



# The New and Improved www.vandercook.edu



If you have recently visited vandercook.edu, you probably noticed the school's website has undergone a facelift. As VanderCook continues to grow, the way we connect with students, alumni, and friends will continue to expand as well.

The new and improved website launched in August after much input and hours of work by our faculty, staff, and dedicated student worker, Alex Fries. The site now features upcoming events, online registration, the ability to download school applications, and photos, lots of them.



Scan this QR Code with your smart phone to visit vandercook.edu.

VanderCook has also expanded our social media presence. Our Facebook and Twitter pages have an attentive audience and we invite you to join in on the action!



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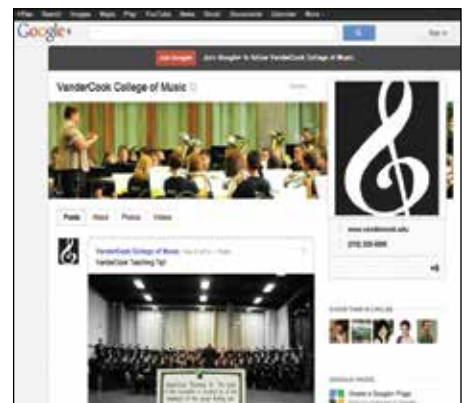
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The mission of VanderCook College of Music is to enrich the lives of present and future generations through the preparation of teachers in instrumental, choral, and general music disciplines. Our broad-based curriculum is designed to prepare teachers with strong character, skill in the process of teaching, and respect for the essential role of music in our culture.





# A Letter from the President

Dr. Charles T. Menghini

Third grade. I started to play the trumpet in third grade. My teacher was Mrs. Staria Drees. She was the town music teacher in Iron Mountain, Michigan. She gave my brother clarinet lessons, she taught flute, horn, trombone, piano, and she taught me trumpet. I progressed fairly quickly and after about six or seven months, she introduced me to Hale A. VanderCook via the entry solo in his great sequential trumpet solo series, "Lyra." I performed it for Mrs. Drees' annual spring student recital.

It was an introduction that changed my life. With her teachings and Mr. VanderCook's music, I experienced the profound joy of playing my trumpet, of making music come alive through my playing. VanderCook's solo helped me develop both the technical and musical aspects of my playing. To think that some 50-plus years later, I would be heading up the college with his name on the door still amazes me.

Today, VanderCook students are learning to help future generations experience the joy of making music, much

like the thousands of our professional teaching alumni who have come before them. The foci of our courses of study, steeped in the traditions and values of our founders, H. A. VanderCook and H. E. Nutt, are as meaningful to today's music educators as they were over 100 years ago.

Our 2012 Annual Report will give you an inside peek at those students, alumni, and friends who

have all been influenced by VanderCook. It also details our plans to meet the needs our college is facing by expanding the educational space for our students and programs through the *Inspire. Build. Sustain.* capital campaign.

The *Inspire. Build. Sustain.* capital campaign signals the start of VanderCook's public efforts to renovate a second building on the IIT campus, just steps from our current facility. This renovation is projected to occur in two phases, each at an approximate cost of \$3,000,000. Presently the college has begun the first

phase, with secured donations and pledges totaling over \$2,300,000. We look to raise the remaining capital by early spring of 2013, allowing us to have the initial phase completed and ready for use beginning in the fall of 2014.

Phase one will include a rehearsal/lobby area, one large classroom, three ensemble rooms, six teaching/practice rooms, a piano teaching studio, four faculty/staff offices, a band library, a choral-orchestra library, an audio-visual production area, an ensemble workroom, a performer's "green room," storage for the college's grand piano, a student lounge, a hospitality area, a new ADA-compliant elevator, bathrooms, and a reception area.

Phase two will include a large performance/activity area that will accommodate an audience of 350–400 people. This will provide the first dedicated performance space in VanderCook's history. In addition, phase two will provide a second large classroom, and house the percussion studies area with a faculty office/teaching studio, additional teaching/practice areas, student lockers, and storage for large instruments and equipment. Phase two is projected to begin in 2016.

