,” Loyde says. “I teach students to work until the task is complete, so it is important that they set goals.”

Gleason also encourages his students to set a goal and work toward that. “I teach them the importance of deep practice or that zone where we are most productive and focused,” he says.

Younger musicians often lack listening and self-assessment skills, Cross says. “I recommend recording and playback,” he says. “This is obviously much easier today than when I was in school.”

As a student Loyde created beats in GarageBand that helped him maintain tempo and pitch during practice sessions. He encourages his students to do the same. Or they can listen to a playlist and play along with the beat while woodshedding technique.

### CATCH THEIR GLOW

Gleason has developed a strategy to deal with students who refuse to practice. “Educators must realize that we cannot control, force, manipulate or coerce students to do anything,” he says. “My role as an educator is to inspire students to be the best that they can be. I do this by preparing well, selecting great literature and caring about each student. I believe that if you teach to the heart, the mind will follow.”



Travis J. Cross



Nolan Jager Loyde

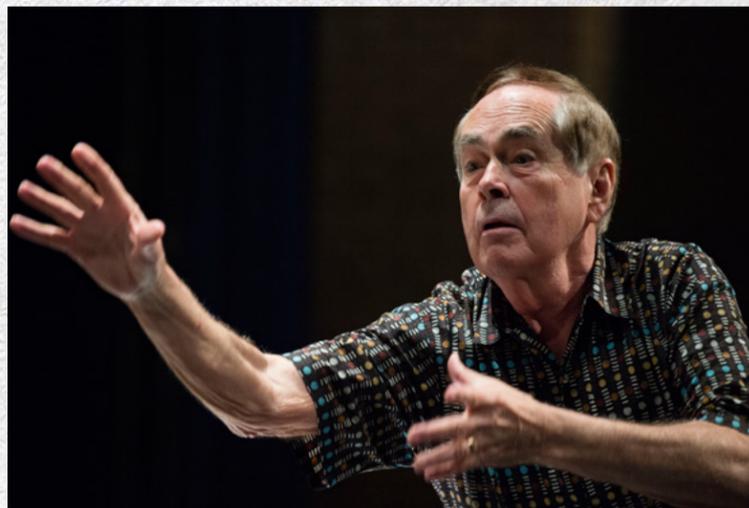


Chris Gleason

## LETTER TO MYSELF

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 Richard,*



**Richard Floyd**

Yamaha Master Educator  
State Director of Music Emeritus  
University of Texas at Austin

**I**t's 1962, and you are about to embark on an amazing lifelong journey. Let me remind you that you are not here today because you finally learned to play the chromatic scale at MM=144, discovered a new alternate fingering on your clarinet or mastered a challenging passage. You chose music because of an emotional connection. Music touched your heart and soul in a series of defining moments, and you realized that you couldn't live without it and became consumed with the dream of sharing it with others.

Always remember that it is the art of making music that gives it true value. In truth, recreating notes on a printed page is no more or less rewarding than solving an algebra equation. No music has been created. But when those notes and rhythms are infused with your spirit and passion for creating and sharing beauty, the outcome is priceless.

Never lose sight of this reality. Trust me, it will be easy to become obsessed with personal achievements, extrinsic goals, a boundless litany of suggested strategies, endless competitions and alluring peripheral activities that disguise themselves as being central to the true purpose of music education. Do not be seduced by these illusions. If you remain ever mindful of those magical moments that ignited your fire for making and teaching music, and you strive to create those kinds of experiences with your students, you will enrich countless lives.

Continually remain a student and be good to yourself. Why? To paraphrase famed British conductor Simon Rattle, "The more you put into yourself, the more you will be able to give back to your students and to the music."

To that end, strive daily to expand your horizons. Give yourself permission to "color outside the lines." If you insist on staying inside the lines — or within the safety of your comfort zone — those lines will become your boundaries.

On your journey, take with you a fortress of great music that offers you inspiration, comfort and revival. There will be countless times when you will need to be reminded of music's intrinsic place in your life and in the lives of others. Your musical fortress must reflect the greatest music that humanity has to offer. Be it Mozart or Mahler or contemporary composers on the cutting edge of compositional thought, make it the best of what is out there. And it must be a compendium of great music that constantly grows and evolves.

One of my favorite quotes is one by Ursula K. LeGuin: "It is good to have an end to journey toward; but it is the journey that matters, in the end." Let that core reality be your guide.

And above all, never forget that life's journey is a do-it-yourself project. It's you — and only you — who can go for it!

Best,

*Richard Floyd* in 2019



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