

SUPPORT ED

A MAGAZINE FOR INSTRUMENTAL INSTRUCTORS

2017 VOLUME 1

DISCOVERING JOY IN
**TEACHING
JAZZ**

DIAGNOSING
YOUR
**BOOSTER
PROGRAM**

+

ADVICE FOR
**TEACHING
STRINGS**

BRINGING THE WORLD OF

JULIE

MUSIC HOME



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Yamaha SupportED

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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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EDITOR'S NOTE

Dear Music Educator,

Welcome to our fourth edition of Yamaha SupportED, a publication designed specifically for you, the instrumental band and orchestral teacher.

As I read the articles in this, our fourth issue of Yamaha SupportED, I was immediately brought back to Keveny Memorial Academy and Waterford-Halfmoon School District in upstate New York, during my time as a band director. Back then, I was ready to change the world and must have thought I knew it all. I quickly realized how much I didn't know about growing a program. The weight of the challenges was overpowering. I learned by making mistakes, leaned on colleagues and figured it out as I went. During those pre-internet days, resources were hard to come by.

As I read this magazine, I see Marcia Neel's article on creative assessment, L. Scott McCormick's article on diagnosing the health of your booster program and the article on teaching strings without a strong background in strings. Wow! This content is exactly the type of information I needed all those years ago.

Besides the articles I mentioned above, this edition contains a very inspiring read about artist/educator Dr. Julie Hill. If you have ever met Julie, you know how energizing she is. This article successfully shows the journey of a focused, gifted person who shares everything she knows about growing both as an artist and as a person. I hope you enjoy her story as much as I did!

When we, as a team, discuss content for

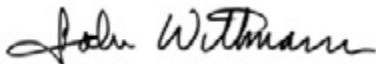
upcoming issues, the lens we look through when considering articles is simply as follows: "Will this story assist, inspire and empower someone to be a better music educator – yes or no?"

Our articles are written by and about real teachers, inspiring artists and enlightened experts who share Yamaha's commitment to keeping music education thriving.

Our first three editions of Yamaha SupportED, which featured Kenneth Tse, Wycliffe Gordon and Kev Marcus from Black Violin, can be viewed at www.YamahaSupportED.com. This magazine is designed to be a quick read and will be published electronically four times a year with two of those issues printed for your convenience.

We are really enjoying putting this magazine together for you as we remain dedicated to inspiring, empowering and equipping music educators and students through finely crafted instruments, access to life-changing musical events and the sharing of gifted artists.

So, enjoy our fourth edition and keep in touch! It's a small world.

Musically Yours,

 John Wittmann
 Director, Artist Relations & Education

LEVI'S MUSIC PROJECT

Popular musicians Alicia Keys, Vince Staples and SZA are fostering the creation of music by partnering with clothing brand Levi Strauss & Co. to produce state-of-the-art music facilities and events as part of the Levi's Music Project.

Levi's and the artists have collaborated on projects that fit their passions to benefit the communities close to their hearts. Keys, who grew up in Manhattan, launched a Music Technology program at Edward R. Murrow High School in Brooklyn, New York. Students can now work with a high-tech media lab, recording booth and mobile recording carts as they participate in sound engineering, audiovisual production, post-production, mastering, songwriting and more.

"As a musician and writer, when you have the knowledge and tools to learn, create and explore your own music without having to wait on anybody else to chase your dreams—

it's a game changer," said Keys, co-creator of the Levi's Music Project, in a press release. "I'm thrilled to bring that same opportunity to students today."

Rapper Vince Staples opened a Music Technology program at the YMCA in his hometown of Long Beach, California, providing music education and mentoring to local youth. Singer-songwriter SZA helped create the "Music Feeds Me" Summer Concert Series, featuring both music and food education, at the Camden (New Jersey) Children's Garden this past August.

"We've heard a lot of stories from the staff and teachers about the creative output from the programs—songs and albums from the kids, performances they've been doing and the overall development, joy and hope the teachers see and feel from the students by them just having access to creativity and inspiration," says Chris Jackman, vice



president of global marketing for the Levi's brand. "It's overwhelming in a positive way that a brand can make this kind of real impact in students' lives."

The Levi's Music Project plans to expand to China, France, Germany, India and the United Kingdom. Supporters can go to http://www.levi.com/US/en_US/features/liveinlevis/ to view video content and learn more.



JOSHUA SIMONDS LEADS THE PERCUSSIVE ARTS SOCIETY

Joshua Simonds has been named the new executive director of the Percussive Arts Society (PAS). The world's largest percussion association, PAS is a music service organization promoting percussion education, research, performance and appreciation throughout the world.

"It's an organization that's open to any person passionate about the percussive arts," Simonds says. "There really is something for everyone, and my job is to bring more people in who have any sort of interest in our art form."

Simonds says that his goals for PAS include being a resource to band directors that aren't percussionists, highlighting the still-living pioneers of the percussive arts during the annual Percussive Arts Society International Convention as well as increasing outreach to students in grades 6 to 12.

Most recently, Simonds served as executive director of the Chicago Youth Symphony Orchestras. He earned his Master of Arts in Arts Management from American University in Washington, D.C., and Bachelor of Arts in Percussion from California State University, Long Beach. He also has a background in marching band as a drum major at his high school and as a member of the Velvet Knights Drum and Bugle Corps.

NAMM MUSIC EDUCATION DAYS

Each January, music educators can learn from thousands of music manufacturers and mingle amid famous musicians at the NAMM Show in Anaheim, California. Through a program known as Music Education Days, now in its 10th year, music educators, school administrators and school board members attend the exclusive trade-only event for just a small \$25 fee.

"Our equation is mostly about inspiration and saying 'thank you' to music educators," says Eric Ebel, NAMM's senior projects manager of public affairs and government relations. "We strongly support the success of music teachers and music administration and professionals, ... [We want to] remind them that the music products industry is there



PHOTO COURTESY OF NAMM

for them as more than just a supplier of goods."

Participants can explore and network with music product specialists on the trade show floor and attend special music educator showcases, featuring short inspiring presentations tailored to their needs.

The Grand Rally for Music Education, new last year, features a celebrity interview and performance. This year's guests were Yamaha Violin Artist Kev Marcus and violist Wil B. from Black Violin.

Find out more information about Music Education Days at <https://www.nammfoundation.org/what-we-do/music-education-days>.

DIRECTOR'S ACADEMY AT THE MUSIC FOR ALL NATIONAL FESTIVAL

Want to network with nationally recognized conductors and band educators? Now you can by attending the Director's Academy at the Music for All National Festival in Indianapolis from March 9 to 11, 2017.

Modeled after the popular Director's Academy at the Music for All Summer Symposium, the National Festival version is in its second year.

Recommended for high school and middle school instrumental music educators as well as future music educators, the Director's Academy connects participants with legendary instructors and conductors who will lead master classes and extensive Q&A discussions in a small group setting.

Upcoming speakers will include Yamaha Master Educators Richard Floyd, music director of the Austin Symphonic Band, Craig J. Kirchhoff from the University of Minnesota and Anthony Maiello from George Mason University. Other conductors who will be at the event include Gary Green, retired professor from the University of Miami, James F. Keene, professor emeritus from the University of Illinois, H. Robert Reynolds from the University of Southern California and Scott Weiss from the University of South Carolina.

Participants also have the opportunity to observe rehearsals of the Honor Band of America, Honor Orchestra of America and Honor Jazz Band of America and have

access to all featured festival performances and concerts.

Last year's participants most enjoyed the personal interaction with the master class teachers at meals and the nightly socials, according to James P. Stephens, Jr., director of advocacy and educational resources at Music for All. "Not only do you get to hear a clinic session from some of the best in the business, but you're actually having the opportunity to visit and meet with them in an intimate setting," Stephens says.

