

Michigan Music Educator

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Abby Butler

From the Editor

As one of the perks for serving as editor I receive copies of other state NAFME journals. I will periodically skim through the issues, looking for articles that might be of interest to MME readers. This can be a dangerous, fascinating, and inspiring activity! Dangerous because it is easy to get lost in the pages, before I know it, the afternoon has slipped away. Fascinating because each journal is unique reflecting issues and interests of import to their members shaped by local events. It's also inspiring because the journals remind me that we are part of a professional organization comprised of individuals who struggle with similar challenges and rejoice over the same achievements.

In this issue we feature two articles reprinted from other state journals. Robert Coleman is a "retired" middle school band director. Coleman serves as communications director for the Utah Music Educators Association and as editor for the Utah Music Educators Journal. He is also a freelance writer contributing pieces to Opera News and the Salt Lake Tribune. Guitarist Thomas Amoriello penned the second featured article. Amoriello currently teaches guitar classes at Reading Fleming Intermediate School in Flemington, New Jersey and serves as the Guitar Education Chairperson for the New Jersey Music Education Association. Both articles are based on interviews of experienced teachers fully immersed in their jobs, offering advice from colleagues in different parts of the country.

Only a seasoned middle school teacher could have written Coleman's article, *Traversing the Piranha-Infested Waters of Classroom Management!* As any teacher knows, effective classroom management is the key to a successful and long-lived career. It's also a perennial challenge all teachers face at some point in their teaching, so when I came across Coleman's article I thought it might be worth a read. I was hooked after reading his opening lines, "Managing students in a music classroom is something like crossing Piranha-infested waters. You might come out unscathed, unless they smell blood. If that happens, all you can do is hope your life insurance is paid up!"

If you currently teach guitar in the classroom or are thinking of doing so, then you'll want to read Tom Amoriello's article, *Guitar Education Roundtable: Thoughts on Guitar Ensemble*. As a solo instrument the popularity of guitar skyrocketed during the last half of the 20th century. More recently, the clamor for guitar instruction in our classrooms has resulted in a plethora of new materials, publications, workshops, and stand-alone classes all geared towards including the guitar in the music curriculum. Tom's article provides a little background on the guitar and its role in the classroom, then shares strategies and tips from experts around the country.

Other articles of interest are all by Michigan teachers. In *Research to "Real Life": Implications of Recent Research for Elementary General Music* Heather Shouldice demystifies the application of research for the elementary general music specialist. She identifies three different research studies, describes the research questions and results then explains how teachers might use this knowledge to improve music teaching and learning. The clarity and directness of her writing coupled with her expertise as a general music specialist make this an especially valuable article for all teachers.

Doctoral students Christopher Marra and Jessica Vaughan-Marra share information from the biennial SMTE symposium in *A Report on the 2015 Society for Music Teacher Education Symposium*. This event featured research presentations, keynote speakers and opportunities for collaboration among music educators in teacher education. The authors provide a detailed summary of the symposium's highlights, including a keynote address by renowned educator, Gloria Ladson-Billings, a world leader for culturally responsive pedagogy.

Featured articles in the instrumental and choral columns offer insight into opportunities for music students to perform following high school graduation. While the context for each is different, the need for continued experiences in musical ensembles after high school is clear.

Marty Marks asks the question in his epony-

mous article, *Should I Continue With Marching Band After High School? Three Points To Consider As I Decide*. While Marks' article focuses on high school marching band students, the considerations apply to any high school student involved in a performing ensemble; and explores typical concerns first year students might have about continuing to play while pursuing their college education. In a similar vein, Chuck Norris talks with Judy Roelofs about a unique experience involving graduates from her program in producing a musical for alumni. Roelofs describes successes and challenges encountered along the way and shares welcome advice for anyone considering a similar venture.

As I think about the articles proffered in this issue of our journal, I am reminded of the value of being a member of a professional organization. While state and national associations are typically organized around an infrastructure that at times can seem removed from the classroom, it's important to remember that the heart of our association is just that – a linking of fellow music teachers, colleagues who share a passion for music, a love of teaching, and who cherish the accomplishments of their students. In its own way this issue of the Michigan Music Educator celebrates the knowledge and experience shared by our colleagues both near and far.

Abby Butler
 Editor, *Michigan Music Educator*

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8358 Riverbend Drive
Portland, MI 48875
C) 517-862-1920 W) 517-688-3521
kelli.t.graham@gmail.com

President-Elect

Karen Salvador
University of Michigan-Flint
126 French Hall, 303 E. Kearsley Street
Flint, MI 48502
C) 517-862-1982
ksalvado@umflint.edu

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Hope College Department of Music
127 East 12th Street
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C) 517-803-2325 O) 616-395-7650
hornbach@hope.edu

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Lindsey Micheel-Mays
1006 West Washington Avenue
Jackson, MI 49203
H) 734-330-4342 O) 517-764-5200
lmicheelmays@sbcglobal.net

Treasurer

Lisa DuPrey
404 Aloha
Davison, MI 48423
C) 586-524-2837 W) 810-591-0839
lduprey@davisonschools.org

Executive Director

Cory L. Micheel-Mays
1006 West Washington Avenue
Jackson, MI 49203
O) 517-748-6518

Executive Committee

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Correspondence relating to circulation or advertising should be addressed to: Joyce Nutzmans, 11878 Parklane St., Mount Morris, MI 48458, nutzmann1@att.net

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Contents

departments

2
From the Editor

6
President’s Message

columns

23: *General Music*
Research to “Real Life”:
Implications of Recent Research
for Elementary General Music

28: *Instrumental*
Should I Continue With Marching
Band After High School? Three
Points to Consider as I Decide

31: *Choral*
Producing an Alumni Musical:
An Interview with Judy Roelofs

35: *Higher Education*
A Report on the 2015 Society for
Music Teacher Education
Symposium

articles

8
Traversing the Piranha-Infested
Waters of Classroom Management

15
Guitar Education Roundtable:
Thoughts on Guitar Ensemble

news

3
Advertising & Corporate
Sponsorship

5
MMEA Board Members

7
Editorial Board

14
MCACA Grant

21
Edwin Gordon Obituary

27
MMEA Awards

33
MMC MMEA Conference Events

37
Guidelines for Submitting Articles

Outside Back Cover
MMEA Calendar

Advertisers in this Issue

Please support these advertisers;
they support music education in Michigan!

Yamaha.....	Inside Front Cover	Hal Leonard.....	22
University of St. Thomas.....	3	NAfME.....	26
Central Michigan University.....	7	San Francisco Conservatory.....	27
JW Pepper & Son.....	12	JW Pepper & Son.....	30
Michigan Music Conference.....	13	Meyer Music.....	34
WestMusic.....	21	EPN Travel.....	Inside Back Cover

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abby.butler@wayne.edu

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dlewis@wpcschoools.org

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lindalouisell@gmail.com

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dlewis@wpcschoools.org

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hshouldi@emich.edu

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COLLEGIATE NAFME REPS

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schmitta@mail.gvsu.edu

COLLEGIATE NAFME ADVISOR

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conwaycm@umich.edu

EARLY CAREERS

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rakui43@yahoo.com
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lfurman@olivetcollege.edu

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• Judy Thompson-Barthwell,
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cmicheelmays@sbcglobal.net

MUSIC IN OUR SCHOOLS MONTH

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dmehringer@twmi.rr.com

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• Katie Pike, kpike75@gmail.com

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lisa.ebener@nwschools.org

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hshouldi@emich.edu

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REGION REPRESENTATIVES

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CWilkinson@jkl.school.org

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Kelli Graham

President's Message

Hello fabulous MMEA members,

The school year is in full swing and at this point I'm sure you've at least finished one (if not two) round of report cards, performances, and/or parent/teacher conferences. As we near the halfway point in the school year, MMEA strives to provide events and professional development activities that help our members continue to interact and provide exciting musical opportunities for our students.

Fall has been busy for MMEA. In September, facilitated by board members Colleen Conway and Phil Hash, MMEA participated in a TweetChat with the Michigan Association of Secondary School Principals, presenting on the topic of teacher evaluation. Participants were invited to join in the conversation about how administrators can best support music teachers in regards to evaluation systems. MMEA also hosted five elementary choral festivals this year in Clinton Township, Allendale, Sault Sainte Marie, Jackson, and Clare.

MMEA also debuted a revamped website. We are excited to be able to feature a cleaner designed site, provide an easier to use site featuring a new member's only section, and starting in Fall 2016 (if not sooner) we will be able to take online registration for events! This has been made possible, in large part, by a grant we received last year from the Michigan Council of Arts and Cultural Affairs. We are very excited to announce that we have been selected as a recipient of this grant again this year!

Now that we are near the mid-way point of the school year, I know that I am often looking for ways to recharge and keep myself energized in the classroom during the winter months. One of my favorite ways to do this is at the Michigan Music Conference. I look forward to interacting with other music teachers, hearing fabulous concerts, and attending the numerous sessions offered throughout the conference. This year the

MMEA headliner is Brian Hiller and our Pre-Conference Event will feature Brian and Mary Alice Amidon. Mr. Hiller has co-authored with Don Dupont nine publications for music educators and is a contributor to *Activate! Magazine* and presents music workshops throughout the United States and Canada. The Amidons workshop will focus on the power of building a community within the classroom through traditional dance, song, and storytelling. Also, at the MMC, be sure to attend the Honors Composition Concert on Saturday from 1:00-2:45. This year will also feature a change to our member meeting. Free to members, MMEA will be providing coffee and assorted light breakfast offerings Saturday. This social event will feature an awards ceremony and a short meeting, but will also be a great opportunity to mingle with other members. I hope to see you all there!

The busy month of March will bring more MMEA events including Instrumental Clinics, the 2nd Annual Elementary Honors Choir, the 2nd Annual Michigan Music Education Advocacy Day, and the Collegiate Conference. We are excited to announce a second Instrumental Clinic site in Belleville, MI in addition to our Fowlerville site. The Honors Choir will be changing sites to Dewitt High School to accommodate the numerous students and parents we anticipate and the Collegiate Conference will be held at Grand Valley State University this year.

There are certainly many opportunities for members to engage in events and offerings this year. As always, keep your eyes out for postings on MMEA social media (Facebook, Twitter, and Pinterest) as well as on our new website. I look forward to seeing everyone at our various events this winter!

Musically yours,

Kelli Graham
MMEA President

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The editorial board urges readers to submit articles of interest to our profession, and encourages this important professional development activity for all members. Articles may be authored or co-authored, address other relevant topics/areas (see columns, at right), and may be considered at any time. Submitted articles will be peer-reviewed by the editor and editorial board members with editing and production in process for 5 to 6 months ahead of the publication date. See the published *Guidelines for Contributors* (on page 53 of this issue) for further information.

Articles may be submitted electronically to the Editor:
abby.butler@wayne.edu

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Traversing the Piranha-Infested Waters of Classroom Management



Robert Coleman

This article was originally published in the 2013 Fall issue of the Utah Music Educators Journal.

Managing students in a music classroom is something like crossing Piranha-infested waters. You might come out unscathed, unless they smell blood. If that happens, all you can do is hope your life insurance is paid up!

