VMEA
CONFERENCE
Presented by the Vermont Music Educators Association

OCTOBER 14
8AM
CASTLETON UNIVERSITY
Dear Colleagues,

Welcome to the 2022 Vermont Music Educators Association’s Fall Conference! Many thanks to Conference Co-Chairs Emma Vogel and Heidi Welch for bringing us together on the beautiful Castleton University campus. We are proud to host keynote speaker Dr. Peter Boonshaft, and all of our presenters, exhibitors, and sponsors. In order to expand accessibility, some presenters are offering virtual sessions, which we never would have thought to do before the pandemic.

As I think about where we have been over the last two years, I am filled with pride for the music educators and students in our little state. We share a common belief in the value of music education. We believe in equitable access, and for that we need a collaborative community of practice. We know that music is unique to the human experience and is essential for humanity. Our advocacy work has laid a strong foundation to continue building programs for all learners, from all places, celebrating all music.

In my last letter, I predicted that our next conference would bring us face-to-face, shaking hands, and celebrating successes. As we visit with colleagues today and throughout the year, remember what it is that connects us. Our core beliefs and shared identity carried us through the pandemic and will continue to shape our practice.

Just think of where we will go in the years to come with these beliefs as our compass.

In partnership,
Emily Wiggett, M.M.Ed.
Vermont Music Educators Association, President
Danville School
extime.wiggett@ccsuvt.net
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Called one of the most exciting and exhilarating voices in music education today, Peter Loel Boonshaft has been invited to speak and conduct in every state in the nation and around the world. Honored by the National Association for Music Education and Music For All as the first recipient of the “George M. Parks Award for Leadership in Music Education,” Dr. Boonshaft is Director of Education for Jupiter Band Instruments, and his weekly “Boonshaft’s Blog” for music educators continues to inspire teachers everywhere. He has received official proclamations from the Governors of five states and a Certificate of Appreciation from former President Ronald Reagan, as well as performing for former President and Mrs. George H. W. Bush, former President Bill Clinton, and for Margaret Thatcher, former Prime Minister of the United Kingdom. He has been awarded membership in Pi Kappa Lambda and Alpha Chi, as well as twice receiving the University of Hartford Regents Award and that University’s Outstanding Music Educator Award. His honors also include being selected three times as a National Endowment for the Arts “Artist in Residence,” three times awarded Honorary Life Membership in the Tri-M Music Honor Society, receiving the Al G. Wright Award of Distinction from the Women Band Directors International, and being selected for the Center for Scholarly Research and Academic Excellence at Hofstra University, where he is Professor Emeritus of Music.

He holds Bachelor of Music (Summa Cum Laude), Master of Music Education in Conducting, and Doctor of Musical Arts degrees. Dr. Boonshaft was also awarded a Connecticut General Fellowship for study at the Kodály Musical Training Institute, from which he holds a Certificate. Prior to this appointment, Dr. Boonshaft was on the faculty of Moravian College and the University of Hartford. He was Founder and Music Director of the Pennsylvania Youth Honors Concert Band and the Connecticut Valley Youth Wind Ensemble. In addition, he held the post of Music Director and Conductor of the Metropolitan Wind Symphony of Boston.


SAXQUEST: GET THE MOST OUT OF YOUR SAXOPHONISTS!

Clayton Hamilton
FAC Blackbox Theater

A clinic that covers an in-depth look at the saxophone set-up, how to fix bad habits, and a guideline of practical exercises to help tone, technique development, and musicality. Time will also be spent on covering tips and tricks to get students crossing over to different saxophones. This clinic is sponsored by The Boston Sax Shop.

CREATING FLOW: COHESIVE ARTISTIC EXPERIENCES FOR ENSEMBLES AND AUDIENCES

Dr. D. Jason Bishop
1787 Room

The Hungarian psychologist Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi coined the term “flow” as a “mental state of operation in which a person performing an activity is fully immersed in a feeling of energized focus, full involvement, and enjoyment of the process.” In the realm of conducting, such experiences of “flow” can be created in performance by the careful, thoughtful construction of a program as a cohesive artistic unit. The concept of “flow” can be extended to the rehearsal environment as well, both as it is facilitated by the repertoire, and by a host of external factors unrelated to artistic content. Through a combination of open discussion and examination of a variety of programming styles, rehearsal techniques, and salient features of a diverse sampling of repertoire, this session will delve into the myriad challenges conductors face with programming, and explore strategies for employing thematic, visual, tonal, and physical elements to create coveted “flow” experiences in concert halls and rehearsal rooms, for performers and audiences alike.
Participants will identify what gender inclusivity is, establish common definitions for foundational terminology, and establish inclusive practices for their lives and classrooms.