For more information, visit <http://www.musicforall.org/what-we-do/mfa-national-festival/music-for-all-national-festival-directors-academy>.

MARCHING FOR ST. JUDE

Four college bands used halftime for more than just entertainment by raising awareness and funds to fight childhood cancer through St. Jude Children's Research Hospital.

Clemson (South Carolina) University, Virginia Tech University in Blacksburg, James Madison University in Harrisonburg, Virginia, and the University of Houston (Texas) are participating in a friendly, competitive campaign called Marching for St. Jude. Each band dedicated a halftime show toward the cause, encouraging the audience to donate to St. Jude through the band's fundraising pages. Together the four bands raised nearly \$50,000.

Through the campaign, bands chose one of their regular halftime shows at a home football game to dedicate to St. Jude. Depending on the regulations of the school's athletic department, an announcement on the loudspeaker or on the digital screens instructed fans how to contribute to the cause. When possible, a St. Jude's patient and family members (pictured) would be recognized during the show.

Clemson kicked off the program at its Sept. 17 football game, raising more than \$12,000. For the



halftime show itself, Clemson performed an uplifting "Beauty of Life" show that included the songs "For the Beauty of the Earth" and "Circle of Life."

"The Clemson Tiger Band is committed to serving our community and the greater good, and we are grateful to have the local support to take on charitable causes like St. Jude Children's Research Hospital," says Dr. Mark Spede, director of the Clemson Tiger Band.

Marching for St. Jude is a subsidiary of the Marching for Hope program, created by the charitable events organizer Ocean 2 Ocean Productions.

"As a parent and soon-to-be grandparent, I am exceedingly thankful for the incredible efforts of the professionals who provide care and comfort to the patients and families who come to St. Jude for medical services," says David McKee, band director at Virginia Tech. "The Marching Virginians and other university bands are proud to support this work in our own unique manner."

For more information or to make a donation, visit <https://www.stjude.org/get-involved/find-an-event/marching-bands.html>.

Newly Signed Yamaha Artists

Yamaha is proud to welcome the following talented musicians to its acclaimed artist roster.

FLUTE

- **Richard Sherman**, professor of flute at Michigan State University
- **Heather Verbeck**, adjunct instructor of flute at the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music

SAXOPHONE

- **Dr. Edward Goodman**, assistant professor of saxophone at the University of Arizona; member of The Moanin' Frogs saxophone sextet
- **Dave Hagelganz**, instructor of music at Washington State University
- **Justin Klunk**, saxophonist and solo artist; currently touring with Saint Motel
- **Dr. Michael Shults**, assistant professor of saxophone at the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire
- **Jim Verdeur**, instrumental music instructor at Hatboro-Horsham School District, currently touring with the Beach Boys

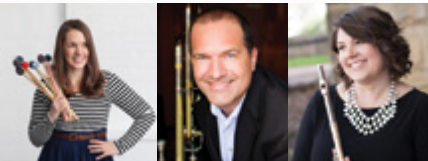
TRUMPET

- **Justin Bartels**, principal trumpet with the Colorado Symphony Orchestra, lecturer of trumpet at the University of Colorado

- Boulder and visiting guest artist at the University of Denver
- **Duane Eubanks**, soloist and recording artist; currently performing with Rhonda Ross, Robin Eubanks and Dave Holland
- **Dr. Travis Heath**, acting chairperson, associate professor of trumpet and brass coordinator at Northeastern Illinois University
- **Dr. Barbara Hull**, assistant professor-in-residence at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas
- **Tony Kadleck**, jazz faculty at the Manhattan School of Music and adjunct professor of jazz trumpet at Montclair State University; current member of The New York Pops Orchestra
- **Jonathan Powell**, soloist and recording artist; currently affiliated with Eddie Palmieri, Arturo O'Farrill and Darcy James Argue

TROMBONE

- **Sean Reusch**, trombonist and educator; currently performing with the Nittany Trombone Quartet and Millennia Consort




TUBA

- **Scott Sutherland**, artist teacher of tuba and euphonium at the University of Redlands; member of Presidio Brass

VIOLIN

- **Andy Reiner**, fiddler, composer and educator

CONCERT PERCUSSION

- **Dr. Brandon Arvay**, adjunct instructor of percussion at Centre College; percussionist with the Lexington Philharmonic
- **Maria Finkelmeier**, soloist and educator, founder and director of Kadence Arts
- **Dr. Nick Meyers**, director of bands and percussion at Valley City State University and assistant director of the Gold Star Marching Band at North Dakota State University
- **Ben Wahlund**, director of percussion at the College of DuPage and instructor of percussion at Northern Illinois University 

Yamaha Young Performing Artists Program

Do you have a student ready to launch their career as a professional musician? The Yamaha Young Performing Artists (YYPA) Program recognizes a group of the nation's most outstanding young musicians in jazz, contemporary and classical music.

Winners will receive an all-expenses paid trip to the Music for All Summer Symposium, where they will have a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to perform in front of thousands. The event takes place from Saturday, June 24 to Tuesday, June 27, 2017 at Ball State University in Muncie, Indiana. Throughout the program, the honorees also participate in invaluable workshops designed to



help them launch their careers, gain national press coverage, get professional photos and videos of their performances, and form a deep relationship with Yamaha's Artist Relations department.

Applicants must be accomplished woodwind, brass, strings, concert percussion/drums or piano soloists and between the ages of 18 to 22 on the date of application. The application also requires a nomination from a university or private teacher, conductor, director, professional performer, music dealer or community musical leader.

To learn more and apply, visit http://4wrd.it/YYPA_2017. 

Yamaha Partners with DonorsChoose.org to Keep Music in our Classrooms

BY SAVY LEISER

It's 8 a.m., and a group of sixth through eighth grade students sit in their school library in awe as they watch a surprise, private performance by Lindsey Stirling, the renowned pop violinist who has released three successful studio albums and toured the world selling out venues. Stirling participated in this visit to Cesar Chavez Academy in East Palo Alto, California, as part of Yamaha's new partnership with crowdfunding site DonorsChoose.org.

"[Stirling's] visit changed the culture," says orchestra director Sarah Azevedo. "I've noticed they're more disciplined since she's been here."

DonorsChoose.org allows teachers to crowdsource online donations for classroom materials. By partnering with DonorsChoose.org, Yamaha made a dollar-for-dollar match on donations for band and orchestral campaigns to provide "music essentials" for the classroom. Yamaha aimed to reduce or eliminate the burden of \$945 per year, on average, that music teachers are paying out of pocket for classroom supplies. Over the course of the #MusicEssentials campaign, Yamaha donated \$125,000, resulting in a total of \$250,000 generated for new music-making materials.

Using donations and Yamaha's matching funds, the Cesar Chavez Academy purchased rosin, chin rests, bows, replacement strings and shelves to store instruments. "DonorsChoose.org has been one of the biggest reasons that we can have the supplies we need," Azevedo says. "Instrumental music programs are costly to create and sustain."

For many teachers, these expenses go far beyond the price of instruments. "Having a fresh box of clarinet reeds to use on school instruments or being able to replace broken strings on a violin can make the difference [between] the student's ability to succeed in the classroom and not playing at all," wrote Garth Gilman, corporate vice president and general manager of the Band & Orchestral Division at Yamaha Corporation of America, in his Aug. 18 Medium post that announced the partnership.