What does it take to keep students from “smelling blood in the water?” It is a rare collegiate training program that prepares teachers to face all or even most of the eventualities encountered while teaching. One can have towering musical skills, understand the psychological, sociological and pedagogical underpinnings of the adolescent experience and be able to create the perfect scope and sequence for their students but still fail miserably at realizing a successful music program.

What is for many the elusive element is a clear understanding of and personal ability to manage students in a respectful, efficient and determined manner. Managing students in a music classroom is more than a learned skill. It is a talent deeply rooted in a teacher’s psyche that requires development through practice, patience and the deft ability to project positive leadership. The teacher must possess or develop a persona that students want to be around – that they can respect and trust.

During recent interviews, two teachers describe their efforts to manage student behavior and musical instruction. They speak about their development in this area as a work in progress, evolving with increased experience. Their methods and rationale are described in this article made possible by the generosity of these educators.

Eileen Dempsey

Eileen Dempsey teaches strings in the Davis School District at Northridge High School and its feeder schools, including Sunset Jr. High and 5 elementary schools. Dempsey has been teach-

ing for 24 years and serves as a master teacher for Weber State University’s string project, an orchestra program for pre-university string students.

She has noticed how music programs help students become better individuals, gaining necessary skills needed for everyday life. Her students – especially the shy ones – have grown in confidence and become excited, transforming themselves into integral members of their school ensemble.

Stop the Chaos

“I’m invested in every kid,” Dempsey said. “It’s a privilege to be invited into their lives. I make them behave accordingly.” She knows that nobody learns much in a chaotic classroom – everyone must be on the same page. She likened an undisciplined classroom to tying shoelaces together. People don’t progress when that happens; they just fall on their faces.

“I’ve taught noisy classes before,” Dempsey noted. Her response was to jack up the instructional pace, having them play and play, so nobody had a chance to say anything. She says students need to be accountable for their behavior and to that end she has developed a system of honor slips.

Honor Slips

In Dempsey’s classes, students receive citizenship grades by earning honor slips, rectangles of brightly colored paper given for good behavior, like consistently putting their instrument cases in the correct location. An “H” (honors) citizenship grade is given when the student earns four slips throughout the course of the term. Conversely, students lose honor slips for infractions, such as playing out of turn. A student who loses four honor slips receives a “U” (unsatisfactory) grade – something especially severe for high school students in Davis County.

Taking away an honor slip is done very matter of fact, quickly and without drama. She doesn't give offending students attention by stopping the class or making a scene of the situation. "If there's blood, I stop class, otherwise, we roll right through," Dempsey said. Yet there's a consequence. Students know she means what she says, but taking away an honor slip is not done in anger or with harshness in the voice. This is something she says requires practice to perfect.

Dempsey doesn't classroom rules but tells students her expectations as the school year progresses. Listening to instructions, including rules, is a skill music students need to learn. According to Dempsey, listening to instructions is everything. Students in her class get pretty good at it – even when she only says something once.

The honor slip system doesn't seem to become old or trite for students, even when they enter high school. She has never had a problem with students thinking the system is immature or demeaning. Students know she cares about them as individuals and they trust her to be fair.

Dempsey's classroom management system includes a check-off chart for each student, listing tests and assignments. There is also a line on the chart for honor slips. If a student loses an honor slip, she makes a quick note of it and students update their own chart.

Focus on the Behavior

If a student's behavior is bad enough, she is quickly on the phone with parents. Occasionally, she is forced to recommend that a student take a different class. This happened with one young man who constantly disrupted class. She explained that she couldn't have him doing this, so he transferred out of the class only to show up in orchestra again the next year. At first, she thought she was in for another round of negative behavior, but she was pleasantly surprised. "He became one of my most wonderful students."

She feels this was the result of her effort to focus only on the behavior and not letting the issue become personal. Parents have come to realize she has the student's best interests in mind when she makes disciplinary decisions. "I can't tell you the benefits of treating students respectfully. It makes everything better form the get-go."

Pacing

Dempsey paces her class fairly quickly. When working with one section, the rest of the orchestra listens, because they know she will be asking them questions: "Is that in tune?" "Are they together?" "Is everyone playing the correct note?" She has discovered through the years that when students give

feedback, they not only become invested in what the class is doing, but their skills and behavior change more quickly. When one section is having difficulty with a rhythm, the other sections count along with them.

Routines

Every class rehearsal begins with a warm-up routine that is varied as students' skill levels increase. She also has students sight-read almost every day and makes a habit of asking students what key they are playing, asking them to play the scale. She usually has them start the scale, playing four times on each step; then three times; then two times, etc. This pattern is sometimes varied, but the main thing is that they play perfectly together, repeating the scale again and again until it is tonally accurate and rhythmically precise. She has noticed that students work harder when she invests them with the power to play together.

This routine allows her to multi-task, taking care of the class roll, passing out music or doing any of a number of things that need to be accomplished at the beginning of class, including dealing with individual students.

Once or twice a week, she gives a rhythm test, writing a rhythm on the board for students to copy. Students then write down the counting and draw beat-lines in the correct place. They trade papers with another student, and 50% of their grade is based on how accurately they grade their partner's paper. Someone is then invited to write the counting and beat-lines on the board. "This exercise catches kids who have missed learning things like time signatures, note values, shapes, etc.," Dempsey said. When this is done, students play the rhythm until all do it correctly. "When they pass it off, they cheer. It's great." Students can then mark that they have passed-off that test on their check-off chart.

Superpowers

Dempsey feels that a teacher needs to have a strong persona, allowing that if a teacher doesn't feel like they have that strength, they need to at least pretend. But she says it's o.k. for a teacher to make a mistake. If he or she isn't sure what to do next, they should just say, "Give me a minute" and regroup.

According to Dempsey, the day of the all-powerful teacher has pretty much vanished, but she tells students that teachers have superpowers. "Mine is listening," she tells them, saying she can hear if something is being played incorrectly. She wants students to know that she cares enough to have them do their very best. "Letting a kid constantly play something wrong is not caring."

Set-Backs

Every class has a personality and sometimes a student comes along who is only invested in her or himself. Someone who sits and glowers or causes disruption is very difficult for a teacher or class to endure. “It’s not a favor to let them think what they are doing is o.k.,” She noted that people with these characteristics would go on to destroy a work place. Dempsey tries everything before recommending that a student drop her class or forcibly removing the child. “I can count on one hand the number of times I have had to send a student to the office,” Dempsey said. But removal is an option when phone calls to parents fail to bring needed change. Sometimes students become frustrated with their musical efforts. “When a student says, ‘I can’t do this,’ I say ‘yet.’” She says students are fully capable of fixing problems if she insists, and she is amazed at what they accomplish. “I’m the biggest nag.” Dempsey finds that students often get frustrated with her nagging, but they know she still loves them. That’s what she wants them to know about her right from the beginning. She strives to correct without a harsh tone. Sometimes she is surprised by the accomplishment of a student who she thought would never catch on. It just takes time and patience – sometimes years. When someone gets something right, such as getting a note in tune, students in her class applaud. This validation is something she fosters from the very beginning and pays dividends throughout the year.

Author’s Observations

Observing a student teacher in Dempsey’s classroom was revelatory. All of the students seemed to be on-task, especially during the warm-up routines. During a rhythm test, one group of students was at the board, working to write down the counting. Another group was busy with pencil and paper, completing the written portion of the test, and a third group was playing an assignment for the teacher – all with minimal verbal instruction and zero confusion.

Students relaxed a bit when they got toward the end of the class period as they started rehearsing their concert music, but they all seemed to be enjoying the experience and continued working as a team, quickly refocusing their attention when given a subtle cue. Their portable classroom was barely large enough to accommodate the many students. There were no elaborate room decorations, and the temperature was quite uncomfortable (broken thermostat), but it didn’t seem to impede the class in any way.

Even though a student teacher was directing students, it was clear that Dempsey had empowered students to learn and had enjoyed her loving validation from the moment they first tucked a violin under their chin or balanced a string bass in front of them. Her basic philosophy, expressed during the

interview, echoed with truth, “I’m invested in every kid. It’s a privilege to be invited into their lives.”

Chris Earl

Chris Earl has just finished his 21st year as a junior high band teacher. Earl has taught in the Weber, Murray and Davis school districts with a current assignment at South Davis Jr. High School. He has also garnered distinction as a published composer of band literature. “I’ve felt that most issues can be taken care of before students get into the classroom,” Earl claimed, saying that preparing for most eventualities of classroom management and instruction is essential. To that end, he keeps and frequently reviews lesson plan notes from year to year, trying to find areas where he can be more efficient and stripping away extraneous and counterproductive procedures.

Lesson plans

He loads his lesson plans into Dropbox, so that they are available to him wherever he goes and on whatever device is available to him – laptop, tablet or smart phone. He keeps his plans simple and quite general with concepts that he will be covering during the period. To him, lesson plans are more like a journal and contain notes for future reference like, “Do this a week later,” “Try this a week earlier,” etc. This helps inform him about where he wants to be at the end of the term.

Earl never allows himself to get in front of a class without knowing exactly what he wants to accomplish that day. Students in his advanced group often tease his specificity, because he will list the exact time he wants to begin a new activity on the board. That not only helps his pacing but also lets students know it is important for them to stay on task.

Rules

Over the years, Earl has pared-down his classroom rules to three: be on time; be respectful of people and school property; use only your own equipment. Basically, he says it boils down to the “golden rule,” of treating others as you would like to be treated.

Years ago, he spent the first two or three days of school talking about “dos” and “don’ts.” Now he handles issues as they arise, discussing cause and effect and keeping explanations as simple as possible. He strives to put a positive spin on behavior issues.

If students start talking during a rehearsal, he doesn’t yell. He’ll usually just say, “I’m waiting.” Students quickly calm down so he can move on. Earl notices that this method

doesn't always work for his student teachers. Obviously, Earl's quiet command is backed by the power of students' past experience with him. They read his intent as easily as he dissects their motives.

Personality

Earl spoke of a visit with a mentor at the beginning of his career who felt that personality was a key factor in determining future success in education – that the most effective teachers were born with a talent or instinct that they hone, producing an effective leadership style and engaging persona or charisma. Earl has noticed teachers with vast amounts of musical skill and knowledge that don't do well in the classroom because students don't respond well to them on a personal level.

“We've all had kids that don't respond,” Earl said. There are some students who make up their mind in the first 5 minutes, barely giving him or their instrument a chance. This makes change next to impossible.

Successful teachers need an arsenal of methods and tactics to head-off students' initial adverse reactions during their musical experience. Earl tries to find something that will help him connect with a student. He gave the example of one struggling student who liked superheroes, so he was able to make a positive connection with the individual on that level.

Opportunities to Grow

Daily rehearsals begin with a set routine of warm-up activities, including scale patterns, allowing him the freedom to multitask. The warm-up develops in complexity and length as skills increase. He instills the idea that they must rehearse the same way they intend to perform in concert, sometimes saying, “Are we going to do that on stage? – Then we shouldn't do it in class.”

All students, including beginning band students, have the opportunity to challenge students in their section for a higher chair position. He feels this type of competition motivates many students. Time is reserved in beginning band for students to “take a rain check” – an opportunity to replace a poor playing test score with a better mark. This, he finds, motivates some students but not all. He constantly tries to find activities and challenges that can reach everyone.