This is important because teachers with inclusive classrooms recognize that people of marginalized genders exist everywhere, it is critical that teachers model gender inclusivity whenever possible. When classrooms are gender inclusive, all students benefit: transgender and gender non-conforming students are safer and at significantly lower risk of depression, suicide, and bullying; and cisgender students experience a model of equitable treatment for all.

This session will feature ways to use language and actions to show your students they are valued, loved, and belong in your space. We approach inclusivity in a way that will be a natural fit in your existing practice. We will include children’s literature and free digital resources to center gender inclusivity at school.

Since gender identity and gender expression are unique to each person, participants will engage in activities designed to encourage personal reflection. We aim to help participants “see themselves with their own eyes” as a way to help students do the same. We will use the resources shared in our session to demonstrate the need for gender inclusion in Pre-K and elementary school settings.

As transgender adults, we have firsthand experience with the way that transgender and gender nonconforming people are treated. We also know that children are one of the most marginalized groups of people, especially in educational settings. There are so many times that children’s words and truths are downplayed or ignored simply because they are younger or less experienced than the adults “in charge.” When children are transgender, having adults who believe and affirm them can truly be the difference between life and death.

There is an entire generation of LGBTQIA+ elders that we will never get a chance to meet or learn from because of the horrific atrocities that our community faced during the AIDS crisis. It would be a horrible shame if we allow for another generation of people from our community to continue to be treated the same way.

One way that we can help is demonstrating what gender inclusion can look like in real situations— from classrooms to legislatures. We hope that by sharing our experiences and showing up unapologetically as ourselves that we can show that inclusion does not have to be scary, and that it truly is appropriate for everyone at every level.
APPROACHES TO POPULAR MUSIC EDUCATION

Brian Boyes & Stephanie Weigand
FAC 110

Popular Music Education or PME refers to the study of popular music performance, stagecraft, live and studio sound engineering, songwriting, production, beat making, etc. It does not necessarily imply pop music. This is not a replacement for existing ensembles in our schools. These approaches are an AND not an OR! PME is a teaching method as much as it is a performing group. The learning is less formal with a student-centered approach in which the teacher serves as coach/facilitator. These approaches support increased equity + student access to social-emotional learning in our schools through popular music education and arts-infused project-based learning. These discussions are just becoming more widespread in Vermont, and with a current push from NAfME to include more modern band/PME instruction in the classroom, we hope to establish connections to those interested in learning more, those who have already experienced success in these methods, and those just getting started on their journey. Using the driving question "How do we foster a creative and collaborative learning community using PME?" this session will initiate conversations that cover the following topics:

* applying and adapting approaches to PME to create and foster increased student engagement, SEL opportunities, and equity.
* using professional performance and studio practices to drive engagement, learning, and assessment.
* how to develop, cultivate, and coach a popular music ensemble
* how to scaffold and support student-led rehearsal sessions and performances as well as build and scale student agency/leadership.
* define and discuss approaches to popular music education and authenticity. ...and more.

INTERCULTURAL UNDERSTANDING IN THE MUSIC CLASSROOM – A BLENDED LEARNING APPROACH

Nisha Feik
FAC 120 - Virtual Presentation

Combining traditional teaching approaches such as singing songs and using rhythm games to understand music from several different cultures with accessing the online music arranging platform Sound Infusion featuring recordings from over 100 countries, this session is sure to provide stimulating ideas for teachers attending. Activities will reference the ‘analyze’ and ‘interpret’ strands of the National Curriculum.
Vermont Symphony Orchestra

EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Musicians-in-Schools Concerts
- School-based performances designed for grades K-5
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- Classical violin masterclass with Bella Hristova in May 2023

$10 Tickets for Music Teachers
- Attend any of our Classical Series concerts with a special discount for Vermont music educators
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For more info and to sign up:
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Serving Vermont music students and teachers across the state!
WARM-UP AND ENSEMBLE DEVELOPMENT EXERCISES THAT WORK!