The matching program has made a world of difference for music students in low-income schools,




Surprise Performance: Renowned pop violinist Lindsey Stirling surprised elementary students at Cesar Chavez Academy as part of a kickoff event for Yamaha's #MusicEssentials campaign with DonorsChoose.org.

with 474 projects funded at 365 schools. For example, at Madras (Oregon) High School, where all students rely on free and reduced lunch programs, band director Jared McFarlin has been able to purchase drum sticks, mallets and reeds. Similarly, orchestra director Steven Campbell from Hickory High School in Chesapeake, Virginia, purchased music stands and a stand storage cart with donated and matched funds.

Yamaha chose the Cesar Chavez Academy for the public awareness event after meeting Azevedo at a DonorsChoose.org Partner Summit. In addition to hosting the private performance with Stirling, Yamaha donated six new violins for the students and a special violin autographed by Stirling for Azevedo to use.

"It was exciting to me because I was about to buy a violin for myself," Azevedo says. "I use it every day in class. Every professional instrument I have is a Yamaha."

Azevedo's gratitude comes from her strong belief that music belongs in every school. "Music gives kids a place to feel safe," she says. "It doesn't matter if you're rich or poor, or what color your skin is. We can all speak this language." 



YAMAHA YX-230 RENTAL XYLOPHONE


For beginning percussion students who have progressed past their entry-level student bell kits, Yamaha has released the YX-230 xylophone. This step-up three-octave (C-to-C range) tabletop xylophone is ideal for middle school students in the classroom and for home use. It requires no assembly and offers easy playability and handling.

Featuring 1-1/2"-wide padauk wood bars, the YX-230 employs octave tuning, resulting in a tone that is suitable for solo playing and private practice. In addition, the post is made of resin that will not bend and dampen bar resonance or cause unwanted noise.

"The YX-230 offers something completely new and fresh to the world of student percussion," says Troy C. Wollwage, marketing manager, Yamaha Percussion. "We interviewed dealers, schools, artists and educators while developing this product in order to gain direct insight into the real needs of the market. The result is a versatile xylophone that replaces the traditional student percussion kit with an instrument featuring exceptional quality, tuning consistency and sound that will set beginning percussion students on a path toward success."

The YX-230 includes a cover that protects the instrument from dust and scratches as well as a pair of ME-103 mallets. The YGS-70 stand and PCS-YX230 soft case are sold separately.

The new tabletop xylophone has an MSRP from \$1,398 to \$1,724.

For more information, visit <http://4wrd.it/YX-230>. 

DIAGNOSING THE HEALTH OF YOUR BOOSTER PROGRAM

Check the pulse of your parent volunteer organization.

BY L. SCOTT MCCORMICK

Ever notice the energy and excitement we all feel when we anticipate the arrival of a new calendar year? I enjoy those times! The opportunity to start fresh is exhilarating. As you complete one season of your band and orchestra program and look forward to the start of another, the timing seems right to conduct an annual or biannual checkup of your parent booster organization. This diagnosis can often lead to a healthier overall partnership.

When was the last time your parent board sat down with you to determine goals and objectives for the coming school or calendar year? If it took you longer than two seconds to remember, you're overdue for a booster shot.

WORK ON A PLAN

I am a big proponent of planning. Whenever the National Association of Music Parents (AMP) is called on to assist a music booster program, my most frequent reply is: "Show me your plan."

Planning meetings help open lines of communication and encourage everyone to get on the same page. They support honest, productive dialogue. They expose organizational weaknesses while capitalizing on opportunities to seize.

Playing it by ear is a dangerous way to manage a booster organization. Clearly defined goals and action plans must

be established to plot strategies in the areas of fundraising, public relations, marketing, special events, travel, volunteer recruiting and involvement, logistics and much more.

SHARE YOUR VISION

Before group planning starts, you, as the instrumental music director, must sit down with your booster president to share your vision of where you see the program going.

After this conversation, you and the booster president should have similar meetings with all of the organization's officers. Communication between the director and officers is an essential step to building the healthy band booster program that you want and that your parent volunteers desire.

WELCOME PRODUCTIVITY

Author Paul J. Meyer said of productivity: "Productivity is never an accident. It is always the result of a commitment to excellence, intelligent planning, and focused effort."

So as you begin to check the health of your music booster program, please remember that the examination shouldn't be one to dread or avoid. Rather, it should be one you and your booster officers and the other parent volunteers gladly welcome as you elevate the excellence and service of your program.

“PLAYING IT BY EAR IS A DANGEROUS WAY TO MANAGE A BOOSTER ORGANIZATION. CLEARLY DEFINED GOALS AND ACTION PLANS MUST BE ESTABLISHED TO PLOT STRATEGIES.”

CHECKUP CHECKLIST

The National Association of Music Parents recommends that you discuss the following questions in a positive, honest, realistic, and non-threatening environment.

1. What activities did our music parent organization undertake that worked well and didn't work so well, and why?
2. Of these activities, are there any we should attempt again or not, and why?
3. How can the music director and booster organization work collaboratively to become better advocates for our children's music program?
4. How well does the booster organization recruit and retain volunteer members? Any new opportunities or ideas we should consider?
5. How well do we engage band, choir or orchestra alumni in the program? Do we have a defined role for them?
6. How well do we communicate with our music parent organization's membership, the school and school district, and local community? Where and how can improvements be made?
7. How professional are we in planning and executing fundraising projects? Where do we succeed, and where can improvements be made?
8. How do we develop and mentor volunteer leadership? How can improvements be made?
9. How can the booster organization best assist the music director in the months ahead?
10. How do we make it fun and meaningful for parents and community members to belong?



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

L. Scott McCormick is the founder and president of the National Association of Music Parents (AMP), www.amparents.org. Established in 2011, AMP is a not-for-profit, charitable organization formed to build a grassroots national movement that brings together all stakeholders of music education to defend the interests of students and ensure that music and the arts remain an integral discipline within the core education system in America.



AFTER TRAVELING THE WORLD AND IMMERSING HERSELF IN VARIED STYLES OF MUSIC, JULIE HILL RETURNS TO HER ROOTS TO MAKE PERCUSSION MUSIC MORE ACCESSIBLE FOR STUDENTS OF ALL BACKGROUNDS.

BY SAVY LEISER

As a child in the small town of Martin, Tennessee, Dr. Julie Hill dreamed of traveling the world. She befriended international and exchange students, listened to world music and took an interest in things that differed from her everyday life.

Hill soon found herself performing percussion music in Brazil, Mexico, Peru, France, South Korea and all across the United States, but she never expected that her dream job would be in her own backyard.

Now in her 12th year as director of percussion studies and recently appointed music department chair at the University of Tennessee at Martin (UTM), Hill uses her vast, worldly knowledge and experience to give back to students in her hometown. After spending her life venturing outside her comfort zone, Hill's goal is to make sure that her students seek out every musical opportunity they can.

Through her additional role as immediate past president of the Percussive Arts Society (PAS), she also

works to make these opportunities available to all musicians, regardless of background. "I think of myself as the kind of student I want to help," she says.

HUNGRY FOR KNOWLEDGE

Percussion first captivated a 4-year-old Hill when she attended her older brother's middle school Christmas concert. As she watched her brother play the clarinet, the back-row percussionists caught her eye. "They were active and busy and making really big gestures," she says.

When she entered sixth grade, Hill began playing percussion in her school's band program. Hill says that practicing and performing with her school ensemble was not enough to satiate her growing hunger for musical knowledge, so the high school band director arranged for one of the senior percussionists to tutor her. "He would work with me on skillsets, so I would have some extra things to practice," Hill says. "That was enough to keep me motivated."

Everything changed for Hill when Nancy Mathesen, a professor from UTM, came to speak with the high school band. Hill instantly took a liking to Mathesen and wanted to learn more from her; however, Hill's family faced difficult financial constraints and could not pay for private lessons. "I said, 'My parents are broke. We're about to lose our house,'" recalls Hill. "She told me that if I practiced 10 hours a week minimum, she'd teach me for free."

