

What Kind of Difference Does One Person Make?

Dr. Tim Lautzenheiser

Greetings,

Mike Brashear, executive director of your Texas Bandmasters Association, is always graciously kind by extending an invitation to submit an article for each of the TBA publications and this wonderful overture is appreciated more than I can express. Before putting forth some thoughts, I would be remiss if I did not extend my sincerest VOTE-OF-THANKS to each and everyone of YOU for your kind support during this year's TBA luncheon and the presentation of the very special recognition award; it is humbling...to say the least.*

As shared in my brief commentary during the ceremony, "My birth certificate claims I'm a Hoosier-born Indiana resident, but my DNA indicates I'm a Texan through-and-through." To that end, you all must know what a valuable role you have played, and continue to play in my professional journey and my personal pathway; it is immeasurable. Suffice to say, the debt board rests HEAVILY in your favor, and it is a privilege and an honor to dedicate myself to making every attempt to balance-the-ledger as we move forward in our mutual support of quality music-learning and music making.

Again, THANK YOU! You can rest assured, the time spent with my Texas colleagues is cherished, and I eagerly look forward to many more years of "banding together" for the welfare of all the young artists-musicians who choose to be a part of their school band programs. What better investment of time and energy could there possibly be? How blessed they are to be a part of the Texas band community! From the lyrics of the popular James Bond song: "NOBODY DOES IT BETTER."

With sincere heartfelt appreciation, I remain,
Tim

From one of America's finest minds, R. Buckminster Fuller (1895-1983):

When the National Science Foundation asked the "break-through" scientists what they felt was the most favorable factor in their education, the answer was almost uniformly, "Intimate association with a great, inspiring teacher."

In the cognitive world of academic TESTING/MEASUREMENTS/etc., the above wisdom is often not recognized by many of the scholars... and yet, the PROOF IS IN THE PUDDING, isn't it?

This is not to diminish or overshadow the importance of the rigors of learning, quite the contrary. However, it is to address the important link of taking the given information and integrating it into something that drives this world to be more civil, more appreciative, and more encouraging. Moreover, it is NOT shallow self-appreciating, but digging in the depths of INDIVIDUAL CREATIVE VISION.

So many of our young people are driven to think it is about HAVING THIS or GETTING THAT, or ACHIEVING SOME MANDATE. In the meantime, the real answer lies within—SELF-WORTH. Until this realization is embraced and integrated into present-moment

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living/doing/becoming, it can be an endless mark time of frustration from lack of satisfaction.

He who has such little knowledge of human value as to seek happiness by changing anything but his disposition will waste his life in fruitless efforts and multiply the grief he proposes to remove.

—Samuel Johnson

It's not about being better than someone; it's not about winning a huge amount of awards, it's not about HAVING MORE than the person next door; or monopolizing the first chair position time-and-again; but it is about creating THE HARMONY OF COLLECTIVE FORWARD MOTION. There is a bit of self deception in all of this, and until we (as educators) come to grips with the honesty of WHAT REALLY COUNTS FOR OUR STUDENTS, the overflow of DATA/INFORMATION will be lost if it is not connected to the relevance of the lives of our students.

The question is NOT: "Can one person make a difference?" That is a given. The real question is, "What kind of difference will one person make?"

To that end, let us all continue to strive for quality teaching dedicated to bringing EXCELLENCE to each and every aspect of our students' lives; IT IS THE WINNING COMBINATION 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. Following three years in the music industry, he created Attitude Concepts for Today, an organization that manages workshops, seminars, and convention speaking engagements focusing on the pathway-to-excellence. Tim presently holds the Earl Dunn Distinguished Lecturer position at Ball State University. Tim is the Executive Director of Education for Conn-Selmer, Inc., and he serves as the national spokesperson for MENC's "Make a Difference with Music" program. His books The Art of Successful Teaching, The Joy of Inspired Teaching, Music Advocacy and Student Leadership, and Everyday Wisdom for Inspired Teaching are best sellers. He is co-author of Hal Leonard's popular band method Essential Elements - 2000.

*At the Convention/Clinic this past summer, Texas Bandmasters Association awarded an Honorary Life Membership to Dr. Tim Lautzenheiser. Honorary Life Members are chosen in gratitude for a lifetime of support and service to the world of music. Dr. Lautzenheiser is only the eleventh person in over 60 years to receive this prestigious award.