

From the Board

Richard Herrera, 2014-15 TBA Past President

Thank you Texas Bandmasters Association members and business partners for a great 2014 Convention/Clinic. It never ceases to amaze me how many wonderful band directors and musicians generously and freely share their time, talent, knowledge, and resources to strengthen our profession. I sincerely thank every one of our clinicians, exhibitors, and student performers who participated at the convention.



I am also grateful to the Board of Directors: Bruce, Steven, Jeff, Chico, John, and Fred, for their help and support during my tenure as President. It was a great pleasure to work with Executive Director Mike Brashear and TBA staff Robin Tovar and Justin Young as well as our convention partners Chuck Kuentz, Kimberly Young, and Charlie Munsell. Special thanks to Priscilla Brashear, Spouses Liaison, for her insight and advice to the Spouses' Board. All are true professionals who go above and beyond for the band directors of Texas. Be sure to drop them a note of thanks for their service to TBA.

Under the leadership of Brian Merrill, the TBA Academy has continued to grow and flourish. We had a record number of attendees at our convention. Thanks to Frank Troyka, Student Day 2014 was a resounding success with

wonderful leadership sessions and performances by state of the art musicians. Both of these gentlemen have tirelessly supported TBA for many years. I thank my wife Lucinda

and the Spouses' division for their hard work as well. Lucinda not only worked diligently as President for the Spouses' Board, but still managed to be a great mom, wife, and a hard working Northside ISD employee as librarian at Valley Hi Elementary. There are numerous people who are responsible for the enormous undertaking in creating, operating and facilitating our convention. Words cannot express my eternal appreciation to all of them.

As successful and record setting as the 2014 convention was, I was saddened to hear about the number of directors that did not attend in order stay home to get a head start on summer band prior to UIL start date of August 1st. Even more disturbing to me was that although the head director may have attended the convention, they left their much younger, inexperienced assistant directors back home to rehearse the band. The fact of the matter is that those are the very directors who would have gained much more knowledge of rehearsal techniques and teaching skills on how to work

a band more efficiently had they attended. A director can attend over 60 clinics by the most qualified teachers in our profession and learn how to get the most out of the time they have with their students.

Another issue for not attending may have been financial. I understand that school administration may not budget for the director to attend. You must help your administration understand that the TBA convention is the same as sending coaches to coaching school. Most administrators understand "coaching school" and its importance, so be sure to sell the equivalent "band director school" to your administrators. Regardless whether the school district pays for it or not, band directors should find a way to make it to the TBA convention. You owe it to yourself, your profession, and most importantly, your students.

It's imperative that we directors learn to work smarter and not harder. How does one actually do that? Well first, it's not the amount of time you spend with your kids, but the quality of work when you have them. To keep every student engaged in rehearsal, one must keep all the students busy especially when you find yourself working with just a few. The other students should be working silently on fundamentals that pertain to their instrument or, since a lot of us are in season, marching. For example, if you are working the trumpet section in a full band rehearsal, the other

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students could be fingering scale work, a section of music, or all region audition music. If you are working with just the brass on a marching drill, the others can be working on their marching fundamentals or fingering a section of music. This not only engages the students you're not working with to "stay busy", but also gives the opportunity for those students to continue to work individually. However, keeping everyone engaged in the rehearsal has to be an expectation set by the band director very early in the school year. Create the expectation and be sure that students follow through with their silent study until it becomes a natural habit of daily rehearsal technique. Make every minute of your rehearsal count.

Thank you for allowing me to serve on the TBA Board. It has been a fantastic journey that I have truly enjoyed. The board members I have had the pleasure of working with are some of the most humble, hard working, and professional men who will forever be my brothers.

I have been fortunate in my career to have a network of master teachers ready to help or give advice on any question I may have. I feel networking is the key to being a successful director. So, be sure to email, call, invite, or visit a master teacher. I promise they are willing to help. This is what's so great about being a Texas band director!