Dr. Peter L. Boonshaft
FAC 134

This session offers specific exercises you can use to develop ensemble performance. These focused warm-ups isolate and target improvement in the areas of balance, blend, intonation, rhythm, rhythmic subdivision, listening, articulation, dynamics, and virtually every aspect of large ensemble playing. Useful for band and orchestra directors of any level: elementary school, middle school, and high school.

JUST GENDER: CREATING AND IMPLEMENTING AFFIRMING SPACES AT ALL LEVELS

Ær Queen
FAC 120 - Virtual Presentation

Participants will learn ways to create an affirming environment for your transgender students, as well as advocate at the school and district levels. Participants will interact with real scenarios with particular attention to music and ensemble situations. Participants will also examine model policies from different districts that demonstrate gender inclusion through regulation. We are able to provide affirming and inclusive spaces for our students at every level of education, and advocate for our students through policy changes at the school, district, and even state level. Transgender students exist everywhere, and affirming transgender students has been proven to be a means of saving lives.

We have first hand experience with the ways transgender people are treated. We also know that children are one of the most marginalized groups of people, especially in educational settings. There are so many times that children’s words and truths are downplayed or ignored simply because they are younger or less experienced than the adults “in charge.” When children are transgender, having adults who believe and affirm them can truly be the difference between life and death.

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COMPOSER DIVERSITY IN THE CHORAL CLASSROOM

Stephanie Weigand
FAC 110

This session uses research and experience from NAfME, ACDA, and the Institute for Composer Diversity (ICD). Presenter, Stefanie Weigand, has worked with Dr. Rob Deemer (Composition Council Chair and founder of the ICD) in order to provide resources for the choral educator/conductor in search of more diverse repertoire. We will cover the big W’s of composer diversity: What, Why, Where, and Who while also saving space for participants to share their own experiences. Through conversations around access, inclusion, and diversity, we will discover opportunities for students to both learn about other cultures AND see themselves reflected in the music we study. These resources will not only influence our habits of repertoire selection, but can aid in fostering a student-centered approach to collaborative learning.

Participants will walk away with advocacy talking points, repertoire suggestions, and the tools to continue uncovering more incredible works on their own. This session will also provide a jumping off point for future conversations as we strive to offer more diverse choral experiences in regional and state level festivals, in addition to our own classrooms.

THE ADAPTIVE GENERAL MUSIC EDUCATOR: MEANINGFUL STUDENT INCLUSION

Dr. Erin Zaffini
1787 Room

Most students learn best through multiple paths for engagement. This session will provide tools for general music teachers as they strive to meet the National Core Arts Standards by providing quality music education for all students. Participants will learn about the “big three” modes of student adaptations as they experience, first-hand, activities that promote kinesthetic, aural, and visual learning. Participants will "learn by doing" as they participate in activities that emphasize the "Creating", "Performing" and "Responding" artistic processes in the general music classroom – activities that they can immediately take and use with their students!
TEACHER PD

VMEA CONFERENCE CREDIT - REMOTE
CREATIVITY IN SOUNDRAP - REMOTE
FIRST STEPS + ORFF - REMOTE
CONVERSATIONAL SOLFEGE + ORFF - REMOTE
INSTRUMENT BRUSH-UP: PERCUSSION
INSTRUMENT BRUSH-UP: WOODWINDS
APPROACHES TO POPULAR MUSIC EDUCATION

MEMBER OPPORTUNITIES

VPR STUDENT COMPOSER SHOWCASE - MONTHLY!
STUDENT MENTORSHIP WITH A PROFESSIONAL COMPOSER
SPECIAL STUDENT OPPORTUNITIES WITH THE VERMONT SYMPHONY, VERMONT PHILHARMONIC AND MORE!
NEW TEACHING AND COMPOSING RESOURCES
FREE CURRICULUM CONSULTATION & COMPOSER VISIT
ELECTRONIC MUSIC SHOWCASE ON BIG HEAVY WORLD RADIO
OPUS 37 CONCERT - BURLINGTON, MAY 2ND
24 WAYS TO IMPROVE EVERY REHEARSAL THROUGH INSPIRED TEACHING!

**Dr. Peter L. Boonshaft**  
1787 Room

Using time-tested wisdom, advances in modern technology, borrowed insights on how students learn, and the message held in a simple blue box we can inspire students to learn and flourish. Useful for conductors and teachers of any level and type of ensemble.