Daily participation and concert attendance accounts for about 20% of the overall grade. He concedes that participation marks are subjective but feels they are a crucial part of students' experience. Those who don't or can't attend a concert realize that they shouldn't expect a higher grade than B+, and this expectation is clearly noted in his class disclosure document.

Earl's school has instituted a type of advisory period when students can go to any teacher for help. (The math teachers are usually swamped.) Many find their way to the band room, so Earl divides them into instrument groups, including 7th, 8th and 9th graders. The older, more experienced students act as mentors to the younger students. He feels like he has turned a less than desirable school program into another reason for his students to enjoy playing their instruments and feeling good about being in band.

Pacing

A visitor to Earl's classroom may have a difficult time finding him at first. He is often roaming around the room, listening to and helping individuals. He notices fewer discipline problems with closer proximity to students. He also models concepts for students, playing any of a number of instruments that are strategically placed within easy reach, trying to keep an interrupted momentum.

“I don't think pacing can solve discipline, but poor pacing can contribute to bad discipline,” Earl said. But with the quickened pace, he worries about students “slipping through the cracks.” However, he feels it is just as bad – maybe worse – for boredom to set-in with the rest of the students. He doesn't want kids to say anything negative about band to their parents around the dinner table, so he tries to keep things light and positive. When he sees a student struggling, he makes a note to review the material the next day or helps the individual one-on-one.

Matters of Consequence

Earl says the most important lesson he has learned from his teaching experience is that students don't care what you know. They only care about how you treat them and if you care about them. He used to think kids were interested in how impressively he could conduct and the wealth of knowledge he brought to the table. He believes this conviction has made him more successful – closer to “the complete package” as a teacher. But he also noted another truism, “You can't teach them if they're not there.”

It is clear to the observer that his ability to attract and retain students is enhanced because of his reputation of being caring and fair with students. After all, a teacher's reputation has a way of filtering throughout a community.

It also becomes apparent to those who become familiar with Earl's music program that something special is happening. The most palpable feeling coming from students is that they enjoy what they are doing and take pride in musical accomplishment. They may not have a clear vision of their relative skills compared to other band programs, but they enjoy a

sense of accomplishment and honest self-realization. Simply put, there is a feeling of momentum bringing validation to another old aphorism: "Success breeds success."

Eileen Dempsey



Eileen Dempsey graduated from Weber State University and began teaching orchestra in Davis County in 1989. She teaches grades 6-12, and her groups have earned many superior and excellent ratings over the years. In addition to training several student teachers,

she has conducted in other arena's, including the Weber School District Honor Orchestra. Ms. Dempsey is a member of the New American Philharmonic Orchestra and the Cantabile String Quartet. She has played for many musicals and plays and has played bass for several different bands – currently the Ripe Tomatoes. Over the span of her teaching career, Ms. Dempsey has experienced how participation in an orchestra develops so much more than the skills to play an instrument. The social skills, the concentration and work ethic, the ability to problem solve and work within a group. These qualities that are so helpful in life are all qualities that are developed in an orchestra setting. She enjoys teaching immensely.

Christian Earl



Christian Earl is currently Director of Bands at South Davis Junior High School in Davis School District. Prior to that, he was Director of Instrumental Music at Hillcrest Junior High School in Murray School District and Director of Bands at Fairfield Junior High School in Kaysville for seventeen years. His compositions for Young Band and Concert Band have been published by both Wingert-Jones Publishing and C.L. Barnhouse Publications.

His commissioned works have been performed at the junior high school, high school, and collegiate levels. He has been a member of The Salt Lake Symphonic Winds for twenty years and is currently serving as the Associate Conductor. Chris holds a Bachelor of Arts degree with an emphasis in Instrumental Music Education from Weber State University where he studied composition with Thomas Root. There he received both the Outstanding Graduate of the College of Arts and Humanities and the Outstanding Graduate of the Department of Performing Arts awards. He has conducted both Jr. High and High School honor bands throughout Utah, and is also active as an adjudicator. Mr. Earl holds memberships in the National Band Association, the American Society of Com-

posers, Authors, and Publishers (ASCAP), Music Educators National Conference, and Utah Music Educators Association where he was editor of The Utah Educator, The Official Journal of the Utah Music Educators Association for four years and has been in charge of reviewing new works for band for that magazine.

Robert Coleman

Robert Coleman graduated magna cum laude with a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Music Education from Utah State University and a Master of Arts Degree in Secondary Education from the same institution. He taught band at South Ogden Jr. High School for 28 years, also teaching some English and German. He is co-founder of the Northfork Band Camp and coordinated band activities in the Weber District. Coleman received the Utah Music Education Association Rookie of the Year and Presidential awards. He was also recognized by the Weber School District with the "I Love Teaching Award." Mr. Coleman is active as an adjudicator, served as the UMEA Jr. High/Middle School Vice President, Business Manager and is currently Communications Director, which includes responsibilities as webmaster and editor of the Utah Music Educators Journal. He is also a freelance music reviewer, writing for Opera News magazine. He also spent a dozen years writing for The Salt Lake Tribune. Mr. Coleman is married with one daughter and two granddaughters.



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 19, 2015

Contact: Cory L. Micheel-Mays, Executive Director
1006 W. Washington Avenue
Jackson, MI 49203

(517) 748-6518
cmicheelmays@sbcglobal.net

The Michigan Music Education Association (MMEA) has been awarded a grant of \$6,000.00 from the State of Michigan Council for Arts and Cultural Affairs (MCACA). This grant was awarded through the MCACA peer review process and was one of 585 applications to compete for MCACA fiscal year 2016 funding. A portion of this grant (\$650.00) was also made possible due to the support of the National Endowment for the Arts.

The mission of the Michigan Music Education Association is to advance the quality of music education in Michigan. MMEA offers professional development workshops throughout the state, performance opportunities for elementary, middle & high school students and outreach to pre-service, current and retired Michigan music educators of all experience levels.

The support of MCACA will allow MMEA to continue providing many local and state music outreach opportunities, including:

1. Elementary Choral Festivals for 3rd-6th grade students across Michigan (5 current locations: Allendale, Clinton Township, Jackson, Sault Sainte Marie & St. Johns)
2. Collegiate Conference for Michigan pre-service music educators
3. Instrumental Clinics for middle school/high school ensembles (featuring students from over 35 ensembles throughout central & southeast Michigan)
4. Elementary Honors Choir for 3rd-6th grade students throughout Michigan
5. General Music Fall Workshop
6. Honors Composition Contest

Organizations receiving a MCACA grant award are required to match those funds with other public and private dollars. Local operational support for MMEA comes from our members and those who participate in our workshops and concerts. In addition, MMEA is proud of the support it receives from JW Pepper & Son, Inc. and Musical Resources. Achieving MMEA's mission would not be possible without the support of many volunteers. The board of directors is comprised of over 30 pre-service, current and retired music educators working with students at the elementary, secondary and collegiate level.

The MCACA peer review process allows for each grant application to be competitively considered by a panel of in-state and out-of-state arts and culture professionals. This ensures the taxpayers, who support this project through legislative appropriations, and all other visitors or residents in Michigan will have access to the highest quality arts and cultural experiences.

A complete list of grant awards around the state is available by contacting MCACA at (517) 241-4011.



Guitar Education Roundtable: Thoughts on Guitar Ensemble



**Thomas J.
Amoriello, Jr.**

A famous quote heard in guitar circles from the great Spaniard Andres Segovia (1893-1987) was his description of the solo classical guitar. He once compared the guitar to “a small orchestra — an orchestra seen through the wrong end of a pair of binoculars.” He liked to explain at length the guitar’s capacity for harmony and counterpoint, which give it a wider range beyond the reach of the violin or the cello. This metaphor refers to the many colors of the orchestral instruments that the guitar can imitate. Another famous quote revered amongst guitarists is, “Nothing is more beautiful than a guitar, save perhaps two.” Which is attributed to Fredric Chopin.

The sounds of many guitars may have really excited Chopin and Segovia, but then again we are focusing on teenagers participating in a large group musical experience for the very first time of their lives. Most band and string students instantly play in a large group starting in grade 5. Guitarists on the other hand may not get their first formal ensemble experience until the age of 15 being years behind the average BOC student. As the popularity of the solo guitar escalated during the last 50 or so years through a combination of spellbinding performers, recording artists, pedagogues, published methods, repertoire and educational opportunities, the guitar even in chamber music settings has remained slightly behind.

Though there are no professional guitar ensembles (excluding guitar quartets) the popularity of the guitar ensemble has been omnipotent in academia. Most college music guitar programs have a guitar ensemble of some sort and the list of middle and high school groups continues to grow. Most guitar ensemble music resembles music written for a trio or string quartet with single line parts. Four (and sometimes five) parts cover different registers of the fretboard to the sometimes low detuned bass strings that imitate the contra bass or cello to the higher notes in 10th position and beyond for those flute/violin sonorities (FYI- guitar music sounds an octave

lower than the written notation).

I have enjoyed teaching guitar ensemble for 10 years and though I found that some groups had their challenges, I found each ensemble has its own unique personality and level of dedication. We have performed arrangements, transcriptions and original compositions in diverse categories such as jazz, blues, classical, mariachi, pop and world music. As we always wonder what others do in similar situations, today we will hear thoughts from some highly respected educators of Guitar Ensemble from New Jersey all the way to Phoenix as well as other highly effective directors.

Dr. Keith Calmes,
Wall High School, Wall, NJ.

Don’t noodle around on the guitar when the director is speaking to you, or to the class. It’s a horrible habit that many guitarists have. KC

What Guitar Ensemble published collections do you like to work from?

I find that I have the most success when I make my own arrangements for my students although there are some fine collections out there- both in print and for download. Honestly, I think that most ensemble music out there gets too challenging too quickly. Many composers or arrangers think little of shifting, writing challenging rhythms, etc. I’ve found that many, many guitarists are challenged by reading. Of course, students have to step up to the plate, yet composers and arrangers should be more conscientious of this.

Your thoughts of “classical guitar seating position” or “right knee” for your groups?

It’s a touchy subject. There are various ways to sit “correctly” with a guitar. Just look at the

greatest players in the world; they hold the guitar in different ways (Paco de Lucia, Jimi Hendrix, Segovia, Carlos Barbo-sa-Lima all come to mind- RADICALLY different). To me, it's all about how your hands relate to the instrument. This is the primary factor in determining sitting position.



Your thoughts on finger-style rest strokes or the use of guitar pick (plectrum) within your groups?

Another touchy subject! I want my students to have good fingerstyle and pick technique. One downside of the acoustic guitar is that it is a quiet instrument. The best way to get volume is to play rest strokes, as well as to explore timbre with the right hand. Many students don't seem to hear the difference in timbre when playing with a pick. To me, it is a different sound world; I can hear the difference a mile away.

What kind of thought do you put into setting up/ seating your students in chairs for the Guitar Ensemble Performance or during rehearsals?

I've found that sitting in a circle works best for rehearsals. I've found that sitting in a "V" formation (a multi-layered V) is best for performance. It's all about getting everybody to hear each other, and creating a sonic blend. I've learned these things the "hard way"...

Do you have any special rehearsal techniques or exercises that you would like to share with readers?