Hill proved her dedication immediately. She jumped at the only time slot—6:30 a.m. on Friday mornings—that Mathesen had left for lessons. "Nancy said that through hard work, anything could be accomplished," Hill says. "Nancy despised laziness and those who made excuses. She was and always will be an inspiration to me."

Hill's relationship with Mathesen opened up a world of opportunities. During her senior year of high school, Mathesen took Hill to the Percussive Arts Society International Convention (PASIC), which inspired her to commit to percussion as a career choice. "I was thinking about becoming a chemistry major," Hill says. "But I came back from that conference and knew I wanted to play percussion forever."

After attending the conference's concerts and clinics, Hill felt motivated to emulate the other percussionists' work ethics. "Being in that environment where you see what it takes for people to be successful, seeing how great those people were and reflecting inward at my current status ... I [knew I had] a lot of practicing to do," Hill says. "It's inspiring to know there are a lot of people better than you are."

Because of the loyalty Hill felt to Mathesen, she enrolled at UTM for her Bachelor of Music Education degree.

COMING FULL CIRCLE

Hill then went to Arizona State University to earn her Master of Music in Percussion Performance. Soon afterward, she moved back to Tennessee to be with her terminally ill mother. While there,



Practice What You Preach: Julie Hill continues improving and performing as a musician while also teaching and motivating students as director of percussion studies and music department chair at the University of Tennessee at Martin.

she started playing in a funk band called 27 B Stroke 6. Some of the group's noteworthy performances include opening for Bob Dylan and Paul Simon.

Hill also began teaching band to fifth and sixth graders at Bellwood Elementary School in Murfreesboro, Tennessee, where she founded an after-school steel percussion program, Steel de Boro, which still exists today.

Steel de Boro's beginnings were humble. The group grew from a need for better instruments in the school's band program. "We had instruments that were falling apart," Hill says.

Because Hill was new to the district, she did not feel that she could ask the school board for thousands of dollars for new instruments. She found an alternate solution: Hill brought in a variety of percussion instruments from her personal collection at home.

Using her own instruments, Hill taught the students rhythm, then arranged a world percussion piece for the students to rehearse. Her students performed at a school board meeting and amazed the administration. The next thing Hill knew, the administration was offering her assistance and funding to acquire new wind and percussion instruments for the band.

"You have to create a little magic and build a little trust before you start asking for things," Hill says.

When looking for help to run Steel de Boro, Hill found Amy Smith and Julie Davila who also held advanced percussion degrees. Hill soon realized that she'd been spending most of her time teaching and not enough time performing, so the three decided to form a group: the Caixa Trio.

The Caixa Trio helped satisfy Hill's desire to travel as the ensemble performed shows and percussion festivals around the United States as well as in Mexico, South America and Asia.

One of the Caixa Trio's goals is to showcase the wide variety of musical styles that percussion instruments can achieve. "We try to have really diverse programs," Hill says. "We don't want to just



Roots of Rhythm: During the yearly tour by the world percussion ensemble from the University of Tennessee at Martin, Julie Hill speaks to students at White Station Middle School in Memphis, Tennessee.

© 2017, NATHAN MORGAN.

play world music or rudimental styles. Percussion is anything you can strike, shake or scrape.”

Hill’s love of travel and success performing abroad stems from her fearlessness when it comes to the unknown. “I am a person who believes that being out of one’s comfort zone is the only way for personal growth to occur,” she says.

When traveling abroad, Hill breaks down cultural barriers by fully immersing herself in the place she is visiting. “For example, [in Brazil], I choose pousadas [small hotels] in urban neighborhoods rather than large ‘American-friendly’ hotels,” Hill says. “Why go to a place to experience what you already have back home?”

Though Caixa Trio and 27 B Stroke 6 perform a little less these days, Hill always makes sure that her students are able to see the groups in action. “Play for [your] students,” Hill advises. “Sometimes, students are not aware of this other life we have.”

Hill’s other life has now expanded beyond the Caixa Trio and 27 B Stroke 6. This season, Hill became the Paducah Symphony Orchestra’s principal percussionist. She is also a member of the X4—pronounced “Ten-Four”—Percussion Quartet. X4 won first place in the 2016 PAS Italy Percussive Arts Web Contest in the Percussion Ensemble category.

But no matter how busy she is performing, Hill always finds a way to bring it back to her students. Hill likes to arrange master classes, concerts or festival performances for her students to attend at least once a year. X4 performed at UTM in the past and will be returning for another performance this coming spring. Because the Paducah Symphony Orchestra offers discounted tickets for college students, many of her students are able to see her perform there as well.

“It creates a second level of respect,” Hill says. “They see me

in the practice room, working on music like they are. That inspires them. I walk the walk every day. I want to teach them to be life learners through my example.”

MAKING PERCUSSION ACCESSIBLE TO ALL

In addition to performing and teaching, Hill currently serves as immediate past president of PAS. After attending PASIC for the first time her senior year of high school, Hill couldn’t wait to return. In addition to the clinics and concerts, Hill was excited by all of the friendships she formed at PASIC. “When you come here, you make new friends,” she says. “Percussionists are giving, social people. We like to be together.”

These new friendships have led to important musical connections for Hill, helping her secure guest teachers and clinicians for her students. Often, Hill will serve as a guest at other schools to teach Brazilian percussion, and in exchange, the instructor from that school will teach his or her area of expertise at UTM. “It’s common to trade skillsets,” she says. “Everyone’s students get something, and it doesn’t cost the program anything. Almost every door that has been opened has been because of someone I met at PASIC.”

Hill also encourages educators to attend PASIC with their students. “Try to attend as wide of a variety [of events] as possible,” she says.

When preparing for PASIC each year, Hill sits down with her students and plans which events she recommends they attend. “Students gravitate toward what they already love,” she says. “A lot of students don’t think, ‘I’m [going to] go to that panel discussion,’ but it’s important for them to see how they can assert themselves as professionals.”

As PAS immediate past president, Hill advocates for initiatives

that help students who are in a position where she once was. “We started streaming the convention [online], so those who don’t have the money to get there can be a part from home,” she says. “We’ve created low-priced group memberships for young people and made PAS much more affordable for international chapters.”

Additionally, Hill helped launch the new PASIC International Scholarship. “PAS is an international organization, but with the convention always being in the USA, it’s difficult for members from around the world to come,” she says.

To further encourage inclusivity, Hill created PAS’s new ad hoc Diversity Committee. This committee works to increase the visibility of minority groups, such as women, people of color and LGBTQ members, in the percussive community.

PAS also runs Rhythm! Discovery Center, an interactive percussion museum in Indianapolis. Hill is currently working with PAS to create virtual exhibits, so that individuals can still get the museum’s educational benefits without traveling to Indianapolis.

“I want students to have everything they need,” Hill says. “If they’re hungry, I want to feed them.”

HOMETOWN HERO

After working on her Doctor of Musical Arts from the University of Kentucky, Hill moved back to Martin to be closer to family. Mathesen had recently retired as director of percussion studies at UTM, and when Hill received the job offer for the position, she eagerly accepted.

After spending years performing an eclectic mix of styles with the Caixa Trio and researching musical styles from Brazil, West Africa and more, Hill has a wealth of knowledge on the diversity of percussion to pass along to her students. “We study everything from drum set to marimba to global musical styles and much, much more,” she says. “The students are really marketable when they finish.”

Hill is teaching a new world music class that is open to all music majors, not just those specializing in percussion. Hill also leads the university’s world percussion ensemble, which performs musical styles from a myriad of different countries. Last year, the ensemble won the PAS World Percussion Ensemble Competition.

