

## Music ADvocacy = Program Success Introduction “Setting the Stage for the Future of Music”

*by Dr. Tim Lautzenheiser*

**Making a Difference:** Music advocacy is a hot topic of discussion for administrators, parents, teachers, and everyone keenly interested in creating the most potent curriculum possible for today’s students. Breakthrough research continues to point to the study of music as a key component to success-development in every facet of personal and professional life. The positive impact of music is no longer a hypothetical theory, but is based on ongoing studies that clearly demonstrate the popular theme: music makes the difference.

**It’s a Fact:** In the mid-’90s, the work of Dr. Gordon Shaw and Dr. Frances Rauscher (University of California - Irvine) drew national media attention by showing the neurological impact of listening to and performing music. Recently, other studies have evidenced the health/wellness benefits enjoyed as a result of making music. The scientific world and the artistic community are working in tandem to explore the unlimited power of music as it relates to human development. More importantly, it is apparent this is only the beginning of the good news to come.

**So What?:** What relevance does music advocacy have in your life? We all seek “betterment” in our lives, and whether it is in our workplace, school, communities, or social environments, there is an innate desire for improvement. It is no accident we find a strong correlation between the educational, economical, and emotional well-being of individuals and music participation.

### **Here’s the Plan:**

1. Who should we approach with this powerful data? It is imperative to share the good news about music benefits with as many people as possible; therein lies the secret to bringing more music makers to the forum. Anyone who is interested in the welfare of the human race is a candidate for the powerful information.

2. How do we go about it? Advocating anything requires a dedication to communication. Everything from newsletters to e-mail server lists can be an avenue of exchange. We can take advantage of every high tech communication vehicle to accomplish our goal.

3. Who is the target market? In particular, the people who are responsible for curriculum and scheduling in our schools are crucial to the cause. These educators make decisions based on the information at hand. Here is our opportunity to enthusiastically focus their attention on the value of music study as it applies to the growth and development of every child.

4. Where can we find all the latest statistics and research findings? There are several free services that constantly bring the current information to your attention. State coalitions, MENC (The National Association of Music Educators), NAMM (International Music Products Association), and NARAS (National Association of Recording Arts and Sciences) are all actively involved in the music advocacy movement. Ask any music retailer and they can guide you to the right sources.

5. Do we ever get to the point where our music advocacy efforts are completed? All too often we think if we have a respectable band, choir, or orchestra in our local school, a good membership in the church choir, or an active community band/orchestra/choral society, we are not in need of music advocacy. Complacency is the enemy. Thus, we must constantly wave the flag to insure the continual interest of music in our communities.

**A Tool for Success:** It is easy to read the material and be convinced of the importance of music; however, the task of music advocacy outreach often falls to the bottom of the “to do” list. Therefore, this magazine column will be filled with pragmatic tools, blueprints for success, and helpful suggestions you can immediately adapt to your present circumstances. You will also be given contacts to serve as sources for your music advocacy library.

**Mission for Music:** Your own life has been influenced by music; that’s why you are reading this publication. Moreover, you have first-hand knowledge of the value of music as it relates to every aspect of your lifestyle, and you understand what a positive difference music has made in your life. The next step is to bring this awareness to others; to give them the gift of music.

All too often we find ourselves saying, “That’s true, but I’m just one person, and I can’t make a difference.” The fact of the matter is, we need many “one persons” to accept the challenge and spread the good news of music. Perhaps music advocacy isn’t as much “what we do” as it is “who we are.” We don’t just believe in the fundamental value of music, we know music is an essential element of humankind. Now, we must join hands and tell our stories so our children, grandchildren, and generations to come will have music in their lives.

We are one of the few nations that has successfully integrated music education as a choice in the daily school curriculum. Music is not just for the “chosen few,” but for all students wishing to understand the intrinsic value of music. Without the understanding of the immeasurable benefits of music learning, music listening, and music making, many people simply will never tap that creative part of their artistic potential. We must educate to perpetuate the theme: music for all.

*Dr. Tim Lautzenheiser is a well known name in the music education world as a teacher, clinician, author, composer, consultant, adjudicator and above all, a trusted friend to anyone interested in working with young people in developing a desire for excellence. His own career involves ten years of successful college band directing at Northern Michigan University, the University of Missouri, and New Mexico State University. During this time, Tim developed highly acclaimed groups in all areas of the instrumental and vocal field. Following three years in the music industry, he created Attitude Concepts for Today, an organization designed to manage the many requests for workshops, seminars and convention speaking engagements focusing on the area of positive attitude and effective leadership training. In addition, Tim is presently serving on the music faculty at Duquesne University. Tim is a graduate of Ball State University and the University of Alabama. He was awarded an Honorary Doctorate Degree from VanderCook College of Music. Tim has been recipient of the distinguished Sudler Order of Merit from the John Philip Sousa Foundation as well as the first recipient of the Mr. Holland's Award for his commitment and dedication to the development of youth in music. Most recently, he received The Music Industry Award from the Midwest Clinic Board of Directors.*