I'm working on it...have a common pattern so that students know what to expect, but have variety and creativity within the pattern. Stick to your musical expectations and curriculum, but be able to shift when the academic situation necessitates it.

James Yancey, Maryvale High School, Phoenix, Arizona

Treat these kids like any other TOP performing ensemble (band, orchestra, choir). EXPECT great things...demand great things....and GET great things! JY

What were some obstacles you faced when you first formed or inherited your Guitar Ensemble at your school?

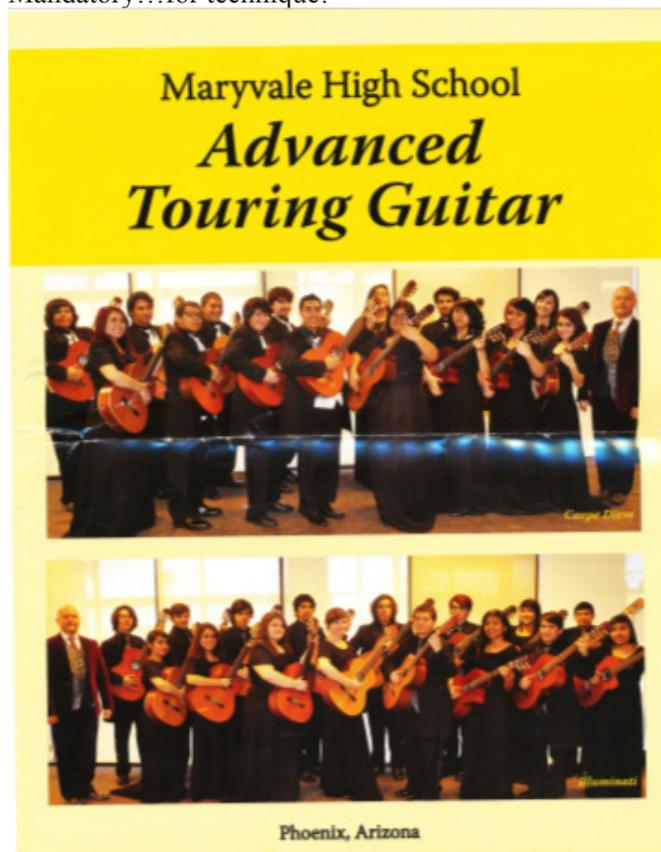
I designed and built my program from ground zero. There was nothing here 16 years ago. I simply treated this class like any other TOP performing ensemble and a giant was created.

What Guitar Ensemble published collections do you like to work from?

We almost own the entire library from GSP. We use everything out there. GSP is my primary resource. For my beginners I use a lot of Andrew Forrest and Thorlakson stuff as it is free!

Your thoughts of "classical guitar seating position" or "right knee" for your groups?

Mandatory...for technique!



Your thoughts on finger-style rest strokes or the use of guitar pick (plectrum) within your groups?

We use both for color and effect.

What kind of thought do you put into setting up/seating your students in chairs for the Guitar Ensemble Performance or during rehearsals?

As they are learning a piece they sit with their section. Later they are mixed so that they can hear all parts.

Glenn McCarthy, Chair of the Guitar Council of the National Association for Music Education, Reston, VA.

Any words of wisdom from a Guitar Ensemble teacher you would like to share?

There are things that any ensemble shares in a performance. Precision, dynamic contrast, intonation, and tone are examples of characteristics you would address in any ensemble.

What were some obstacles you faced when you first formed or inherited your Guitar Ensemble at your school?

Finding guitar ensemble literature in the 70's was tough. I used everything from clarinet pieces to arranging pieces that the students would want to play. No Internet.

Your thoughts of “classical guitar seating position” or “right knee” for your groups?



Do you wear flip-flops when you're running a marathon, do you wear dress shoes at the beach? It depends on the guitar you're using and /or the style of literature you're playing.

Your thoughts on finger-style rest strokes or the use of guitar pick (plectrum) within your groups?

Depends on the piece. You wouldn't play a bluegrass tune with fingers.

What are some performing opportunity highlights that your groups participated in?

Playing at the White House visitor center was a great experience for my students. We would get a VIP tour after our performance.

What kind of thought do you put into setting up/seating your students in chairs for the Guitar Ensemble Performance or during rehearsals?

I like to group the parts together but I change the part assignments on different pieces.

Do you have any special rehearsal techniques or exercises that you would like to share with readers?

One thing that was successful was to have the students sing their parts.

What direction or positive thought about the future of guitar ensemble do you have that you would like to share?

There is a difference in guitar programs. Is it an introductory class or does the program include multiple levels? More schools are offering the multi-level approach in guitar. Just as in band, orchestra or chorus if a guitar student has been playing for multiple years the repertoire will be more advanced and guitar ensemble literature is perfect to develop a guitar student's musicianship.

Matthew Denman, Director of Education for the Guitar Foundation of America, Austin, Texas.

Learn from master teachers in any music discipline. We have a great deal to learn from established band, choir, and orchestra programs. MD

Any words of wisdom from a Guitar Ensemble teacher you would like to share?

Find ways to collaborate with other teachers as often as possible. This is a powerful way to advocate for your program. Don't be an isolationist. If you are don't be surprised when your program is the first one to be cut the next time your school is forced to "reorganize."

Visit your principal often with good news and very rarely with bad news. You want your principal to look forward to your visits so that when the time comes your administration will go the extra mile to help you and your students out.

Spend a great deal of time working on your conducting. Use a baton – we are closer to a percussion ensemble than a string orchestra. Our attack has to be exact. Fingers and hands don't cut it although you'll see videos of me conducting with my hands. I always lose my baton. :)

Create programs that are entertaining. I always ask myself if I would like to come to this concert if I were a total stranger. A boring program is damaging to everyone involved.

Get help. I exist in part to help you succeed. If I can help you with any planning or advice feel free to contact me at education@guitarfoundation.org

What Guitar Ensemble published collections do you like to work from?

I like any thing I can get my hands on. I am very impressed Productions Doz. I love the quality of their work and that if I need a piece instantly, and I often do, then I can just purchase the PDF online.



Your thoughts of “classical guitar seating position” or “right knee” for your groups?

I start my students in a standard classical position. I encourage my students to use the dynarett pad for their left leg instead of using a footstool. That being said I am not a fanatic and my students can play in different positions. For me there just has to be a well-reasoned argument from the student as to why the guitar works a certain way for them. It is important that students don't just pick a position out of laziness or familiarity.

Your thoughts on finger-style rest strokes or the use of guitar pick (plectrum) within your groups?

I enjoy many musical styles. I often play acoustic and electric guitar and I think many popular styles lend themselves towards using picks. However, when you are asking students to sit in classical position I believe students should be taught fingerstyle.

What kind of thought do you put into setting up/seating your students in chairs for the Guitar Ensemble Performance or during rehearsals?

I like a half moon shape and multiple rows for large ensembles.

What direction or positive thought about the future of guitar ensemble do you have that you would like to share?

I think the continued growth of guitar programs in public and private schools is inevitable at this point. Everything we are trying seems to be working.

Kevin Vigil, Heritage High School, Leesburg, VA

Any words of wisdom from a Guitar Ensemble teacher you would like to share?

Team building is very important for a successful musical ensemble. It is important for the ensemble members to develop a sense of community and ownership in what they do. Each individual plays an important role in the success of a performance.

Most musical ensembles are not able to switch parts. Every vocalist has a particular range (soprano, alto, tenor, bass). All the musicians in a guitar ensemble have the same range. For this reason, I find it important for ensemble members to rotate parts from piece to piece. Every member of the ensemble will have the experience of playing melody, bass or harmonic parts. Students need to learn to lead, follow and support the musical interests in a given piece.

While the ensemble develops a sense of pride in rehearsals, it is important to build an audience for the ensemble. Sharing music with the community at large is a very rewarding experience for students. It is very disappointing for the students when there is not much of an audience to support their efforts. I have found that the more I communicate with parents, the larger our audience. When the parents attend, so do the siblings and friends. This builds excitement. Hosting an after show reception help build the community as well.

What were some obstacles you faced when you first formed or inherited your Guitar Ensemble at your school?

When I inherited the guitar program at Heritage High School, we only had two levels of guitar: Beginning/Intermediate and Intermediate/Advanced. In addition, many students were placed in the wrong class. We now have four lev-

els of guitar: Beginning, Intermediate, Advanced, and Artist. While there are challenges for school counselors to schedule students appropriately, this leveling system has improved instruction exponentially.

Money can also be a challenge. I probably spend between \$700 – 800 per year on strings alone. It is also important to build a library of music. Since students often stay in the program for up to four years, I try not to recycle music more than every four years. This can get expensive quickly when you have four levels for which to provide music. I have been fortunate on this end. While the school system provides an instructional allotment, I get further support from our Heritage Music Boosters. I'm not sure what I would do without the support of this parent/student organization.

What Guitar Ensemble published collections do you like to work from?

There is an ever-growing body of literature for guitar ensemble and I cannot say that I stick to one collection for multiple years in a row. Mel Bay has published many collections that I have used that have been arranged by Donald Miller, Glenn Caluda and Alan Hirsh. I enjoy the Signature Series published by Class Guitar Resources with composers Leo Welch, Romana Hartmetz and Jeffrey Tanner. Everything that Jeffrey Tanner (Funky Bear Music) publishes is brilliant. My students love Jürg Kindle's and Miroslav Lončar's compositions published by Les Productions D'Oz. D'Oz/Doberman-Yppan has a multitude of music for guitar ensemble, so I'd strongly recommend browsing their website. Another wonderful resource is www.guitarcurriculum.com which is hosted by the Austin Classical Guitar Society. If you purchase their online membership, there is a plethora of graded ensemble pieces that you can print and customize.

Your thoughts of “classical guitar seating position” or “right knee” for your groups?

I don't believe in “classical guitar seating position”, I believe in a healthy position no matter what style of instrument one plays. In most cases, if you think about a marriage between physiology and physics, the guitar will be angled at about 45 degrees. In order to do this, the traditional manner has been to place the left foot on a footstool. While this works well, there are many guitar supports that will allow the guitarist to keep their feet flat on the floor, which helps to prevent back strain. While many of my students use footstools, I have a growing number of students who use one of the many guitar supports available today.

It is important that the ensemble sit consistently for various reasons. If some hold the guitar on the right leg while others on the right, guitars will be banging into each other.

Additionally, if the ensemble holds the guitar at an angle, the soundboard will project to the audience. If students hold the guitar on their right leg, the soundboard is usually facing the side.

Your thoughts on finger-style rest strokes or the use of guitar pick (plectrum) within your groups?

Rest stroke, free-stroke, and picks all produce a different musical effect. All can be useful. I think of the orchestration of the ensemble. If everyone member of the ensemble plays with the same tonal characteristic, it is sometimes difficult to distinguish the various parts. While a part's range can make a distinction, timbre is also a useful tool for orchestration. The director needs to listen carefully and study the score to make sure that the proper balance is in tact.

All approaches to plucking a string are valid, but need to be chosen for musical reasons. Consistency in each section is important. If the director chooses for once section to use rest stroke just behind the sound hole, all students in that section should do this. If the director decides that all students in a particular section should play ponticello free strokes, all students should do so. Tonal inconsistency in each section is what is most important. Whether using a pick for a tremolo or a soft tasto rest stroke for a beautiful melody, musical decisions must be made and executed consistently.