BEYOND CHECKING BOXES: INNOVATIVE PROGRAMMING FOR DIVERSE AUDIENCES

**Dr. William George-Twyman**  
FAC 110

Diversity is about more than just racial and ethnic variety; it’s about intentionally choosing a showcasing repertoire that reaches the broadest audience possible. Presentation of the final product should be innovative and challenging while maintaining high standards. Programming is more than just what the choir sings, it’s more about what the choir does as an organization. What kinds of things does it offer? Who is the audience? What is the outreach? It’s about what the organization is and what it stands for.

In this session we will explore the many responsibilities we have as conductors and educators to provide the means for performers and audience members alike to fully engage with and participate in music and performance that not only affects them artistically but also enriches their overall life experience. Session attendees will hear about strategies to implement diversity in all facets of the choral program, starting with issues as simple as repertoire substitution, but also exploring more nuanced concerns about overall accessibility and representation within the organizational structure. Each attendee will leave with new awareness to recognize areas of concern in their programs and strategies to make small shifts in important areas to create positive change for all parties involved in the artistic process.

This presentation speaks directly to both the Respond and Connect sections of the 2014 National Standards Ensemble Strand. By linking performer experiences to diverse programming choices (“programming” meant in the broader sense discussed in the session) we strengthen student and audience connection to the presented material and encourage deeper engagement with the music and art. Understanding the context surrounding what we do as performers will allow for a more robust realization of the overall artistic goal.
ALIGNMENT CHECK: CREATING A VALUES-DRIVEN MUSIC PROGRAM

Allison Russo  
FAC 120 - Virtual Presentation

Creating an effective, engaging, and values-driven music program could feel like a long run down a country road, but often it feels like being stuck on a treadmill: repeating the same activities, programs, and projects that might be fun, convenient, or traditional, but aren’t moving students in the direction you want.

Whether you’ve inherited an established program or are building something new, this session will allow teachers to envision the path to a music program that reflects your values and strengths and that of your community. Using solo and group reflective practices, this session will reveal teachers’ values and determine how their values align (or don’t) with the activities in their classroom. Teachers will come away with clarity on which activities, programs, and projects to keep, modify, or scrap all together.

This session can connect to all National Core Arts Standards— in fact, the key to the session is to understand how to truly connect with these standards and also how to identify which standards are most important to you as a teacher and to your school’s community.

HOW LONG IS A DOT? A TAKADIMI STARTER KIT FOR RHYTHMIC LITERACY

Dr. D. Jason Bishop  
FAC 134

Are you always asking your students to “count” while they sing or play? Do you struggle with teaching them to process rhythmic information or to perform subdivisions of the beat with cleaner articulation? Numerous systems exist for teaching rhythm, from the Kodály method (“ta ti-ti”) to Robert Shaw’s famous count-singing method (1-and 2-and ti-and...). This session will focus on the Takadimi system, developed by Richard Hoffman, William Pelto, and John W. White in 1996 as a fusion of what they believed to be the best features of the Kodály, McHose/Tibbs, Edwin Gordon, and other methods. With handouts, musical examples, and group participation, you’ll come away from this session ready to fix the rhythmic ailments of the world as an enthusiastic proponent of the Takadimi system.
GETTING IN: ETHICAL AUDITION PRACTICES

Allison Russo
Leavenworth 103

In this session, teachers will reflect on their current policies and procedures for auditions. Through the lenses of critical pedagogy, culturally responsive pedagogy, and trauma-informed care, teachers will confront their assumptions on traditional auditions and create new audition, seating, and placement policies for more equitable outcomes. This presentation connects to National Core Standards #4, 5, and 6 as they pertain to preparing for auditions.

BEGINNER STEPS INTO CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING FOR THE NOVICE TEACHER

Dr. Erin Zaffini
FAC 120

This practical, interactive, and "hands-on" session will focus on providing tools and suggestions for collegiate students and early career music educators who wish to delve deeper into culturally responsive pedagogy in their classrooms. Specific strategies that will be shared with participants include (1) identifying their own lived experiences in relation to their practices as educators, (2) identifying and rectifying common hidden curriculum within the National Core Arts standards that is often promoted within their classrooms, (3) self-reflection and self-observation techniques and tools that can be used regularly, (4) collaborating with mentors to promote inclusivity and responsiveness in the classroom, (5) promoting student agency within their classrooms, (6) tapping into community members and students as experts in their own culture, and (7) discovering the "why" behind culturally responsive education. In addition, participants will gain specific ideas that will help them promote culturally responsive practices while meeting the national standards (i.e., laptop ensembles, non-traditional ensemble arranging, student-composed pieces based on student heritage and culture, student-driven informances, etc). This session will be a very practical, interactive and "hands-on" approach to developing more culturally responsive practices.
CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT: ADVICE, TOOLS, TRICKS, AND SUPPORT FOR THE ELEMENTARY TEACHER

Alexander Judge
FAC 134

Oftentimes thought of as one of the most challenging aspects of teaching for any educator, this 60 minute long session is designed to equip pre-service, beginning, and experienced elementary music teachers with strategies, tricks, tools, and support to design an effective mission statement and style of classroom management that works for them. This will be accomplished through discussion, modeling, and sharing of experiences.