Beyond her evident musical influences, Hill also loves passing on her pay-it-forward mentality to her students. “A big passion of mine [is] making sure students have access to opportunities,” she says.

Each fall, Hill and the world percussion ensemble travel around Tennessee to perform for thousands of elementary students in a two-and-a-half-day tour called Roots of Rhythm. “It’s a good way for my students to teach and learn how to give back as well,” she says.

UTM also hosts the Honor Percussion Ensemble each spring. At this event, top high school percussionists from Tennessee and its surrounding states come together for a giant percussion festival and finale performance. “It’s good for recruiting and creating opportunities for students who don’t have them,” Hill says.

CREATING OPPORTUNITIES IN YOUR OWN SCHOOL

Julie Hill inspires percussionists on many levels: as a university educator/scholar, world-class performer and immediate past president of the Percussive Arts Society (PAS). Many of her philosophies and strategies can be implemented on a smaller scale at your own school. Here are three ideas.



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1. SET THE EXAMPLE

Let your students see your musical life outside the classroom. Hill invites her university students to the concerts she performs with various ensembles. Hill’s students gain respect for her through seeing her work ethic and witnessing the results it yields.

2. STEP OUTSIDE YOUR COMFORT ZONE


Hill believes that having new experiences are necessary for growth as a person and an educator. For her, that involves traveling around the world and learning about new cultures. She incorporates her newfound knowledge of international musical styles into her teaching. Attending conferences and events such as the Percussive Arts Society International Convention also allows her to learn new ideas, network with other teachers and find guest instructors for her classrooms.

3. PAY IT FORWARD

When Hill’s own progress could have faltered due to lack of resources, a teacher helped her focus on the music, not the money. Now Hill uses her circle of influence to advocate for students who may not have access to opportunities. Hill and her students also give back to their community through performing for younger musicians.

Hill draws inspiration from a quote often attributed to Mahatma Gandhi. “Be the change you want to see in the world,” she says. “I say that to my students a lot.”

Whether she is performing in another country or teaching at her alma mater, Hill spreads music and opens doors for others. “Some people need status; I need purpose,” she says.

Growing up with an intense hunger for knowledge and a desire to break free of her small hometown, Hill never expected that her journey would lead her right back to where she started. “I don’t think I would’ve said 25 years ago that my dream job was teaching at [UTM],” says Hill. “Your dream job might be where you already are.” 

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Cheryl Floyd
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Kevin Sedatole
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Director of Bands
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EDUCATION INSIDER

CREATIVE ASSESSMENT


PROJECT-BASED LEARNING IN THE INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC CLASSROOM

BY MARCIA NEEL

You can tell from their playing whether a student is progressing; but can you really get a read on whether or not what we have been teaching is really sinking in? Playing tests are fine—they can be quick and easy to assess—but you can have students demonstrate how much they have learned about the bigger picture of studying music via more comprehensive types of projects that have the added benefit of stimulating their creativity in new ways.

When considering that music makers are some of the most creative of the school's student body, it doesn't take long to realize that project-based learning will provide appropriate inspiration and open up a whole new world of assessment options. It is also just plain fun for both teachers and students alike.

Adding project-based learning to your program doesn't have to be cumbersome or intimidating. Students could start with something as simple as arranging 8-bar "cheer" songs for their marching band section to play at football games.

With an infinite number of possibilities, there will be an endless stream of innovative projects that students will certainly enjoy creating – all that has to be done is to provide the opportunity. 

The key is for students to demonstrate their understanding of how sound, and ergo music, works.



To prime the pump and help inspire the process, here are several suggestions (and video examples!) from other programs:

TRY IT: Ask students to create their own instrument and performs an original piece or arrangement of a song of their choice. (This also makes a great group project.) The key is for students to demonstrate their understanding of how sound, and ergo music, works. Blue Man Group has motivated many high school percussionists to come up with their own PVC instruments.

WATCH IT IN ACTION: See how one young inventor performs his original composition "Cargo" at <http://4wrd.it/PVC>.

WATCH IT IN ACTION: Get your students motivated with any one (or all) of these videos, showcasing eight incredible created instruments: <http://4wrd.it/8INCREDIBLE>.

TRY IT: Ask students to use unconventional materials to make a new version of their own instrument. Students from Cateura, Paraguay, found a way to craft their own instruments using recycled trash.

WATCH IT: The Recycled Orchestra of Cateura gained national attention after being featured on "60 Minutes" (<http://4wrd.it/RECYCLERS>) and inspired a documentary film, "Landfill Harmonic."

TRY IT: Encourage the use of technology in the classroom by asking students to choose a partner or group to form a duet, trio or ensemble and to either compose or arrange a song to be performed in the manner of their choosing. Inspire them to incorporate technology in any creative manner that showcases their performance. Students could also provide live performances if time permits.

WATCH IT: Encourage the students to think outside the box by showing them examples like Eric Whitaker's Virtual Choir (<http://4wrd.it/VIRTUALCHOIR>) and Jacob Collier's "Isn't She Lovely" (<http://4wrd.it/JCOLLIER>).

Once project-based learning becomes part of the established procedure for assessment, students will come up with all sorts of ideas on their own. This could even be a project idea unto itself: ask students to come up with their own projects to demonstrate their understanding of music-making. This more creative type of high-level, free-form type of learning might be specifically reserved for seniors with the final project eventually posted on the music department's website or YouTube page.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Marcia Neel, formerly the coordinator of secondary fine arts for the Clark County School District headquartered in Las Vegas, currently serves as president of Music Education Consultants Inc. and education advisor to the Music Achievement Council. Neel has also been named senior director of education for the Yamaha Corporation of America, Band and Orchestral Division.

DISCOVERING THE WORLD OF JAZZ



Janis Stockhouse didn't like—or understand—jazz until she had to teach it while at Bloomington (Indiana) High School North. Today, she is a passionate jazz educator; both she and her program have been recognized as leaders in the field.

BY FRANK DIMARIA

Janis Stockhouse's confidence was high on her first day as director of bands at Bloomington (Indiana) High School North. Then her jazz students showed up. "They were tossing out vocabulary and words, and I was stumped," Stockhouse says. "It made me feel really bad that I couldn't teach them anything. I wanted to run home."

Stockhouse was so rattled that she tendered her resignation a month later, but fortunately her principal refused to accept it. Instead, Stockhouse persevered and immersed herself in the jazz world, teaching herself not only to appreciate the art form but also to excel at it. Since then, she and her jazz ensembles have received numerous awards and accolades.

WHAT'S THAT SOUND?

When Stockhouse accepted the director position at Bloomington High School North in 1981, the school was only 10 years old, but its music program was already shrinking. Replacing one and a half directors, Stockhouse taught two jazz bands, two concert bands and the marching band—five classes in all.

Knowing she was destined to be a band director, she had immersed herself in the concert and marching band programs while earning a music degree at Indiana University, but she had no interest in jazz. "I didn't know why it sounded like it sounded," she says. "It was kind of foreign to me, the long solos. I didn't understand what was going on. If you don't understand something, then you often don't like it."



Honor Band: The Bloomington North Advanced Jazz Ensemble performs at the Ball State University Dimensions in Jazz Festival in March 2014.

But while at Bloomington, Stockhouse knew that she owed it to her jazz students to learn all she could about jazz. "I had to figure out what jazz is, what's improvisation?" she says.

She sought help from David Baker, the late renowned jazz composer and professor from Indiana University's music department. He agreed to come out to teach her jazz classes. "You would have thought it was the dream jazz band," Stockhouse says. "He knew what tunes to pick, he knew how to teach and relay things. I just sat in the back of the room and watched."