What are some performing opportunity highlights that your groups participated in?

Every other year, my students have performed for the Yale Guitar Extravaganza at the Yale School of Music. In 2012, students from Loudoun County Public Schools performed the world premiere of *Shiki: Seasons of Japan* composed and conducted by Shingo Fujii with the Los Angeles Guitar Quartet as the solo ensemble. We also did the world premiere of *Cascade* by Omid Zoufonoun which was commissioned by the Guitar Foundation of America (2013). Our school system created video documentaries of each of these events, please visit: <http://www.loudoun.k12.va.us/Page/132986>

What kind of thought do you put into setting up/seating your students in chairs for the Guitar Ensemble Performance or during rehearsals?

Seating for performance and rehearsal really depends on many factors: the size of my classroom vs. the size of the performance venue. In an ideal world, our seating would be the same in the classroom as it would be on stage. This does not always happen and varies by the number of students that I have in any of my four ensembles.

More and more I have looked for pieces with more than 4 parts. I love it when I find music like Andrew York's *Attic* with 9 parts. The piece requires a solo trio in front with two antiphonal guitar choirs in back. This is a case in which the seating is very specific for the piece.

As much ensemble music is written in three to five parts, I try to think of arranging seating position like a standard string orchestra. Guitar 1 = Violin 1, Guitar 2 = Violin 2, Guitar 3 = Viola, Guitar 4 = Cello/bass, Guitar 5 = Bass. In the end, I may adjust placements due to the demands of the music. There is not necessarily a set template for each piece.

Do you have any special rehearsal techniques or exercises that you would like to share with readers?

When I hand out a new piece of music, we start with a rough read through. I then send the students to practice rooms for sectionals. I check coach each section and then we return to the classroom to play through again. Once students know their parts, I have the students work in small ensembles with one person per part. This requires each student to fully understand their part and is the best stage for assessment. When students are able to play well in sections and small ensembles, the full ensemble is much stronger.

The guitar attracts a wide range of personalities and backgrounds. I have seen honors students perform side by side with students who are failing all their other classes. By playing music from various cultures, students can learn more about themselves and the world around them. The guitar offers an outlet for students who are not interested in other activities. KV

Guitar Ensemble Music Web Sites (compiled by Glen McCarthy)

<http://www.flatpik.com/Sheet-music-Downloads>
<http://jerrysnyder.com>
<http://www.guitarfoundation.org>
<http://www.gspguitar.com>
<http://www.productionsdoz.com>
<http://classguitar.com>

<http://www.dobermaneditions.com/>
<http://www.halleonard.com/guitarBass.jsp>
<http://www.fjhmusic.com/guitar.htm>
<http://guitarsessions.com/>
<http://www.delcamp.net/>
<http://www.thomaskoenigs.de/>
<http://www.classicalguitarcanada.ca/>
<http://www.leesollory.co.uk/>
<http://guitarensemblemusic.com/>
<http://suzukiassociation.org/guitar/>
<http://www.melbay.com>
<http://www.clearnote.net>
<http://www.daddario.com>
<http://www.classguitar.com/>
<http://www.alfred.com/>

In addition, the following sites offer free ensemble music:

- * <http://www.guitardownunder.com>
- * <http://www.derek-hasted.co.uk>
- * <http://www.classicalguitarschool.net/en/>
- * <http://www.funkybearmusic.com/>
- * <http://www.freeguitarensemblemusic.com/>
- * <http://www.forrestguitarensembles.co.uk/>

Thomas Amoriello currently teaches guitar classes at Reading Fleming Intermediate School in Flemington, NJ where he has introduced the instrument to over 5000 students and counting. He earned his Master of Music in Classical Guitar Performance from Shenandoah and is the Guitar Education Chairperson for the New Jersey Music Education Association. He resides in Lambertville, NJ and you can learn more about Tom by visiting www.tomamoriello.com.

This article was originally published in the May, 2015 issue of Tempo Magazine, the official publication of the New Jersey Music Education Association.



Edwin E. Gordon

1927-2015

Edwin E. Gordon has been known throughout the world as a preeminent researcher, teacher, author, editor, and lecturer in the field of music education. Since 1997 he was Distinguished Professor in Residence at the University of South Carolina, following his retirement as the Carl E. Sesebare Professor of Research in Music Education at Temple University in Philadelphia.

In addition to advising Ph.D. candidates in music education, Dr. Gordon has devoted many years to teaching music to preschool children. Through extensive research, Professor Gordon has made major contributions to the study of music aptitudes, stages and types of assimilation, music learning theory, and rhythm in movement and music, to name just a few areas.

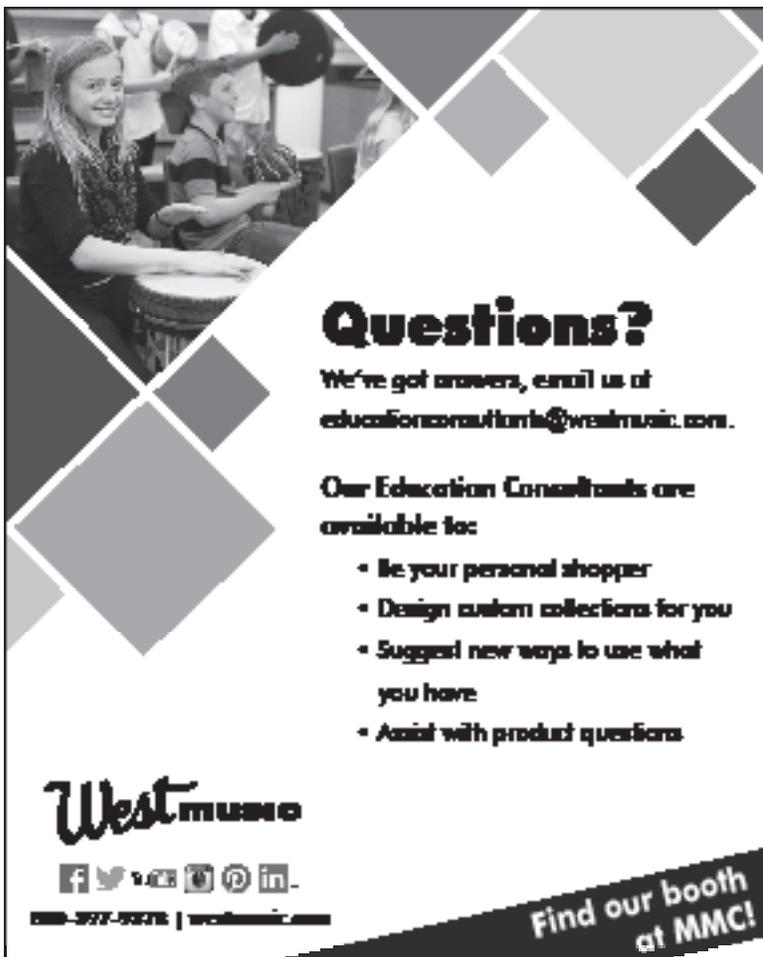
Before devoting his life to the field of music education, he earned bachelor's and master's degrees in string bass performance from the Eastman School of Music and played string bass with the Gene Krupa band. He went on to earn a Ph.D. from the University of Iowa in 1958.

Professor Gordon and his work have been portrayed nationally and internationally on the NBC Today Show, in the New York Times, in USA Today, and in a variety of European and Asian publications.

Dr. Gordon passed away on December 4, 2015 in Mason City, IA, where he was cared for by his daughter Pam.

Read Gordon's "Roots of Music Learning Theory" on Edwin Gordon's Facebook page
http://www.facebook.com/westmusic?note_id=104934506264301

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- Suggest new ways to use what you have
- Assist with product questions

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Research to “Real Life”: Implications of Recent Research for Elementary General Music

Heather Nelson Shouldice

Many music teachers perceive research as being wholly removed from education practice, something that only those in the “ivory tower” find interesting or meaningful and having little direct connection to teachers’ day-to-day lives in the classroom. Some teachers believe research is cumbersome to read and understand, littered with academic prose and jargon. Still others feel they have no time to read about current education research; they have to plan tomorrow’s lessons! However, it is worth it for music teachers to be aware of current research in music education because it can be invaluable in informing teaching practice and guiding decision-making in the classroom. This article will summarize three recent research studies of relevance for elementary general music teachers and discuss their implications for teaching practice.

“The Effects of Harmonic Accompaniment on the Tonal Improvisations of Students in First Through Sixth Grade”

What Did the Researcher Want to Know?

What are the effects of root melody (bassline) accompaniment on the tonal improvisations of elementary school students?

What Did the Researcher Do?

Guilbault (2009) studied 419 of her own students in grades one through six for almost an entire school year. These students were divided into two groups, with approximately half of the classes (the “treatment” group) experiencing “root melody” accompaniments during music instruction and the other half (the “control” group) experiencing only a cappella singing.

Similar to a bassline, “a root melody is the melodic line created by the fundamental pitches of the harmonic functions found in a song” (p. 84). Pitches in a root melody can be played/sung and sustained once per chord change or repeated on each beat. The students in the treatment group experienced root melodies with approximately 80% of the songs included in each class period and during improvisation activities. These root melody accompaniments were either played on a pitched instrument (e.g., xylophone, piano), played by a voice recording, sung by the teacher/researcher as the students sang a song, sung by the students as the teacher/researcher sang a song, or sung by the student(s) as another student(s) sang a song. The students in the control group experienced all the same songs and improvisation activities as the treatment group but without any accompaniment.

What Did the Researcher Find?

At the end of the school year, Guilbault (2009) recorded each student vocally improvising an ending to an unfamiliar song without accompaniment. Three music educators judged the recordings, rating the degree to which each student improvised a melodic ending that used clearly implied harmonic changes and good harmonic rhythm. Statistical analysis of these ratings revealed that the students in the treatment group (who had experienced root melody accompaniments throughout the school year) were able to vocally improvise song endings that made more harmonic sense than students in the control group (who had not experienced root melody accompaniments).

What Does This Mean for My Classroom?

Exposing students to harmonic progressions in familiar songs helps them develop better harmonic understanding, which in turn enables students to vocally improvise with a better sense of harmonic progression. If elementary general music teachers wish to help their students develop the ability to vocally improvise with a good sense of harmonic progression, they might consider providing students with many opportunities to experience root melody accompaniments to the songs they learn in music class. Teachers could do this by playing root melody accompaniments on an instrument, singing them while students sing a song, teaching students to sing root melody accompaniments while the teacher sings the song, or having students sing songs and root melody accompaniments in two groups or even as duets.

“Exploring Informal Music Learning in a Professional Development Community of Music Teachers”

What Did the Researcher Want to Know?

How do music teachers in a professional development community implement informal music learning in their classrooms, and how do their beliefs and practices evolve as a result?

What Did the Researcher Do?