PLAYFUL ENSEMBLE REHEARSALS

William Kinne
FAC 110

We will examine a holistic approach to ensemble rehearsals that engages students in critical thinking including the core areas of Performing, Responding critically, and Connecting to our human experience.

Summary:
We are all hardwired to play from birth. In this interactive clinic, we will explore ways to increase engagement and artistic risk-taking in rehearsal by introducing unpredictability into our ensemble rehearsals. Become a more compelling conductor without having to take any time away from your rehearsals.
Support for Teachers

- Continuing Ed Opportunities and Grant
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- Online Tools for Performance Assessment, Teaching Theory and Composition
- Peer Connections and Networking
- Publications, Consultation and Marketing Services

Student Opportunities

- Community Service Play-a-Thon
- Online Tools to Create, Perform, and Learn
- Performance and Composition Opportunities
- Non-competitive Auditions
- Multi Piano Festival
- Peer Connections and Sharing
Dr. D. Jason Bishop enjoys a national and international reputation as a conductor, composer, clinician, and choral scholar. Positions he has held include Artistic Director of the world-renowned, Grammy award-winning Texas Boys Choir; Associate Professor of Music, Director of Choral & Vocal Studies, & Chair of the Music Department at Drew University; and most recently, Director of Music & Worship Ministries at Christ United Methodist Church in Plano, Texas. While serving as Director of Choral Activities at Penn State Erie, Dr. Bishop is especially proud to have changed the choral landscape of northwestern Pennsylvania by founding its first community children’s chorus, the Young People’s Chorus of Erie, of which he served as Artistic & Executive Director. Crossing the city’s spectrum of racial, religious, and socioeconomic backgrounds, Dr. Bishop’s goal was to provide the region’s children with a world-class musical experience regardless of their financial means, building the organization’s mission on a commitment to diversity, artistic excellence, academic achievement, and personal discipline. During his tenure, he brought the Young People’s Chorus of Erie to the national stage in performances at Carnegie Hall and in competition at the World Choir Games (the “Choir Olympics”), for which they won two gold medals and one silver medal.

Dr. Bishop has numerous performances to his credit in major venues including Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center, Saint Patrick’s Cathedral, Sanders Theater at Harvard University, and the Chautauqua Institution. As an active guest conductor and clinician, he has conducted honor choirs, festivals, and workshops throughout the United States and around the world, as well as presented at multiple professional conferences, including for ACDA and for the Music Educators Associations of Hawaii, Nevada, Tennessee, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey. Dr. Bishop has received several awards and honors for his work, including “Outstanding Young Conductor of the Year” by the American Choral Directors Association of PA, the Asset Champion Award from Healthy Youth Development of Erie County, and a Proclamation from the Erie City Council. He was selected by the American Choral Directors Association as one of seven conductors nationwide for a two-week conducting fellowship in South Korea, and he was named Honorary Chair of the Alpha Boys Choir of Shenzhen, China, where he was an invited guest conductor for the city’s public and international schools.

A native of Burns, Tennessee, Dr. Bishop earned the Doctor of Musical Arts degree in choral conducting from the University of Oklahoma, where he studied with Dennis Shrock. His dissertation, entitled Omnes Completant: A Conductor’s Resource Guide to the Office of Compline, provides an overview of the historical evolution of Compline, along with complete source material for the traditional Compline liturgy with original Latin translations, chant transcriptions, a catalog of Compline-themed repertoire, and several polyphonic motets edited for study and performance. He received his Master of Music degree in choral conducting from Boston University where he studied with Ann Howard Jones, and his Bachelor of Arts degree in Music and Classical Languages from Rhodes College in Memphis, where he studied conducting with the late Tony Lee Garner, graduated Phi Beta Kappa with distinction, was voted into the Rhodes College Hall of Fame, and received the Rhodes College Kinney Leadership Award for outstanding service to his community.

