



VanderCook College of Music
Alumni Association Board Nominee Bios
December 2012

John Armstrong (BMEd 2008) incumbent

Armstrong is currently the Director of Technology for the Joliet Public Schools District 86. Previously, Armstrong served as Fine Arts Coordinator for the Joliet Public Schools District 86, where he supervised over 1,500 students in the band, orchestra, and choir programs; as well as junior high general music and elementary art instruction. He has served as band director at several District 86 schools, as well as co-director of the Joliet All City Band. Bands under Armstrong's direction consistently received superior ratings and numerous awards. The Joliet All City Band performed at the 2005 Illinois Music Educators Association All-State Conference. Armstrong has over 22 years experience teaching band, choir, and general music in Texas and Illinois.

Armstrong received a BMEd VanderCook in 1988 and an MA in Educational Administration from Governors State University in 1998. In addition to many honors, Armstrong is a 2002 recipient of the prestigious *Chicagoland Outstanding Music Educator Award*.

Armstrong has served as the Vice-President of the Illinois Grade School Music Association (IGSMA), Northern Division, after having served as District VI Chairperson; Festival Chairman for the Illinois Music Educators Association (IMEA) District I Fall Festival; and President of VanderCook's Alumni Association. Armstrong's professional affiliations include the Illinois Grade School Music Association, Illinois Music Educators Association, National Association for Music Education, American School Band Directors Association, Urban Music Leadership Conference, the National Council of Supervisors of Music Education, and the International Society for Technology in Education. Armstrong holds life membership in the Illinois Parent-Teacher Association and Kappa Kappa Psi National Honorary Band Fraternity and is an active adjudicator and clinician throughout the Chicagoland area.

Brian Covey (MMEd 2006)

Covey is the Visual and Performing Arts Chairman, in addition to serving as Director of Bands at Lockport Township High School. Covey was appointed Director in 2003 after serving two years as Associate Director of Bands. He also conducts the Wind Symphony, Symphonic Band, and one of two freshman concert ensembles; oversees the Marching Porters, Pep Band, the Jazz Program; and conducts the Pit Orchestra. The concert ensembles at Lockport Township High School have performed at numerous competitions and festivals throughout IL and the States, consistently receiving Division One ratings. The Wind Symphony has become a nationally respected ensemble with performance highlights including the Illinois Superstate Festival at the University of Illinois (every year since 2004), the National Association for Music Education National Conference, the Illinois Music Educators Association State Conference, the Meyerson Symphony Center, Chicago Orchestra Hall, The Music for All National Concert Band Festival (2006 and 2008), The World Association for Symphonic Bands and Ensembles International Conference, recipient of the John Philip Sousa Foundation Sudler Flag, and The Midwest International Band and Orchestra Clinic.

Prior to joining Lockport High School, Covey attended the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign where he earned his BMEd. He earned his MMEd at VanderCook, and his second masters degree in educational administration from The University of St. Francis. Covey has served as an adjudicator for many regional and Illinois High School Association Solo and Ensemble Contests, for both the Illinois High School Association and the Illinois Grade School Music Association, and clinician to area schools in Illinois, Iowa, and Virginia. He holds nine Citations of Excellence from the National Band Association, has been chosen five times as "Who's Who Among American Teachers," serves on the National Band Association's Selective Music Committee, been awarded the "Chicagoland Educator of the Year" from Quinlan & Fabish Music, the "Mildred Jackson Lockport Township High School Teacher of the Year Award", and was highlighted in School Band and Orchestra Magazine. Covey is a member of the National Association for Music Education, the National Band

Association, Phi Mu Alpha Sinfonia, and Kappa Delta Pi Honor Society. Covey is the Illinois Music Educator's Association District I Band Representative, and serves on the National Band Association's Board of Directors.

Christopher Nakielski (MMEd 2009)

Nakielski has been director of choirs since 2010 at Loyola Academy in Wilmette ,IL. Chris earned his BA in vocal performance from Ripon College. He then taught briefly at Waterford Union High School before pursuing his MMEd in 2009 from VanderCook. Upon graduating from VanderCook, he began his teaching career at Whitney Young Magnet High School. Chris and his wife Colette reside in Chicago.

Mike Teolis (MMEd 1991) incumbent

Teolis joined the faculty of The Latin School of Chicago as the instrumental music director in 1989. Before coming to Latin School, he worked for 15 years in the Chicago Archdiocesan School system as a band director, orchestra director, choral director, and general music instructor. He is currently the chair of the Performing Arts Department at Latin and teaches instrumental music to grades 4-12. His bands have been featured at several City of Chicago events and have performed in England, Ireland, Finland, Estonia, and Germany. Outside of school, Mr. Teolis performs as a freelance vocalist, conductor, and instrumentalist. He is the founder/musical director of the Michael Teolis Singers, an enterprising vocal ensemble of mixed voices. Over the years, he has worked with such notable musical artists as Gian Carlo Menotti, Sir David Willcocks, Peter Schickele, and David Foster. He was a long-time member of the William Ferris Chorale, also serving as the chorale's associate conductor, choir master and occasional guest conductor. He is the author of several original vocal and instrumental compositions and arrangements, some of which are published. He has served as a member of VanderCook's Alumni Board. He is a member of IMEA, NAFME, NCBA, and ASCAP.

Cindy Tovar (BMEd 2000) incumbent

Tovar is the administrative assistant to Dr. Charles T. Menghini, president of VanderCook College of Music. She joined the staff in 2000 after receiving her BMEd from VanderCook. Previously, Tovar served as the Undergraduate Dean's assistant from 2000 – 2004, Director of Outreach and Ensemble Coordinator from 2004 – 2009, and Alumni Association Liaison from 2004 -2008. Tovar is the immediate past state advisor for IMEA collegiate chapters and currently serves as the chapter advisor to VanderCook's NAFME chapter 581. Tovar also coordinates community drum circles and is a member of the Midwest Clinic staff.

Write-In candidate(s) must be current dues-paying members of the Alumni Association.