Kastner (2014) studied four elementary music teachers as they participated in a professional development community (PDC)—a group of teachers who work together to develop their teaching practice and grow their professional expertise. This PDC focused on the topic of informal music learning, which “is the term commonly used to describe processes individuals use when learning music without teacher-directed, formal instruction” (p. 72) and typically involves vernacular music genres such as popular music. The teachers met biweekly for six months to discuss readings about informal music learning, develop ways they could implement informal music learning in their classrooms, and share their experiences in trying those ideas. In addition to studying the teachers’ interactions during these PDC meetings, Kastner also observed informal music learning activities in each teacher’s classroom. These informal music learning activities included “music share days” that involved students performing music from outside of school during their music classes, playing popular melodies on recorder, and aurally creating and performing vocal or instrumental covers of popular songs in small groups.

What Did the Researcher Find?

Among several themes, Kastner (2014) found that the teachers utilized a variety of pedagogical practices in implementing informal music learning in their classrooms. The four teachers varied in the amount of control they gave their students during informal music learning activities, including in the selection of songs and the organization of students into small groups. For example, when having students create “covers” of popular songs, some teachers chose specific selections for their students while others gave students complete freedom to choose their own songs. The teachers also varied in the amount of scaffolding they provided during informal music learning activities. While some teachers were completely “hands-off” in letting students work on informal music learning activities like arranging cover songs, other teachers found that students needed more guidance in order to be successful and provided this guidance by modeling examples, providing song lyrics, or “giving permission” for students to make their own choices (p. 82).

Kastner (2014) also discovered that the teachers in the PDC felt their implementation of informal music learning in their classrooms was extremely valuable. First, these teachers found that informal music learning experiences enhanced student motivation; they observed that student engagement was quite high during informal music learning activities, even among students who “were typically reluctant to participate” in music class (p. 83). Second, the teachers also valued the ways in which informal music learning helped develop their students’ musical independence; one participant noted that, as a result of their experiences with informal music learning, her students “can hear it [music], they can jam” (p. 83).

What Does This Mean for My Classroom?

In addition to formal instruction, elementary music teachers might consider incorporating informal music learning activities in their classrooms. Potential benefits of providing elementary students with opportunities to experience informal music learning include an increase in student motivation and development of students’ independent musicianship. Elementary music teachers can vary the amount of freedom and control they give their students in the selection of repertoire and the organization of students into small groups and can provide their students with different types and amounts of scaffolding in order to help them experience success with informal music learning activities.

“Elementary Students’ Definitions and Self-Perceptions of Being a ‘Good Musician’”

What Did the Researcher Want to Know?

What do elementary students believe it means to be a “good musician” and to what extent do they perceive themselves to be “good musicians?”

What Did the Researcher Do?

Shouldice (2014) individually interviewed 347 students in grades one through four. The students answered questions pertaining to the kinds of things a good musician can do, how one knows if a person is a good musician, and who can be a good musician. At the conclusion of each interview, each student was asked to choose the statement that best described him/herself (see scale in Figure 1) and explain why.

I am NOT a good musician.	I am an OK musician.	I am a PRETTY GOOD musician.	I am a VERY GOOD musician.	I am one of the BEST musicians in my class.
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Figure 1. Scale to measure students’ perceptions of themselves as ‘good musicians’.

What Did the Researcher Find?

While students across all grade levels most commonly described a “good musician” as someone who plays an instrument, practices, and/or sings well, other characteristics fluctuated across grade levels, suggesting that students’ perceptions of what it means to be a “good musician” may change over time in relation to their own experiences. Statistical analysis showed that students in grade one perceived themselves as better musicians than did students in upper grade levels, indicating that elementary students’ perceptions of their own musical ability may diminish as they get older.

Qualitative analysis of the data revealed that some children’s ability self-perceptions were based on how they believed others perceived their abilities, such as a first-grade girl who knew she was a good musician “because my [music] teacher always picks me first” (p. 336), or were reached as a result of comparing themselves to others. A number of students believed that innate musical talent is necessary in order for a person to be a “good musician;” their comments included the belief that “only some people are born with the talent” and “either you got it or you don’t” (p.

339). Additionally, responses from some students implied the belief that skill in certain musical genres or modes of music making do not qualify one as a “good musician,” such as one second-grade boy’s statement that rappers and beat-boxers cannot be good musicians and that he himself was not a good musician despite describing himself as a “rapping pro.”

What Does This Mean for My Classroom?

Elementary music teachers should be aware of the tendency for students’ musical ability self-perceptions to diminish over time and work to help students maintain positive musical identities as they get older. Teachers also should be aware of the ways in which they might inadvertently communicate their own judgments of students’ musical abilities and/or beliefs about the value of certain musical genres or modes of musicking. Additionally, teachers can encourage students to focus on effort and practice as determinants of musical ability rather than emphasizing innate musical talent.

The Value of Research in “Real Life”

Rather than assuming we know what is effective or doing something because “that’s how we’ve always done it,” music teachers can advance their teaching practice in an evidence-based way by reading current music education research. Research can illuminate phenomena pertaining to music teaching and learning, moving the profession forward by informing our actions in the classroom, encouraging us to try new ideas, and posing new questions for further exploration. Specifically, the implications discussed in this article illustrate ways in which research findings can shape practice for elementary general music teachers.

In providing these summaries of recent research studies, my hope is to not only provide a bit of insight to inform your teaching practicing but also to inspire you to read more research, including the full articles cited. As a member of the Michigan Music Education Association and the National Association for Music Education (NAfME), you have access to NAfME’s free online journals, including *General Music Today* and *Update: Applications of Research in Music Education*, both of which are excellent sources of music education research publications. Recent articles in these journals that are of particular interest to elementary general music teachers include Hedden’s (2012) review of research on children’s singing and Koops and Keppen’s (2015) review of research on enjoyment in musical interactions.

In addition to reading more music education research, you might also consider getting involved in music education research yourself! Teacher research, sometimes called ac-

tion research, is a way for teachers to pose questions and gather information regarding what goes on in their own classrooms as a means for “gaining insight, developing reflective practice, effecting positive changes in the school environment (and on educational practices in general), and improving student outcomes” (Painter, n.d., para. 3). If there is a topic you are curious about or a problem you want to solve in your classroom, why not conduct your own teacher research project? If do not feel knowledgeable (or adventurous!) enough to conduct research on your own, you might contact a music education faculty member at one of the Michigan colleges/universities in your area to let them know you would be willing to allow them to conduct a research project in your classroom. All three of the studies summarized in this article took place in Michigan and involved local teachers and/or students!

Regardless of how you might choose to get involved, I hope you acknowledge the value of music education research. It is not just for those in the “ivory tower.” Research has the power to illuminate teaching practice, inform your day-to-day actions in the classroom, and help you provide the best possible music learning experience for your students.

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Heather N. Shouldice is Assistant Professor of Music Education at Eastern Michigan University, where she teaches undergraduate and graduate courses and supervises student teachers. Dr. Shouldice currently serves on the board of the Michigan Music Education Association and is president-elect of the Gordon Institute for Music

Learning, for which she is also a professional development faculty member.

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MMEA Announces 2015 Award Recipients

The Michigan Music Education Association (MMEA) is pleased to announce our 2015 Award Recipients:

Colleen Conway, 2015 MMEA Music Educator of the Year

Betty Anne Younker, 2015 MMEA Award of Merit

Lisa DuPrey, 2015 MMEA Hilda Humphreys Service Award

Rob Spagnuolo & John Deiter (Dewitt Public Schools), 2015 MMEA Outstanding Administrator Award

Colleen Conway is Professor of Music Education at the University of Michigan. Betty Anne Younker is Dean and Professor of Music Education at the University of Western Ontario. Lisa DuPrey teaches elementary general music in the Davison Community Schools. Rob Spagnuolo is the Assistant Superintendent for Finance & Operations for the Dewitt Public Schools. John Deiter is the Superintendent for the Dewitt Public Schools.

All awards will be presented at the MMEA Coffee Hour/Annual Meeting, to be held at the 11th annual Michigan Music Conference on Saturday, January 23rd, 2016 in Grand Rapids, Michigan. Music teachers from across Michigan, as well as special guests from the recipients' schools, will be on hand to witness and assist with the award presentations. Congratulations to these fine music educators and supporters!

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Should I Continue With Marching Band After High School? Three Points to Consider As I Decide

Marty Marks

Note: Music Educators, please share this article with your seniors. While it is specific to marching band, its principles apply when considering participation in any collegiate ensemble - choirs, orchestras, wind bands, or jazz bands.

Many of us reflect on our senior year of high school as one of our most memorable rites of passage. So many decisions are made that have an impact on the rest of our lives – particularly regarding education and career. During their college search, many seniors view the college band experience as an important factor for consideration. Band students who intend to major in music education will invariably include marching band in their plans, but this article discusses three points (intellectual and emotional) for all band seniors to consider as they decide whether they wish to continue.

Point #1 – Won't marching band take up too much time?

Well ahead of their first day of class as a college freshman, students who are serious about academic success are already aware that they cannot fully predict how their weekly routines will unfold. How will they balance their studies with the rest of their time? They tend to be conservative when choosing commitments, and many come from marching programs that require a significant time commitment during the fall season.

College and university bands post semester schedules during the summer before

their band camps convene. These schedules include every rehearsal and performance – a source of consolation to students who are eager to nail down their weekly routines. Students should request a copy of this schedule as they decide whether to join. Many are surprised to discover that often, college marching bands require less time than high school bands. Even when college bands require more time, it is comforting to know that so many other participants can manage the commitment and still balance their schedules.

Point #2 – What if I am inadequate as a performer?

College bands host a wide range of musical ability within their ranks. Some can already perform at a professional level, while others have only attained the basic skills necessary to contribute to their high school band. Everyone within this range can make a substantial contribution to a college marching band. What does a college band director perceive as the most valuable quality in a band member? Is it the ability to play faster, higher, or louder, or to move with the grace of a skilled dancer while marching? These are admirable qualities, but the most sought after ability is dependability. Regardless of talent or experience, every student can choose to be dependable – to be physically and mentally present in rehearsal, to have all required equipment on hand, and (believe it or not) to have on the right socks when in uniform! When deciding whether to continue with band, seniors should worry less about comparing their musical abilities and focus more the high value

of their contribution to the band's success by simply being where they are supposed to be.

Point #3 – How do I cope with differences when I compare a college band to my high school band?

College marching bands are made up of participants ranging from those who have never previously marched to veterans of highly competitive bands. Every high school graduate has a number of pre-conceived ideas or opinions as to how a marching band should operate.

Once a student graduates from a high school program, many elements of their past experience will never be repeated. This is reality, whether it is a source of grief or relief. Typically, there are three different levels of coping factors, discussed below from least to most challenging: Some students attended school where marching band did not exist, or used minimal movement. Others participated in parades only, or exhibitions and festivals where critiques or division ratings may have been used as assessment. These students may have to cope with differences in band size, styles of uniform, styles of marching or choreography, or new and different band traditions or procedures. For these, the transition into a college marching band is less dramatic.

A more difficult challenge for many students is the transition to what they perceive as a more humble role. Initially, they might see a change in assignment – from drum major to section member, from piccolo to 2nd flute, from snare drum to cymbals – as a demotion. They have to decide whether this change reflects on their self-worth, or the value of their contribution to the band. Many students discontinue participation in band because they cannot reconcile themselves to this change. High school band directors can ease this transition by managing these roles within their bands. If every student role contribution is frequently affirmed as vital, and if the path of rising from section member to section leader is duly appreciated, it is easier for college freshman marchers to reconcile themselves to their new role. Further, graduates of college marching bands frequently place great value on their life experiences as their role within the band evolved from their first to last season of participation.

