

So You Think You Can't Spin

Critical yet basic colorguard information for A, AA, and AAA bands—a preview of their 2013 TBA clinic

Estelle Gravois-Murr and Celestino Sosa

TBA is pleased to announce that band directors Estelle Gravois-Murr and Celestino Sosa will be presenting a colorguard clinic geared towards small school bands. During the clinic, Sosa and Murr will provide information related to training, choreography, and cleaning your own students' performances. There will be student performers on hand to demonstrate basic skills, combinations, and progressions that will lead to polished choreography.

The clinic will open with a discussion on how to train your colorguard without an instructor, including basic skills and combinations that can be applied to choreography. Musicality will be discussed to help directors present programs that are musical in nature versus spinning for spinning's sake.

Also on the agenda is how to fix or enhance drill design with a focus on musicality, pacing, and flow to elevate your overall program. Specifics include staging equipment and prop changes as well as layering basic techniques to create visual moments with depth.

Musical instructional strategies will be applied to the colorguard setting so that every band director can be confident in teaching their own guard about articulation, breath, phrasing, balance, and

blend. Too often band directors feel the colorguard is an unknown or different element; Sosa and Murr will explain and demonstrate how your current knowledge base of musical instruction will make you able to produce an effective colorguard.

Students from Alvarado HS and Little Elm HS will demonstrate basic skills and participate in real-time instruction. All attendees will receive a DVD of the skills and combinations taught and demonstrated during the clinic. Directors are welcome to bring cameras and record any of the session.

A question and answer period is built into this session. Participants can ask any colorguard-related questions of the clinicians or the students. In addition, directors can pose problems or scenarios for Sosa and Murr to demonstrate how to resolve. The clinic will be held in CC Hall D with a field marked off so the presentation will be to-scale just like your marching rehearsals.

The clinic is generously sponsored by DSI, Team Go Figure, and Fred J. Miller. Door prizes will be given, including three sets of show flags, gift certificates, discounts, and custom choreography. If directors already have their show music in hand, two of them will win custom choreography and can have their

opener written for them before they leave the convention!

Sosa and Murr will be available throughout the day following the presentation to meet with directors and discuss specific needs or consult on their programs.

Estelle Gravois-Murr resides in Fort Worth and is currently in her fifth year as a band director and dance teacher at Alvarado High School and 17th year in public schools. She directs the colorguards at Alvarado HS and JH, Everman HS, and also Northwestern State University in Natchitoches, LA. She choreographs for multiple colorguards and consults in both programming and visual performance. She is a past director of the US Scholastic Band Association, a division of Youth Education in the Arts, and worked for several years with the Cadets Drum and Bugle Corps in the areas of leadership and tour administration. She has served as an adjudication caption facilitator, lead various seminars and been published in music education journals. Most recently, Ms. Gravois-Murr was inducted to the inaugural class of the North Texas Colorguard Association Hall of Fame.

Celestino Sosa brings 32 years of experience in guard design, choreography, staging, and consultation to this clinic. He has worked with multiple guard and band programs throughout the United States and is sought after for his knowledge in visual concepts, staging, and movement. Under his direction, the 2010 Little Elm High School Winter Guard was the NTCA Scholastic A Champion, WGI Southwest Regional Champion, and WGI Scholastic A World Champion. Little Elm HS is the first Texas winter guard to have achieved this honor. Mr. Sosa is currently the Assistant Director of bands at Little Elm HS and was recently inducted to the inaugural class of the North Texas Color Guard Association Inaugural Hall of Fame.