Dr. Bishop previously served on the faculty of Lesley University and on the administration of the Longy School of Music, both in Cambridge, MA; and as Director of Music at St. Stephen’s United Methodist Church in Norman, OK. He has performed as a countertenor soloist in chamber ensemble concerts and vocal recitals, and had the honor of singing for two seasons with the Santa Fe Desert Chorale. His numerous arrangements of Schubert and Schumann Lieder have been performed by men’s, women’s, and mixed choirs, with selections published by Colla Voce Music, and in Henry Leck’s Creating Artistry Series with Hal Leonard Corporation. He has served the American Choral Directors Association (ACDA) in a number of capacities, including as National Repertoire & Resources Chair for Student Activities.
Dr. Peter Boonshaft

Called one of the most exciting and exhilarating voices in music education today, Peter Loel Boonshaft has been invited to speak and conduct in every state in the nation and around the world. Honored by the National Association for Music Education and Music For All as the first recipient of the “George M. Parks Award for Leadership in Music Education,” Dr. Boonshaft is Director of Education for Jupiter Band Instruments, and his weekly “Boonshaft’s Blog” for music educators continues to inspire teachers everywhere. He has received official proclamations from the governors of five states and a Certificate of Appreciation from former President Ronald Reagan, as well as performing for former President and Mrs. George H. W. Bush, former President Bill Clinton, and former Prime Minister of the United Kingdom. He has been awarded membership in Pi Kappa Lambda and Alpha Chi, as well as twice receiving the University of Hartford Regents Award and that University’s Outstanding Music Educator Award. His honors also include being selected three times as a National Endowment for the Arts “Artist in Residence,” three times awarded Honorary Life Membership in the Tri-M Music Honor Society, receiving the AI G. Wright Award of Distinction from the Women Band Directors International, and being selected for the Center for Scholarly Research and Academic Excellence at Hofstra University, where he is Professor Emeritus of Music.

He holds Bachelor of Music (Summa Cum Laude), Master of Music Education in Conducting, and Doctor of Musical Arts degrees. Dr. Boonshaft was also awarded a Connecticut General Fellowship for study at the Kodály Musical Training Institute, from which he holds a Certificate. Prior to this appointment, Dr. Boonshaft was on the faculty of Moravian College and the University of Hartford. He was Founder and Music Director of the Pennsylvania Youth Honors Concert Band and the Connecticut Valley Youth Wind Ensemble. In addition, he held the post of Music Director and Conductor of the Metropolitan Wind Symphony of Boston.


**BIOS**

**Brian Boyes**

As a trumpeter, composer, arranger and band leader, multi-instrumentalist **Brian Boyes** has worked in Vermont for over 20 years. Brian has twice received special recognition from the Vermont Arts Alliance for his unique and creative approach to music education at Cabot School and is a three-time recipient of Cabot School’s UVM Teacher of the Year award where has worked for the past 24 years. In 2014, Brian was awarded a Rowland Foundation Fellowship to develop and implement a significant project of educational transformation in Vermont. Most recently, Brian Boyes has been celebrated and recognized for his work as the composer and conductor of the 18-piece post-rock, big band, The Saturn People’s Sound Collective. As a recipient of a Vermont Community Foundation Arts Endowment grant and a Goddard College Concerts commission, Boyes and the Saturn Collective have sent shockwaves throughout the VT musical community leaving an indelible imprint amongst Vermont’s tastemakers and diverse music lovers alike. Says Seven Days of the group’s 2013 headlining Discover Jazz Festival performance, “Mind blowing radness . . . The Saturn People’s set at The FlynnSpace on Tuesday was simply transcendent, not merely a local highlight, but a festival topper, period.” Brian is the founder and creative director of SoundCheck – a band of select VT high school musicians writing and performing original music to fight for social justice. SoundCheck students work with music educators, prominent singer-songwriters and anti-racist educators to develop original material that tackles racism, injustice and hate. The band regularly performs and facilitates workshops at New England high schools using art and music as a catalyst to spark dialogue, action and awareness.