The consensus of opinion among college marching band directors (from programs of all sizes) is that competitive high school marchers have the most difficulty coping with marching band after their senior year. This is not a complaint, or a negative observation – their misgiv-

ings are understandable. How do you compare a college marching band to an experience where hours are spent on the details of uniform movement, or thousands of dollars are spent on drill design, custom arrangements, or lavish props and elaborate backdrops that require stage crews for each presentation? When your high school band commissions compositions for their show, how do you perceive a band that presents a medley of pop or Broadway tunes at halftime? How do you keep judgment in check when college peers have not experienced the drama and intensity of competition, or when they seem to take less pride in their horn angle or body carriage?

These students bring great value to college programs; but the only way they can reconcile themselves to fully enjoy the experience is to find a way to place it into an unrelated compartment of their minds. Competitive high school and college bands share many traits, but they are simply not the same thing. With a measure of resilience and understanding, competitive marchers can eventually find a way to fully enjoy their college band experience.

Conclusion

Beyond the monetary value many colleges offer in the form of participation scholarships, there is lifelong value in continuing in a marching band, or any college music group. Music is a reflection of our humanity. It connects us all at the least, and at the most it brings affirmation, forgiveness and healing. College ensemble participation also facilitates life-long music making, enabling expression and collaboration with others in ways that non-musicians cannot experience. Secondary and collegiate music educators should work together to ensure more students have access to outlets for performance beyond graduation.



Dr. Marty Marks is currently completing his 12th year as Director of Bands at Adrian College in Michigan. He began his teaching career in 1981, and holds music degrees from Oklahoma Baptist University, the University of Central Oklahoma, and the University of Oklahoma. He is an honorary member of MSBOA, and is consulted frequently as a clinician and adjudicator.



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Producing an Alumni Musical: An Interview with Judy Roelofs

Chuck Norris

During the summer of 2014 I had the pleasure of being involved with the Unity Christian High School alumni musical production. Because the experience was so overwhelmingly positive for everyone involved, I thought to ask the director, Mrs. Judy Roelofs (choral director emerita, Unity Christian High School, Hudsonville) a few questions about the process of taking on such an ambitious project. I hope the following dialog will serve as a starting point for those who have considered or are considering producing an alumni musical. – CN

Why did you decide to do an alumni musical?

The idea was born about 5 years ago when several alumni returned to attend the high school's musical and asked about the possibility of doing an all alumni show. After much thought and consideration, I realized what an opportunity this would be to showcase the many talented alumni, many of whom had gone on to major in music in college and were now professional musicians. It was also a way to promote and demonstrate the development and level of the music program.

What musical and when and where did you do the musical?

The choice of the musical was a no-brainer. I have ALWAYS wanted to do Les Miserables, but never wanted to tackle it with high school students. This was the perfect group and venue to tackle this show. We chose June 2014 as the performance dates, and we performed it at the Zeeland High School auditorium in Zeeland, Michigan. We decided on 3 performances, Thursday-Saturday.

How far in advance of the proposed production dates did you begin contacting alumni about interest in the production?

We began working one year and a half before the performances.

What kinds of committees were formed to ensure successful fruition of the project?

Began with the steering committee, made up of former "musical parents", three alumni, and the two directors. From the first meetings, we designated the various committees needed, and they included, costumes, set building, pit, fund raising, stage crew, publicity, ticket sales, food and a few smaller ones.

How was the musical financed?

Private donors and program advertisements. We intended to use patron ticket sales to fund the project, but had our expenses covered BEFORE any tickets went on sale!!!

What kind of staffing was required (costuming, pit, sets, etc.) and how did you accomplish it?

For both costumes and sets, we enlisted the help of former committee members, who were parents of musical casts. The costume committee included approximately seven women, and the sets committee varied from week to week, but had a core of approximately 8 guys. The pit was another matter altogether. I wanted the pit to consist of alumni, if possible. We ended up with about 80% alumni, and we hired local musicians to fill in the needed instrumentation. Dr. Charles Norris, a very good friend of mine, graciously volunteered to direct the pit, after a couple of alumni options fell through. His leadership and expertise were invaluable!

How did you go about casting the show?

The survey that was initially sent out to determine interest, including questions concerning their interest and ability to take on either a lead role, supporting role or chorus only. We also included a question concerning vocal ranges. My hope was to cast all the lead roles with music

majors, or at least those who had continued to participate in music since finishing high school. From the results of the questionnaire, we began casting the lead roles, went on to the supporting roles, and finished with the chorus roles.

The roles of the children (Gavroche, little Cosette, and little Eponine) were cast at a later time. We enlisted the help of the elementary school teachers who recommended several children for these roles. We auditioned these students and chose our children cast members from these auditions.

What kind of rehearsal schedule did you develop and how did it work (from inception to end)?

Rehearsals were the most challenging part of the project. The cast included 15 years of alumni students, and they were all over geographically. We had college students, working alumni, parents of small children, and a few others as well. Trying to get them all together was a logistical nightmare. We decided to hold one Saturday rehearsal per month from December through May. I also held one special rehearsal for the ABC society in late May. These rehearsals consisted of purely singing. We went through all the music. Made sure that everyone knew what part they were to learn, determined balance and blend, and just focused exclusively on singing. Every cast member was responsible for learning and memorizing their own music. They were on the honor system, and they produced! I would ask them to have certain songs learned by the next rehearsal, and they always came back prepared. WOW!

During these rehearsals we surveyed the cast as to what time would be the most convenient to rehearse once we got to our Zeeland rehearsals. They preferred evenings, so for the 10 days before performance, we began meeting at the Zeeland Auditorium beginning at 4 p.m. and we rehearsed until 10-11 p.m. It wasn't until our Zeeland rehearsals began that we introduced or rehearsed any blocking, etc. In actuality, we produced this show with literally 9 days on stage.

How many alumni did you contact and how many actually joined the cast and/or the pit, committees, etc.?

I began by going through old musical programs, and selected those students who had been in at least 2 shows in high school and had exhibited a positive work ethic and attitude during high school. We contacted, including pit musicians, approximately 100-120 alumni. From that initial list, we ended up with 48 cast members, 11 crewmembers, and 13 pit musicians.

Looking back, what are things you might do differently on a second production?

Hindsight is always wonderful, but the experience was an overall very positive and rewarding experience. I would have

a more detailed rehearsal schedule (during production weeks), and have that schedule determined earlier. It was SO difficult to determine how long anything was going to take, and it made the rehearsal schedule difficult. I hate to have people sitting around at rehearsals, but with the complexity and enormity of the project, this was one area of collateral damage.

Is there anything you might add that was not covered in these questions?

What a huge project, but what an immensely rewarding one. However, if anyone wants to tackle a project of this magnitude, you must be prepared to invest a huge amount of organization, pre-planning, discussions, and ground work BEFORE you even think about sending out the initial questionnaires. There will be disappointments (people that have to back out), frustrations (schedules, however well thought out, that don't quite work out), and stress (microphones that die, sets that don't work). Also, the difference in working with adults as opposed to students was both exciting and challenging. We all needed to define and appreciate our roles.

Most importantly, be able to relax, laugh, and enjoy the unique and special experience that you are blessed to be a part of. Having all those alumni who were so special as students, come back and be on one stage was priceless. They didn't even KNOW each other at the beginning, but bonded and connected on a very special level. Siblings got to perform together, friends were reunited, and new friendships were formed.

The project was a fund-raiser for the new campus that was being started. My initial hope was to raise between \$20-25K. When all was said and done, we raised \$47,000 for the new campus. What a feeling of accomplishment for everyone involved. Each person involved is now truly invested and a part of the new school, and has a PERSONAL investment in it. As I told a friend after the production was finished: "It was the most difficult, frustrating, stressful, rewarding, joyful, and memorable experience I have ever had the privilege of being involved in." Can't say that about many projects!



Charles Norris, Professor of Music Education at Grand Valley State University, holds masters and doctoral degrees from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. His undergraduate work was completed at Indiana State University in Terre Haute. A thirteen-year veteran of K-12 music teaching, he brings practical experience into a variety of music education methods courses at Grand Valley State University. Dr. Norris also teaches aural perception and sight singing, choral conducting, conducts GVSU Varsity Men and directs graduate research. Dr. Norris can be reached at norrisc@gvsu.edu.

Michigan Music Conference

2016 Highlights

MMEA Activities

Pre-Conference Events (Thursday)

Elementary General Music

Clinicians: Peter & Mary Alice Amidon

Topic: Creating a Dynamic Learning Community with Traditional Dance, Song and Storytelling

Time: 9 AM – 4 PM

Location: JW Marriott Ballroom

SCECHs: 5 ½

Research Symposium

Keynote Speaker: Dr. Colleen Conway

Topic: Forum for the dissemination and discussion of new scholarship relating to music teaching and learning

Time: 11 AM – 2 PM

Location: Grandview

SCECHs: 2 ½

Conference Special Events (Friday & Saturday)

MMEA Headliner

Clinician: Brian Hiller

Topic: Orff

Times: Various, Friday & Saturday

Location: Pantlind

MMEA Research Poster Session

Time: Friday, 9:30 AM

Location: Ambassador Foyer

Early Career Teacher Meet & Greet

Details: Join us for a friendly gathering filled with tips, discussion, sharing and information about how make your first years of teaching rewarding and successful. Come help us build a supportive community of new music teachers!

Time: Friday, 4:00 PM

Location: Heritage Hill

MMEA / NAfME Collegiate Reception

Details: A great chance for MMEA/NAfME collegiate members to hang out & socialize with fellow future music educators from other schools. Snacks & beverages will be provided.

Time: Friday, 7:00 PM

Location: JW Marriott Ballroom Foyer

MMEA Member Coffee Hour

Details: Free for members. Includes complimentary coffee/tea & donuts. Great chance to socialize with MMEA members. Will include awards presentation & brief membership meeting

Time: Saturday, 8:00 AM

Location: Pantlind

MMEA Honors Composition Concert

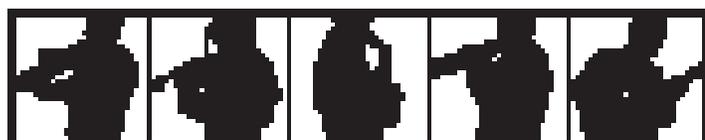
Details: Features K-12 student compositions

Time: Saturday, 1:00 PM

Location: Ambassador Ballroom



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A Report on the 2015 Society for Music Teacher Education Symposium

Christopher M. Marra
Jessica Vaughan-Marra

The 2015 Society of Music Teacher Education (SMTE) Symposium took place on September 17-19 in Greensboro, North Carolina. The conference has been held at The University of North Carolina (UNCG) biannually since 2005. This year UNCG was host to 320 participants for the 10th anniversary of the symposium. The attendance report represented 44 states and 3 countries. Though the majority of the membership is music teacher educators, over 70 graduate students attended the symposium as well (S. Conkling, personal communication, September 20, 2015).

