

You Make a Difference!

Dr. Tim Lautzenheiser

As you continue to negotiate the constantly morphing landscape created by the pandemic, it has been encouraging to witness everyone going the extra mile (day-in and day-out) to nurture their programs and find avenues to continue to work with students, parents and administrators while constantly shifting to accommodate the current health-consideration parameters set forth by the various officials. Give yourself a pat on the back! “BRAVO” TO ALL!

No doubt there have been days when you have asked yourself:

“Is all of this additional effort having any impact on my students?”

“Am I REALLY making a difference or just spinning my wheels?”

“What else could I or should I be doing to keep things moving forward in a positive direction?”

“Will the students want to stay in band once we get back to a sense of normalcy?”

Ultimately, we all have to answer these questions for ourselves, but rest assured: YOU ARE MAKING A DIFFERENCE. The mere fact you have opened this publication to refresh your mind, embrace new ideas, discover the latest teaching tool, seek inspiration...that, in itself, speaks volumes about your commitment and dedication. The needle is moving in the right direction because of YOU. The best part is your students are the benefactors of your sense of purpose and mission...and THAT is a massive understatement!

The following quote from Buckminster Fuller poignantly describes the value master educators bring to their students:

“When the National Science Foundation asked the ‘break-through’ scientists what they felt was the most favorable factor in their education, the answer was uniformly: A trusted association with an inspiring teacher.”

Of course, the key phrase is: A TRUSTED ASSOCIATION WITH AN INSPIRING TEACHER—those priceless mentors who create the spirit that fuels and nurtures students along their pathways to excellence. For the most part, isn't that why YOU and I chose to be band directors? We were availed to the wonderful world of music-making via an inspiring music educator. It was someone we trusted, cared for, respected, admired. It was someone who was THE role model to guide us from visions to reality.

In the past year my schedule has created the opportunity to communicate with countless young musicians who continue to share this theme: “I miss band. I miss my friends. I miss making music together. I miss my band director!” They don't say, “I can't wait to get back to school.” They say, “I can't wait to get back to our band.”

Following his tenure in the college band directing world, Dr. Tim Lautzenheiser created Attitude Concepts for Today, Inc. to manage the many requests for teacher inservice workshops, student leadership seminars, and convention speaking engagements focusing on the area of effective leadership training. Dr. Tim presently serves as Vice President of Education for Conn-Selmer, Inc. He is a nationally recognized voice touting the importance of arts education for every child. His books, produced by G.I.A. Publications, Inc., continue to be bestsellers in the educational community. Tim is also the Senior Educational Advisor for Music for All, and NAMM (The National Association of Music Merchants). He continues to teach as an adjunct faculty member at Ball State University, Indiana-Purdue/Ft. Wayne University, and Butler University. He is also a member of the Midwest Clinic Board of Directors and the Western International Band Clinic/American Band College Board of Directors.

Can there be any greater affirmation concerning the value you bring to their lives?

A dear friend and most successful band director called me following his first day at school when all the students were on site for the first time in almost a year. He shared:

“When everyone came into the band hall, there was a sense of excitement beyond words. Once they had their instruments out, I jokingly said, ‘Let's see if we can still get through the Bb scale as an ensemble; that's our starting point!’ Tim, you won't believe what happened next. We finished the scale, the students started clapping, it erupted into a standing ovation and there were cheers of celebration mixed with tears of pure joy...and many of those tears were mine. To top it off, the next morning I walked into the rehearsal room and across the front wall was a huge sign that read: THE BAND IS BACK...and on my office door was another large poster: WE LOVE YOU MR. G! ...and that triggered another flood of tears. This is the greatest profession ever...EVER!”

What more needs to be said? You can carve it in stone; the students want to BAND TOGETHER...with YOU, the teacher who makes a difference!

STRIKE UP THE BAND!