**Nisha Feik**

**Nisha Feik** is Cultural Infusion’s Education Strategist. She holds a Masters of Education and has taught performing arts from kindergarten to university level since 1991. She works closely with the Sound Infusion online resource and has trialled it with primary school classes. Nisha runs blended learning workshops for teachers, demonstrating how to use technology alongside traditional percussion, singing and dancing techniques and performances. She presented a workshop at the International Society for Music Education in July 2022.
Dr. William George-Twyman

Dr. William George-Twyman currently serves as the Head of Choral Studies at the world-renowned Booker T. Washington High School for the Performing and Visual Arts in Dallas ISD. He teaches five choirs, Music Theory, Conducting, and Integration of Abilities as well as being the Assistant Music Conservatory Director over curriculum and instruction. Striving to find connections between Classical-era repertoire and modern music, William is known for innovative programming ideas and multimedia collaborations. William has led choirs at the middle and high school levels as well as at the collegiate, semiprofessional, and liturgical levels. He has served as pit conductor for numerous musical theater productions including the Tony award-winning Coram Boy in partnership with the University of Oklahoma Weitzenhoffer College of Fine Arts in Norman, Oklahoma. Dr. George-Twyman was the recipient of the Outstanding Choral Leadership Award from the University of Oklahoma School of Music. He holds a Doctor of Musical Arts degree in Choral Conducting from OU, a Master of Sacred Music degree from the University of Notre Dame, a Master of Music in Choral Conducting from Butler University, and a Bachelor of Arts in Music Education from Transylvania University.

A fierce advocate for racial and gender equity in music education, Dr. George-Twyman recently presented sessions on Anti-Racism in the Choral Classroom and Diversity in Programming for Arkansas chapter of SWACDA in 2021. He’s the current (2020-2024) Repertoire and Resources chair for High School Mixed for SWACDA, serves on the ACDA National Diversity Initiatives Committee Task Force, and is on the National ACDA conference (2023) committee for Insight Choirs and Interest Sessions. He lives in Mesquite, TX with his husband Christopher and their two children, Sophie and Skylar.

Clayton Hamilton

Clayton Hamilton is the Band Director at Burlington High School in VT. He has his Bachelor of Music in Education from Houghton College. After studying at Houghton, Clayton was accepted with scholarship to the New England Conservatory of Music where he received his Master of Music in Saxophone Performance. Since moving to VT in 2017 from working in Plymouth and Falmouth, Clayton has performed with the Burlington Civic Orchestra, and been a guest soloist with the Solaris Vocal Ensemble, performing Ola Gjeilo’s Evening Prayer and Deep River by Anders Paulsson, and performed in educational outreaches with the Vermont Symphony Orchestra.
Alexander Judge

Currently in his seventh year of teaching, Alex Judge has proudly been serving southwest New Hampshire’s Monadnock Regional School District since the 2018-2019 school year, where he provides instruction in general and instrumental music to kindergarten through sixth grade students at Troy Elementary School, Dr. George S. Emerson Elementary School, and Gilsum STEAM Academy. A strong advocate for music education among the youngest of learners, Mr. Judge takes great pride in his ability to create an engaging, innovative, and meaningful culture and environment where highly purposeful music making and learning can take place. Mr. Judge holds a degree in Music Education from Ithaca College, his primary instrument is the saxophone, and enjoys watching, playing, and coaching basketball in his spare time.

William Kinne

William Kinne is Assistant Professor of Music and Director of Bands at the University of Southern Maine, where he conducts the Concert Band, Wind Ensemble, and Portland Youth Wind Ensemble. Dr. Kinne also teaches undergraduate courses on conducting and music education and leads the graduate program in wind conducting.

Dr. Kinne is a founding member of the Colorado New Music Ensemble and former Conductor of the Boulder Concert Band. He is in demand as a guest conductor, clinician, and adjudicator, and has worked with university and high school bands from Wisconsin, Florida, Arizona, New Mexico, Colorado, and Utah. Recently, he presented clinics at the Arizona Music Education Association Conference and to the music faculty of the Clark County School District in Nevada.

Dr. Kinne’s career as a music educator spans a decade of teaching middle and high school instrumental music. Ensembles under his direction have earned praise for cross-disciplinary performances and have earned superior ratings at state festivals. His research interests include the intersection of music creation and technology, the music of Charles Ives, and a wind ensemble transcription of Dmitri Shostakovich’s operetta, “The Tale of the Silly Little Mouse.”

