

TBA News

Mike Brashear, TBA Executive Director

This is a time of reflection, excitement, and anticipation on my part as I assume duties of TBA Executive Director. Looking back on my 30 years as a band director followed by two years as a Fine Arts Director, I am convinced that there is no greater calling than devoting one's life to a career in education. If as a band director, I helped students grow as musicians and gave them the life skills necessary for their future, I count my career a huge success. Never underestimate the importance you play in your students' lives. Even though many will never take time to express their appreciation, you may very well be the most important adult influence in their lives. You may be the one who made a difference at a critical moment.

Texas Bandmasters Association has always played a very important part in my life as a band director. Attending each year's July convention was just a part of what we all did. This event always marked the end of summer vacation and was the catalyst for refocusing attention back on my students and the band world. My appreciation for TBA grew more when I served on the Board of Directors serving as president in 2003.



I am excited about the future of TBA and anticipate many opportunities as we continue to strive to meet the needs of band directors in an ever changing educational environment. More than ever before, it is crucial that all of us as band directors take care of our programs. Keeping our band programs strong, both in quality and size, is our best insurance against cuts when school districts begin to face financial challenges and are forced to make

tough decisions. Take care of your band parents—you will need their support as advocates for your program. Administrators and school boards must be convinced that your program is important to your community. Don't skip the campus planning committee or district budget meeting because you are too busy with marching practice, sectionals, and teaching. The decisions made at those meetings could be critical for your program's future success. You must become the music advocate for your community—always looking out for the welfare of your program. If you do not take care of this, who will?

Hopefully, this year's TBA Convention/Clinic helped to recharge your battery and prepare you for your best school start ever! Make plans now to attend one of the clinics of the Professional Development Outreach Program. Whether you are a young teacher or a veteran looking for a way to improve your skills, you will find a session that will be helpful as you prepare to be the best band director you can be. Led by the most respected band directors in the country, these sessions have been very successful and this year's lineup is not to be missed! Check out www.texasbandmasters.org for information about these clinics.

You can also download handouts from previous convention clinics and read articles published in prior editions of the *Bandmasters Review*. You will also find contact information for all of our Sustaining Members when you need to follow up on a business contact you made at the convention.

Please contact me with suggestions for future TBA events. My email address is mbrashear@texasbandmasters.org If you would like to request a clinic topic or have ideas that will better our convention, I want to hear from you. The TBA Board of Directors and I are committed to meeting the needs of band directors, band students, and our band community.

Mike Brashear