The jazz master schooled Stockhouse on jazz articulation and modes, or variations on scales. He told her to listen to Miles Davis's "Kind of Blue." She bought the album that night. As she listened, she took notes on what the rhythm section was playing and how the soloists were improvising. "It was like a whole world opened up to me," Stockhouse says. "I must have listened to that album five times that night," she says.

GETTING IN THE GROOVE

To further increase her knowledge of jazz, Stockhouse would visit the music store, picking the brain of the owner. With so many CDs to choose from, she was overwhelmed and wondered what would be the next logical progression after "Kind of Blue." She found "Maiden Voyage" by Herbie Hancock.

"Kind of Blue was the late '50s and then 'Maiden' the mid '60s—there was a huge change in the performance of jazz between those two albums," Stockhouse says. After all, "jazz reflects society."

In addition to poking around the local CD shop, every Monday night she would attend a jazz concert at the local college. With the evening's program on her knee, she'd jot down the names of the pieces she'd like to try with her jazz ensemble. On Thursdays she'd go to the local jazz club to listen to gigs. She was searching for pieces that she could introduce to her small combos and looking for ideas on how to teach

the art of jazz improvisation. "I was really liking what I was doing," Stockhouse says.

Possibly the most important decision Stockhouse made on her journey to jazz band director came in the summer of 1982 when she attended a jazz workshop in northern Wisconsin.

For two weeks she improvised in a jazz combo and in a big band. "After that I felt better; I felt maybe I know a little bit now, and I could compose a blues for big band and arrange it," Stockhouse says. "I learned a lot about history and all the different kinds of styles and repertoires. It was comprehensive. It was fantastic. My anxiety was more or less gone even though I was still a newbie."

Over the years Stockhouse continued to grow into her jazz director position by attending endless conventions and clinics and asking a lot of questions to the jazz artists. She seeks out as much live jazz as she can and reads countless books on the subject. "It's an endless passion," Stockhouse says.

Several years ago Stockhouse co-wrote a book about female jazz musicians, titled "Jazzwomen: Conversations with Twenty-One Musicians." Through the process of interviewing these talented musicians, she learned a great deal about jazz and jazz performance.

**Jazz is
America's
contribution
to the world of
music.**

FEELING THE MUSIC

Bloomington's four jazz ensembles are leveled not by grade but rather by ability. Ninth graders can play in the top ensemble if they have the chops, but for the most part, students progress through the four levels. Jazz ensemble classes at Bloomington are 90 minutes long. Stockhouse spends two-thirds of that time teaching big band charts. The rest of the time she works on improvisation, memorization, scales, patterns, transcription of pieces into other keys, listening skills and jazz history.



PHOTO COURTESY OF BLOOMINGTON H.S. NORTH.

Special Night: The Bloomington North Advanced Jazz Ensemble presents its “Honor Band” night performance at the University of Nebraska Omaha in 2013.

BUILD YOUR JAZZ ARSENAL

Directors who are entering jazz from another musical discipline may want to look at the following resources to get started:

“Teaching Music Through Performance in Jazz” from GIA Publications Available as a book or CD set, this title contains some of the most significant works ever composed for developing and intermediate jazz band.

Aebersold Publications Jamey Aebersold’s Play-A-Longs have made it possible to create an interactive jazz environment in a classroom. Aebersold has produced more than 130 volumes of jazz recordings and books along with various supplemental items, carving out a new avenue for jazz education.

Sierra Music Publications Inc. Sierra Music Publications, a jazz-specific music publisher, offers more than 600 big band charts from established composers like Stan Kenton, Bill Holman, Count Basie, Maynard Ferguson and others. In addition, Sierra has commissioned music from many new composers like Dan Haerle, Ellen Rowe, Fred Stride, Fred Sturm and others.

The Midwest Clinic International Band and Orchestra Conference

As a band director, you’re likely already attending the Midwest Clinic International Band and Orchestra Conference. If you’re new to jazz, though, make sure to check out the jazz-specific clinics and concerts. This past December, sessions included “‘Latinizing’ Your School Jazz Ensemble” and “The Jazz Combo – An Inside Look.”

Jazz Education Network Website and Convention The Jazz Education Network (JEN) is dedicated to building the jazz arts community by advancing education, promoting performance and developing new audiences. Membership in JEN offers many benefits including networking, performance opportunities, and discounts to magazines and goods from strategic partners.

Her favorite activity is to take an arrangement of a big band chart, such as “Blue Bossa” that has an open solo section, and require the entire band to memorize the head, or main theme, as well as the chord changes. She insists that her students listen to various artists’ interpretations of the tune and the solos, so they can gain an appreciation of Dexter Gordon’s version.

When students listen, “they get to really learn the tune,” Stockhouse says. “So they don’t just learn the trombone three part of ‘Blue Bossa’; they learn ‘Blue Bossa.’ As I’m playing my trombone three part, I can appreciate the tune more as a musician.”

Chris Parker, who studied under Stockhouse from 2011 to 2015 and is currently studying jazz and music education at Indiana University, says Stockhouse really stresses listening to the music, a skill often overlooked by other jazz educators.

One time Stockhouse played a recording of Count Basie’s “It’s Oh, So Nice” and turned the lights off in the jazz room, Parker recalls. She asked her students to tap their toes and “feel the music,” he adds.

During the chorus, Parker says that Stockhouse had her students stand and walk around the room to the beat. Being high school students, many were shy and reserved. “But by the end of it, everybody was really into it,” Parker says. “The difference between before we did that activity and after we did it [was startling]. We were a million times better as a whole. We were feeling the beat more because we were able to move to it. She understands you have to listen to the masters to perform jazz at a high level.”

Stockhouse takes her ensembles to participate at festivals; however, she never puts pressure on her students to win and views these events more as learning opportunities than competitions. “Students love performing; they also enjoy traveling and hanging out with each other,” she says. “And if there are clinics and live concerts, it’s fun to see how they react to these and how some get extremely motivated. Live music is so much better than just listening to YouTube.”

Stockhouse encourages her students to take risks through improvisation, a skill she teaches through scales. As students become more familiar with the scales and their instruments, they gain the technique necessary to improvise.

Learning to be a jazz improviser could possibly be the pinnacle of what a student can experience as a teenager in high school, Stockhouse says. “For those individuals who have the mind and know their instruments and have fallen in love with jazz, it’s what they live for,” she says. “I’ve seen that with so many students. It’s everything to them. They love it. It’s so creative.”

In addition to learning to improvise, jazz students need to form combos. These smaller groups allow rhythm players the opportunity to learn volumes about the music and about performing, Stockhouse says.

To date Bloomington jazz ensembles have performed at the International Association for Jazz Education (IAJE), Jazz Education Network (JEN) and Midwest Clinic conferences. Bloomington has also won the Lionel Hampton Jazz Fest on many occasions.

TIPS TO GET IMMERSED AND WELL-VERSED IN JAZZ

FROM JANIS STOCKHOUSE, DIRECTOR OF AWARD-WINNING JAZZ ENSEMBLES AT BLOOMINGTON (INDIANA) HIGH SCHOOL NORTH

1. Buy and Listen to Classic Jazz CDs. Stockhouse encourages new jazz instructors to start by listening to “Kind of Blue” by Miles Davis as she did, then check out John Coltrane’s “Ballads” album. “If that hooks you, keep discovering other classic recordings,” she says.

2. Learn to Improvise Yourself. Purchase Jamey Aebersold’s play-a-long book “Maiden Voyage: Fourteen Easy-to-Play Jazz Tunes” and learn how to solo over these fairly easy but great jazz pieces.

3. Attend a Jazz Workshop. Stockhouse suggests the Jamey Aebersold Summer Jazz Workshops, offered as weeklong or two-day courses in Louisville, Kentucky.