The theme of the 2015 symposium, “Toward a Stronger, Richer Community,” was evident throughout the keynote speeches, presentations, poster sessions, and Areas of Strategic Planning and Action (ASPAs) Meetings. The ASPA meetings were assigned to focus primarily the theme of “equity and inclusion” through their break out sessions. Thursday’s evening presentation began with greetings from symposium chairs, Dr. David Teachout and Dr. Susan Wharton Conkling. After an introduction from Kelly J. Burke, Associate Dean of UNCG, NAFME President and Board Chair, Glenn Nierman, took the floor to give an update to the SMTE membership regarding NAFME’s work with the United States Senate on the Every Child Achieves Bill, which is intended to replace No Child Left Behind.

The evening continued with a beautiful performance by the Peck Elementary String program organized by Dr. Rebecca MacLeod of UNCG supported by Lillian Rauch. This program focuses on social justice through string music education. It began in 2008 as a volunteer exchange program where UNCG string music education majors would tutor third through fourth grade string orchestra students. The group on stage Thursday evening was a combination of the UNCG string musician mentors as well as Peck Elementary String ensemble. They performed two folk tunes, *Silvie* and *Nampaya Omame*, for the attendees.

The Keynote speaker for the evening was Dr.

Gloria Ladson-Billings from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Focusing on the symposium theme of “Toward a Stronger, Richer Community,” as well as the ASPA’s concentration on “Equity and Inclusion,” Ladson-Billings directed the audience’s attention to the history of hip-hop music and how this art can be used as a form of relevant pedagogy. The enlightening address methodically guided the audience through hip-hop’s origins from African American slave music prior to New Orleans’s “Congo Square” to the blues and birth of jazz. Ladson-Billings continued through the music of the sixties and highlighted how church music was transformed to meet the calls of social justice through familiar tunes with new and relevant lyrics that reflected the calls of the Civil Rights movement. She concluded her presentation by reminding the audience of how historians label the significant events of the past and how challenging it can be to identify these moments in the present. Hip-hop is not a fad and it is not going away according to Ladson-Billings. She challenged educators to foster the presence of culture and art form within discussion of history.

Friday and Saturday hosted the bulk of the symposium with 60 sessions, twelve ASPA meetings, poster sessions, and the first ever division meetings of the general membership. Many current and former Michigan music teacher educators were selected to present including ten current faculty members as well as twenty-four university alumni from across the state. The ASPA meetings provided an opportunity for all participants to contribute their thoughts and research (both former and future) towards one or more special action group. The ASPA topics include: Critical Examination of the Curriculum, Cultural Diversity and Social Justice, Music Teacher Educators: Identification, Preparation, and Professional Development, Music Teacher Socialization, Policy, Supporting Beginning Music Teachers, Professional Development for the Experienced Teacher, Program Admission, Assessment, and Alignment, School/University Partnerships, Teacher Evaluation, Teacher Recruitment, and Teacher Retention. A final mind-

map of all ASPAs ongoing research projects can be found at this address: http://smte.us/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/2015_SMTE_ASPA_Goals_Update_after_SMTE2015.pdf

The state of Michigan was well represented in the North Central Division meeting held on Saturday. This meeting encouraged an open dialogue with other surrounding states about common topics and issues in our profession. The topic of edTPA quickly emerged as the most pressing issues confronting our division. The group discussed the many challenges in which this policy has impacted future music educators. By the end of the meeting, the group came to the determination that a major first step in confronting this challenge would be to create an official position statement for NAFME to illustrate where we stand on this topic as a profession. It was decided that Dr. Colleen Conway (University of Michigan) and Dr. Mitchel Robinson (Michigan State University) would co-author the first draft of this position statement for review by the NAFME board and state representation.

The symposium also featured a plenary session with a panel of four music teacher educators who all were able to share their unique and personal experiences on equity and inclusion in our profession. Dr. Martina Vasil from the University of Kentucky suggested that we look for ways to be inclusive of our student's cultural heritage when deciding what musics to select for a curricular unit. Dr. Jason Thompson from Arizona State University asked the audience to consider "what is the relationship between silence and ignorance?" He continued by discussing his personal experiences of feeling both invisible and hyper-visible as an African American at predominantly white campuses and also as a researcher who's work may "not always fit in line with the statue quo" (J. Thompson, lecture, September 18, 2015).

Dr. Joyce McCall from Indiana University echoed Dr. Thompson's research pressures recalling times in which she was told to wait until you get tenure to ask the difficult research questions that might offend others. She posed the question, how does one grapple with a "profession that people assume is so inclusive, [but] is yet so exclusive?" She recalls the distinct feeling that "the profession is not ready for my voice" as an African American female feeling as though we have to "gift wrap" the truth so that the message is more palatable to the profession. Dr. McCall urged the profession to act now by asking, "when are we going to start looking at ourselves and questioning what's really beneath our goal of diversity and inclusion? And are we really ready to put in the work" (J. McCall, lecture, September 18, 2015)?

Joshua Palkki, doctoral student from Michigan State University, shared his story about gender identity both as a student and as a teacher. As teacher educators, he suggest that "dialogue is our biggest tool" for working through these issues in our classes. Citing one of his mentors, Dr. Mitch Robinson from MSU, he asks the question "can we create a safe but uncomfortable space in our classrooms" where you are willing to have or at least be open to having the uncomfortable conversations

in your classrooms in a safe environment? (J. Palkki, lecture, September 18, 2015).

The 2015 SMTE Symposium concluded with a keynote address by Dr. Carlos Abril, professor and director of undergraduate music education at the Frost School of Music at the University of Miami. Dr. Abril was able to come full-circle with the topic of equity and inclusion as he urged the audience to synchronize our social justice efforts as a profession. He highlighted several key moments throughout the symposium that brought about poignant discussion on this topic and challenged our way of thinking about creating a stronger and more inclusive community. Dr. Abril urged teacher educators to "create a safe space to have uncomfortable conversations" where we can remain open to seeing opportunities for teachable moments in our own classes with the hope of cultivating a more inclusive environment and preparing our pre-service teachers to lead these same conversations in their future classrooms. Finally, Dr. Abril echoed the calls of many of other presenters in the symposium by stating that the time to act is now. Those who are in a special position of privilege (referring to music teacher educators) have the distinct responsibility to use that privilege to foster a more inclusive and socially just profession through our actions, not just our words (C. Abril, lecture, September 19, 2015).

The Society of Music Teacher Education will meet again at the NAFME Music Research and Teacher Education National Conference in March 2016 to continue the collaboration and progress from this year's STME symposium. For more details about the 2015 symposium and further information about STME, please visit www.smte.us.



Christopher Marra is currently pursuing his Ph.D. in music education with an emphasis in wind band conducting at the University of Michigan. Before entering this degree program, he taught high school band and orchestra in San Jose, California for the past 10 years. He holds a B.S. in music education from Duquesne University and an M.M. in music education with an emphasis in wind band conducting from Northwestern University.



Jessica Vaughan-Marra is currently pursuing her Ph.D. in music education with an emphasis in string pedagogy at the University of Michigan. Before entering this degree program, she taught middle school band and orchestra in Cupertino, California for the past 9 years. She holds a B.S. in music education from Duquesne University and an M.M. in music education with an emphasis in string pedagogy from Northwestern University.

Guidelines for Submitting Articles



Writing for the *Michigan Music Educator*

The following guidelines should be of help to both prospective and established authors:

1. The Editor encourages the submission of manuscripts on all phases of music education at every instructional level. Please note the contributor's deadlines listed below (step 12).
2. Manuscripts should be concise, to-the-point, and well-structured. An average length for a feature article is from 3 to 4 double spaced, typewritten pages, or around 2,500 words. An average length for a column article is from 1 to 2 double spaced, typewritten pages, or around 1,500 words.
3. Avoid generalities and complex constructions. The article will generally be more interesting, have more impact, and be more persuasive if you try to write in a straightforward & clear manner.
4. You may use any writing style as long as it is appropriate to the type of article you are submitting. Be sure to use the correct form in the References section. If you have questions pertaining to style, please do not hesitate to contact the Editor.
5. *Michigan Music Educator* is always pleased to receive photographs with a manuscript especially when those photographs enhance the information in the text. Digital photos are preferred in pdf, jpg or tiff formats. Please insure all subjects in photographs have provided permission to be included in a publication. Please contact the Editor for a sample media release form.
6. Music examples, diagrams, and footnotes should appear on separate pages at the end the manuscript.
7. Include biographical information on each author with the submitted manuscript (approximately 50 words or fewer).
8. Manuscripts should be submitted via email attachment, saved in a MS Word for Windows or Mac format. If this is not possible, please contact the Editor for alternatives.
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SUBMISSIONS should be sent to: Abby Butler, Editor (abby.butler@wayne.edu)

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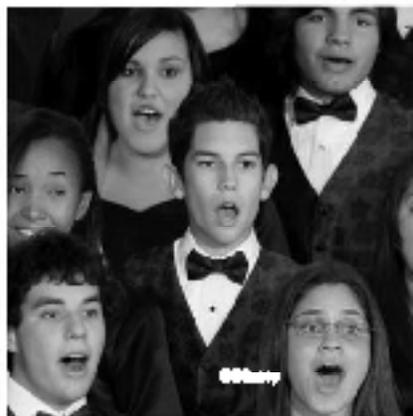
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2015-2016 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

EVENT	DATE	LOCATION
NAfME National Assembly	June 25-29, 2015	Tysons Corner, VA
MMEA Fall Board Meeting	September 11-12, 2015	Jackson
MASSP TweetChat (music teacher eval)	September 21, 2015	Twitter
Fall General Music Workshop	October 10, 2015	East Lansing (MSU)
NAfME National In-Service Conf.	October 25-28, 2015	Nashville, TN
All-National Honor Ensembles Concert	October 28, 2015	Nashville, TN
Elementary Choral Festivals (5)		
1. East MI	October 17, 2015	Clinton Twp (Eerie Elem.)
2. West MI	October 17, 2015	Allendale (Allendale HS)
3. Upper Peninsula	October 17, 2015	Sault Sainte Marie
4. Lower Central MI	November 7, 2015	Jackson (MI Center HS)
5. Upper Central MI	November 14, 2015	Clare (Clare MS)
Michigan Music Conference (MMC)	January 21-23, 2016	Grand Rapids
MMEA Winter Board Meeting	January 21, 2016	Grand Rapids
MMEA Member Breakfast (FREE)	January 23, 2016	Grand Rapids
Honors Composition Concert	January 23, 2016	Grand Rapids
Instrumental Clinics		
1. Belleville (N. Taylor & M. Campbell, hosts)	March 3 & 4, 2016	Belleville HS
2. Fowlerville (Bill Vliek, host)	March 4-5, 2016	Fowlerville HS
Elementary Honors Choir Rehearsal	March 5, 2016	Dewitt HS
Elementary Honors Choir Concert	March 19, 2016	Dewitt HS
Music Education Advocacy Day	March 9, 2016	State Capitol, Lansing
Collegiate Conference	March 12, 2016	Grand Rapids (GVSU)
Michigan Youth Arts Festival	May 12-14, 2016	Kalamazoo (WMU)
MMEA Spring Board Meeting	May 13-14, 2016	Kalamazoo (WMU)
NAfME National Assembly	June 22-26, 2016	Tysons Corner, VA
General Music Fall Workshop	2016 Date TBA	TBA
NAfME National In-Service Conf.	November 10-13, 2016	Grapevine, TX