

# TBA - A College Student's Perspective

Alysia J. Gist

The Texas Bandmasters Association is a well established organization that promotes the value of education, fosters goodwill and fellowship among its members, provides educational publications, and offers practical and instructional information. So why are there so many students that don't have a clue what TBA is and what it has to offer? To be honest, I didn't know what TBA was until I was given an opportunity to work with them three years ago. During the time I have spent as an intern I have gotten a chance to see and understand what TBA is all about and what it has to offer me as a college student and as a soon-to-be music educator.

TBA has resources for college students and many of them are actually available on the TBA web site. The web site holds archives of clinic handouts dating back to 2002 and all are in an easy to use PDF format. A couple of the clinics that really caught my attention this year were part of the College Track Series: "Preparing to Teach" and "Acing the Job Interview".

The TBA Board of Directors is making great strides to expand the student membership and is trying to provide as much useful information as possible for the future music professionals. For example, the

web site archives includes articles from past issues of the *Bandmasters Review*. Other TBA opportunities of interest to college students are the Malcolm Helm Scholarship, the TBA Job Bank and the Professional Development Outreach Program.

Although these ventures are relatively new, one of the goals of the TBA Board of Directors is to make TBA a place that students are encouraged to call upon for information to aide them in their musical journeys. To help meet this goal, Texas Bandmasters Association has created a College Advisory Board which is made up of college professors who meet every year at the annual Convention/Clinic. Their purpose is to communicate what is going on at the members' own campuses, make suggestions for the future, and most importantly, serve as liaisons for the TBA Board of Directors. As liaisons, they ask teachers and professors to inform their students about TBA—its purpose—and all the resources available.

**(The purpose of the College Advisory Board is to communicate what is going on at the members' own campuses, make suggestions for the future, and most importantly, serve as liaisons for the TBA Board of Directors. As liaisons, they ask teachers and professors to inform their students about TBA.)**

After speaking with TBA Executive Director Mike Brashear, I learned that one of his goals is to see a substantial increase in college student participation including expanded opportunities for college students at future TBA conventions. There, students can network with other students, teachers, Board Members, and visit with some of our "more established" members.

TBA has so many great things to offer musicians at every level. So no matter what the setting—whether it be a band class, private lesson, or in a college classroom—communicate with your students about TBA. Let them know that the convention has a huge floor with hundreds of exhibitors, four days worth of clinics, concerts, and a world of networking capabilities! Give your student another resource of information, a place to ask questions, and a place to go where everyone shares the love of music. The TBA experience can only make your student's scholarly journey more rewarding!