4. Network With Jazz Artists. Go to the Jazz Education Network convention held each January and other conferences in the national or state level. Seek out more experienced jazz directors and artists and ask them all of your questions.

GROWING THE PROGRAM

The key to building a relevant jazz program is to integrate it into the high school curriculum rather than beginning it after marching season or making it an extracurricular activity, according to Stockhouse. “If you don’t start your jazz program until after Thanksgiving, all you’ll be able to do is teach three pieces of music,” she says. “You won’t be able to teach improvisation because you don’t have time. Having it in our school day has been our saving grace.”

Stockhouse generates excitement for her jazz program by exhibiting her palpable love for jazz to her students. That’s not hard to do when she owns more than 2,000 jazz CDs and tunes her radio to the jazz station 24/7.

She introduces her freshmen to high-energy music, like “Watermelon Man” and “Cantaloupe Island.” “Herbie Hancock is a good entry level for 14-year-olds,” Stockhouse says.

Another way to ensure a jazz program’s success is to physically separate it from the concert and marching bands. In 2005 Bloomington built Stockhouse a jazz ensemble room. Before then her jazz students set up in the corner of the band room. The drum set, the piano and amplifiers were always in the way of the concert band. “Now we have a room dedicated to our jazz ensembles. It made a huge difference,” Stockhouse says.

CREATING A BIGGER BUZZ

Since discovering her own personal passion for jazz, Stockhouse has made it her goal to keep jazz programs relevant in Indiana. When IAJE came to a close in 2008, Stockhouse looked for ways to preserve a statewide coalition. She teamed up with a group of educators to form the Indiana Jazz Educators Association (IJEa) and has served as a president of the organization.

The goal was to keep all-state jazz ensembles and jazz combos moving forward. “We succeeded,” Stockhouse says. “I worked pretty hard for five years organizing things.”

For all of her efforts in the classroom and in the greater jazz world,




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On the Road: Janis Stockhouse encourages the Bloomington North Advanced Jazz Ensemble members to “dig in” during their performance at the Jazz Education Network conference in Louisville, Kentucky, in 2016.

Stockhouse received the 2015 John LaPorta Educator of the Year Award from JEN and was named a 2014 Jazz Hero by the Jazz Journalists Association.

In addition to building Bloomington’s jazz program, Stockhouse also ran the school’s marching program for 20 years. Today the marching band is under the direction of Thomas Wilson although Stockhouse still heads up the brass section. The Bloomington North Cougar Marching Band has marched in the Tournament of Roses Parade and the Macy’s Thanksgiving Day Parade and has finished in the top 10 in Indiana State School Music Association (ISSMA) competition 10 times. The Symphonic Band has also been an ISSMA finalist for all but two years since 1985.

When Stockhouse accepted the director position at Bloomington, jazz was a mystery to her. Today, it’s a significant part of her life. Through hard work, open mindedness, and perseverance, Janis Stockhouse and her ensembles have transformed into jazz powerhouses.

“Jazz is America’s contribution to the world of music,” she says. “Jazz is passion combined with genius and creativity.” 

LAUNCHING INTO UNCHARTED TERRITORY

NEW TO TEACHING STRINGS? WITH ADVICE FROM TOP STRING PROFESSIONALS, YOU'LL QUICKLY BE ON THE FLIGHT TO SUCCESS.

BY EMILY MONEYMAKER

After years of teaching band, you've just been told that you must also teach beginning orchestra. Panic sets in as you realize you don't know how to position your fingers, and you fear making screeching sounds in front of your students.

Don't worry. You are not alone.

Switching to string education is not a rare occurrence. In fact, the 2008 study titled "Perception Differences of String-Trained and Non-String-Trained Educators Who Teach Strings in Iowa and Nebraska" found that nearly one-third of music educators throughout Iowa and Nebraska teaching string or orchestral classes were not native to the string family.

With these five tips from successful string educators, you can effectively transition to become a first-rate string educator.



Bob Phillips
Alfred Music Publishing

TIP 1: LEARN THE INSTRUMENT ALONG WITH YOUR STUDENTS

While teaching students to play a string instrument is a fundamentally different experience than teaching band or choir, the inherent externality of the instrument also has its advantages. "The act of playing a string instrument involves lots of large muscle movement in a way

that the other two disciplines do not," says Bob Phillips, director of string publications for Alfred Music Publishing and a former president of the American String Teachers Association (ASTA). "You can actually see the muscles that are moving and how they're moving, so it's much easier to identify what's happening—although those movements are much more complex."

Teaching string instruments "relies upon modeling and showing and demonstrating," says Kirk Moss, chair of the department of music and theatre at the University of Northwestern-St. Paul in Minnesota. Therefore, he says that it's particularly important for string educators to become proficient on at least one string instrument as quickly as possible in order to be able to teach with an instrument in hand.

While it may seem a little awkward at first, an effective way to continually improve on your own playing is in the classroom along with your students. Putting yourself in your students' shoes will provide you with insight about their challenges. "The interesting thing from a pedagogical standpoint is when we have a secondary instrument in our hands, as a music educator, we're processing that ourselves," Moss says. "The same things that I might struggle with are the same things that my students might struggle with."



Kirk Moss
University of Northwestern-St. Paul

TIP 2: FOCUS ON THE BOW HAND

Going back to the basic mechanics of the instrument with your string students may not be particularly glamorous, but it's incredibly important as a retention tool. "If, fundamentally, the sound of the instrument isn't good, they don't like and enjoy playing," Phillips says.

Moss recommends that teachers focus on the right hand. "The right hand and the bow arm are analogous to the breath of the singer," Moss says. "At a very basic level, a lot of that comes down to the placement of the right hand thumb. As a general principle, the thumb and second finger on the right hand are opposite each other and form a relaxed oval shape when holding the bow, and maintaining that bow and placement is kind of a cornerstone" of string education.

In addition, teachers should help students get rid of tension in the bow hand by making sure the fingers curve naturally. Focusing on these little things will make a big difference in your students' sound production. "The more we can work with the students' bow hand, the better the sound," Moss says.



Nancy Campbell
School for Creative and Performing Arts

TIP 3: DEVELOP A COMMUNITY OF RESOURCES

Integrating method books such as "Orchestra Expressions," "Essential Elements" and "Sound Innovations" can provide a useful structure to map out the path your students will take throughout the year. Not only do these books include important information for students, but some books also include useful tips for educators such as how to evaluate students, how to set up your orchestra room and more.

"Some of the lessons are so well scripted that if you're prepared ahead of time, you can feel really confident," says Nancy Campbell, orchestra director at the School for Creative and Performing Arts in Lexington, Kentucky, and at the Central Kentucky Youth Orchestra.

Another exceptional resource is ASTA. With state chapters, regional conferences and a new mentorship program started in the spring of 2016, the opportunities to learn from exceptional educators throughout the string community are endless. "There's a wealth of information, and there's a wealth of people out there that really want to help and are really good role models for teachers," Campbell says.

YouTube is also a great place to look for demonstration videos, both for your own sake and also for your students to watch.

Even special interest groups on Facebook can be a powerful way to get teaching tips from other educators. Campbell belongs to Kentuckians for the Arts and Violas on the Verge, among others.

TIP 4: FIND A MENTOR

Developing a community of string professionals that you can turn to with any questions will prove extremely useful if you're

FROM TROMBONING TO BOWING



Darryl Gregory
Schaghticoke Middle School

After graduating with a Bachelor of Music Education, Darryl Gregory—whose instrument of choice is trombone—took the normal music educator route and taught band and general music. But when he took over at Schaghticoke Middle School in 2012 after nearly 30 years in band education, he had to take on a new role as the orchestra teacher, a challenge he faced head on. "I borrowed a cello and violin from my school, and I tried to do as best I could over the summer, at least getting familiar with the beginning aspects of teaching strings to be prepared for the beginning of the school year."