Dr. Kinne holds degrees from The University of New Hampshire, The University of Michigan, and The University of Colorado Boulder. His primary conducting teachers are Allan McMurray, Donald McKinney, Michael Haithcock, and Andrew Boysen. Dr. Kinne is a member of the College Band Directors National Association and The National Association for Music Education and is an honorary member of Kappa Kappa Psi and Tau Beta Sigma.
Ær Queen

Ær (they/them,fen/fens) is a trans non-binary General Music teacher at Bradock Elementary School in Annandale, Virginia in Fairfax County Public Schools. This is their third year at Braddock ES and their seventh year teaching General Music in Northern Virginia. They are a proud alum of Fairfax County Public Schools and of Shenandoah Conservatory at Shenandoah University in Winchester, Virginia where they earned their Bachelor of Music in Music Education. Ær has seen and experienced the real effects of targeted transphobia, and that has only served to drive them to be more active in advocacy spaces for transgender, gender-nonconforming, and queer students. Their “why” centers around the idea that education is one of the best ways to stem hatred and violence, and their platform is in line with the theory that anyone can do better when they know how. They believe that seeing and hearing the first-hand experiences of a transgender person can help to demonstrate the importance of being affirming of other transgender people, especially our students. Ær is passionate about helping educators view the importance of gender inclusivity in schools through the first person lens of a practicing transgender teacher, and they have presented at numerous conferences throughout the US including 11 state Music Educator Associations’s, the Virginia Education Association Summit for Racial and Social Justice, and the National Alliance for Partnerships in Equity - National Summit for Educational Equity. They have also been accepted to present on Gender Equity at the National Association for Music Education conference in the fall of 2022.

In their classroom, they do everything they can to make sure that their students know they are loved, cared for, and included from the moment they enter the classroom. Part of that care includes actively and unapologetically being themselves, which involves being as open and honest with their students as possible. They also firmly believe in trusting students when they express questions or truths about themselves, and giving their students the benefit of the doubt in as many situations as possible. Ær works on being intersectional and anti-racist in their teaching practice, and was recognized as a Quarterfinalist for the 2022 and 2023 Music Educator Grammy Awards.
Allison Russo

**Allison Russo** is an educator, consultant, and writer focused on creating ethical and effective learning spaces in the arts. Her areas of interest include social-emotional learning, culturally responsive teaching, and diversity, equity, and inclusion. Allison has a BM from Ithaca College and an MM from Boston University, both in Music Education. As an elementary band teacher and non-profit arts administrator, Allison has designed and delivered music programming to thousands of students and teachers. She currently serves on the board of Keys 2 Success, a non-profit working to remove systemic barriers to music education for the children of Newark, NJ. Allison envisions a world where arts education is boundless, universally accessible, and joyful for all.

Stefanie Weigand

**Stefanie Weigand** has served as President and Membership Chair of the VT chapter of ACDA (American Choral Directors Association) and as the Youth R&R Chair of the ACDA Eastern Region. She currently serves as the Chair of the NAfME Council for Choral Education. She enjoys working as a presenter, clinician, and guest conductor across the region and is currently the conductor of the Polaris Singers at Northern VT University - Johnson. Stefanie is also the Director of Education with Music-COMP, a non-profit organization that promotes creativity and teaches composition to both students and teachers. She was the 2014 recipient of the VMEA’s Outstanding New Music Educator Award and received a Masters of Music Education from Castleton University. After completing her BFA in Musical Theatre from Ithaca College, Stefanie toured nationally with a Children’s Theatre Company and worked on stage and off as a performer, pit musician, and music director in New York. Since moving to Vermont, she has appeared as a vocalist, pianist, and music director for various organizations including TURNmusic, the Vermont Philharmonic, Stowe Theatre Guild, Lyric Theatre, Music-COMP, Apex Ensemble, the Green Mountain Mahler Festival, The Saturn People’s Sound Collective, Burlington Civic Symphony Orchestra, the Green Mountain Opera Festival, and more. Stefanie’s work as a studio vocalist can also be heard on a number of albums released through Lane Gibson studios and Lovetown Recording. She now enjoys living in central Vermont with her husband and theatre partner-in-crime, along with their two children.
Dr. Erin Zaffini

Dr. Erin Zaffini is the Director of Teacher Education for the fully online Master of Music in Music Education program at the Longy School of Music in Cambridge, MA. In addition to her experiences teaching preK-8 general, choral and instrumental music, she is a co-author of the National Core Arts Standards for general music, and is the project leader for NAfME’s National Music Mentor Training Initiative. She has published articles in General Music Today, Music Educators Journal, Update: Applications of Research in Music Education and Qualitative Research in Music Education.
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