Although Gregory's first year as an orchestra teacher was successful, it was not until he took a pedagogy class the following summer that he realized just how unique orchestral education is. "It was eye-opening; there were things that I had no idea about that made me feel like I didn't know anything about strings," he says.

Gregory walked away from this class armed with new information about bow grip, the proper way to tell a child how to hold the instrument and a deeper understanding of string instruments in general. Since then, he has continued to learn and evolve as an orchestra educator.


"I'm still researching and thinking about things and looking at different ways of telling kids to do a certain bowing or a certain way of approaching the music."

not native to the string family. Darryl Gregory, a trombonist turned string educator at Schaghticoke Middle School in New Milford, Connecticut, believes string mentors are especially useful for teachers in more remote locales or districts without a large string program, "Even if it's not a mentor that's local but just somebody that you can call up or you can email or FaceTime, it can be a really good resource."

Don't know how to begin looking for a mentor? Universities and music stores are great places to jump-start your search.

TIP 5: STAY OPTIMISTIC

Even though teaching an unfamiliar subject may feel like an insurmountable task, try not to view it as such. Before you can be an effective teacher, you need to let go of your reservations, Gregory says. "Even if you can't make a decent sound on a string instrument, you can still demonstrate and hold the instrument correctly and show how it should be held properly," he says.

Equally important is staying positive and enthusiastic, regardless of the circumstances. In the end a teacher's purpose is to make a difference in their students' lives. "If you can help kids to just be happy with where they are at this moment and work hard, I think that's probably the biggest thing," Campbell says. 

Artist Events

Would you like a chance to be inspired, to motivate your students, to expand your musical horizons? Yamaha Artists conduct clinics all over the United States. Here’s a partial list of who’s going to be in your area in the near future.

DATE	CITY, STATE	INSTRUMENT	ARTIST(S)	EVENT NAME	LOCATION
3/3/17	Salt Lake City, UT	Percussion, Trumpet	Michael Sammons, Allen Vizzutti	Western Regional Concert Band Festival	University of Utah
3/3/17	Fort Wayne, IN	Saxophone	Adam Estes, Kenneth Tse	North American Saxophone Alliance Region V Conference	Indiana University - Purdue University Fort Wayne
3/3/17	St. Joseph, MO	Trombone	Tom Brantley	Tom Brantley Trombone Residency	University of Kansas
3/5/17	Missoula, MT	Trumpet	Rex Richardson	Trumpet and Jazz Residency	University of Montana
3/6/17	Sioux Falls, SD	Trumpet	Allen Vizzutti	Jazz on the Upper Great Plains Festival	Augustana University
3/9/17	Valdosta, GA	Saxophone	Adam Estes	North American Saxophone Alliance Region 6 Conference	Valdosta State University
3/9/17	Tuscaloosa, AL	Euphonium/Tuba	Michael Forbes	South Eastern Regional Tuba/Euphonium Conference	The University of Alabama
3/9/17	Indianapolis, IN	Various	Thad Anderson, Joe Burgstaller, Jon Crabiel, Nathan Daughtrey, Adam Frey, Shawn Goodman, Joanna Hersey, Michael Huestis, John Kilkenney, Andy Martin, Mimi Stillman, Doug Spaniol, John Tafoya, Mark Ortwein, Mark Ostoich, John Pollard, Mike Tomaro, Larry Williams, Larry Zalkind, and Yamaha Master Educators Travis Cross, Douglas Droste, Cheryl Floyd, Richard Floyd, Craig Kirchhoff, Anthony Maiello, David Starnes	Music for All National Festival	Indianapolis, IN
3/10/17	Lexington, KY	Percussion	Michael Sammons	Clinic at University of Kentucky	University of Kentucky
3/10/17	Portland, OR	Saxophone	H2 Quartet	North American Saxophone Alliance Region 1 Conference	Portland State University
3/14/17	Martin, TN	Percussion	Michael Sammons	Residency @ University of Tennessee Martin	University of Tennessee Martin
3/15/17	Bayside, NY	Percussion	Terry Longshore	Left Edge Percussion & Multi-Media Clinic	Queensborough Community College
3/17/17	Kalamazoo, MI	Trumpet	Rex Richardson	Western Michigan University School of Music Trumpet Day	Western Michigan University
3/18/17	Murfreesboro, TN	Percussion	Julie Hill, Joshua Smith	Percussion Fest 17!	Siegel High School

DATE	CITY, STATE	INSTRUMENT	ARTIST(S)	EVENT NAME	LOCATION
3/18/17	Draper, UT	Percussion	Pius Cheung	Utah PAS Day of Percussion	Juan Diego Catholic High School
3/22/17	Melbourne, FL	Trumpet	Charles Lazarus	Charles Lazarus at The Horn Section	The Horn Section
3/22/17	Winter Park, FL	Trumpet	Charles Lazarus	MasterClass with Charles Lazarus	Rollins College
3/23/17	Mississippi State, MS	Percussion	Bill Shaltis	Clinic for Mississippi State University Percussion Studio	Mississippi State University
3/23/17	Denver, CO	Trumpet	Justin Bartels, Bobby Shew	National Trumpet Competition	Metropolitan State University
3/24/17	Baton Rouge, LA	Trumpet	Bobby Shew	LSU Trumpet Festival	Louisiana State University
3/24/17	Amherst, MA	Saxophone	Steve Wilson	35th Annual New England Saxophone Symposium	University of Massachusetts Amherst
3/25/17	Memphis, TN	Percussion	Jon Weber	University of Memphis Day of Percussion	University of Memphis
3/25/17	Minneapolis, MN	Flute	Mimi Stillman	Upper Midwest Flute Association's Flute Fest 2017	Plymouth Congregational Church
3/27/17	Lamoni, IA	Percussion	John Lane	Graceland Percussion Day	Graceland University
3/28/17	Albuquerque, NM	Trumpet	Stanley Friedman	New Music for Trumpet & Brass	University of New Mexico
3/31/17	Davenport, IA	Percussion	Kevin Lepper	Iowa PAS Day of Percussion	Davenport Central High School
3/31/17	Pensacola, FL	Trumpet	Wayne Bergeron	NW FL Collegiate All-Star Clinic	Pensacola State College
3/31/17	University, MS	Saxophone	Adam Estes, Kenneth Tse	2017 Mississippi Single Reed Summit	University of Mississippi
4/1/17	Orlando, FL	Trumpet	Allen Vizzutti	Allen Vizzutti Masterclass	University of Central Florida
4/3/17	Honolulu, HI	Trumpet	Charles Lazarus	Master Class with Charles Lazarus	University of Hawaii at Manoa
4/3/17	Boston, MA	Euphonium/Tuba	John Manning	Brass Class	Boston Conservatory
4/5/17	Nashville, TN	Trombone	Wycliffe Gordon	2017 Tennessee All-State Clinic	Opryland
4/18/17	Norman, OK	Percussion	Lamar Burkhalter	Percussion Masterclasses and Marching Percussion Clinic	University of Oklahoma
4/22/17	Orange, CA	Percussion	Naoko Takada	Southern California Marimba Concert Series	Chapman University
4/24/17	Blacksburg, VA	Flute	Mimi Stillman	Mimi Stillman Recital and Master Class	Virginia Tech
4/26/17	Fargo, ND	Percussion	Ney Rosauero	North Dakota State University Day of Percussion and Residency of Ney Rosauero	North Dakota State University
5/12/17	Chicago, IL	Clarinet	John Bruce Yeh	Chicago Clarinet Symposium	Northeastern Illinois University



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