Once completed, **The VanderCook Music Education Center** (or as the center will be appropriately named) will provide an exceptional environment for music lessons, master classes, clinics, workshops, lectures, public performances, and graduation ceremonies. In addition, VanderCook will host a concert series featuring college ensembles and visiting school music groups, and secure sponsorship to bring special musical performances to the campus: chamber recitals, jazz concerts, and performances of interest to its students and the Chicago arts community. As the first and largest center of its kind in the neighborhood in decades, this building will meet the needs of the college as well as provide the campus and community with a unique space for educational and recreational events.

I hope you will feel the passion, excitement, and devotion expressed throughout this publication, and I hope you share it with someone who needs to be introduced to VanderCook College of Music.

Thanks for your continued support of our efforts. Please know that YOU are the lifeblood of this college – its past, its present, and its future.

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**"Today, VanderCook students are learning to help future generations experience the joy of making music, much like the thousands of our professional teaching alumni who have come before them."**

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# “A Year Through My Eyes”

*My name is Tayiib Dauda, and I'm a saxophone player in my fourth year at VanderCook College of Music. Here's a look at a typical year at VanderCook from my perspective, although I'm sure a lot of my fellow classmates feel the same...*

## AUGUST

Every school year always starts off with a huge variety of emotions. At some point during the summer, you find yourself wanting school to start up again so you can see all your friends. This feeling usually lasts right until a couple of days before the start of classes, and then (if you're anything like me) you suddenly dread the thoughts of having to wake up early or do homework or study for tests. To ease the transition, VanderCook has a Welcome Back BBQ on the Sunday before the first day of classes. It acts as an ice-breaker and actually feels like the first day of school, but without the class work. This is great because it gives us a chance to collect ourselves and get ready to take on whatever challenges the year might bring.

## SEPTEMBER

After a little less than a month, we have our first performance, the Prism Concert. At this point in the year, we've only had a handful of rehearsals together. With every new school year we have a lot of new faces in the band. They range from incoming freshmen

to transfer students and even the occasional graduate student. It's always a challenge to play with a new ensemble, not to mention that at least a third of the band is playing secondary instruments. But by the night of the concert, we're all playing like a cohesive unit, and feel validated by having a successful concert.

## OCTOBER

As a saxophone player who loves jazz, I've been lucky enough to perform in the VanderCook Jazz Ensemble every semester since I enrolled. Because of this, I've had the privilege to be a part of our annual Fall Tour every October. This is easily one of my favorite events of the school year – not only because we get to travel to high schools around the Midwest, but we also get to showcase our talent and advertise our college. Fall Tour is always memorable. There are roughly 60 students chosen to tour in the jazz band, orchestra, chorale, and percussion ensemble. Fall Tour lets us demonstrate our versatility as most of us perform in more than one ensemble. Audiences are always amazed to see someone play Mozart's “Eine Kleine Nachtmusik” on cello, and then see that same person



pick up a trumpet and squeal out those high notes on Glenn Miller's “In the Mood.”

## NOVEMBER

As the holidays approach, everyone begins feeling homesick in addition to the pressure of finals (“Sleep... what's that?”). The two events that help me get through this month are Toot ‘N’ Doodle, and the Faculty and Staff Recital.



As part of the Woodwind Methods course, you're required to participate in Toot 'N' Doodle, an outreach event that introduces musical instruments to second and third graders. We bring band and orchestral instruments and set up stations for the kids to try them all. My station last year was with the woodwinds, but I also lucked out and was able to proctor the oboe test-runs. My job was to teach second graders how to form an oboe embouchure and make a sound on the instrument. Oh, and did I mention that we have to do this in 30 minutes with about 60 kids? If you know anything about second graders and anything about the oboe, you know it was challenging! But it was still a fun experience.

The Faculty and Staff Recital is another fantastic event. Not only does the college provide us with a full Thanksgiving dinner, but we get the wonderful opportunity to watch the faculty and staff – the people who tell us what to do and how to do it – pull out their instruments and put their money where their mouth is. Watching them employ the same techniques that they preach on a daily basis really gives me a sense of reassurance that I am learning from a credible source.



### DECEMBER

The best month of the year by far! Next to my birthday, the biggest event in the VanderCook calendar is the Symphonic Band performance at the Midwest Clinic. This is an event where directors, musicians, and vendors from all around the world gather to share their experience and hear new music. There are more than 11,000 musicians who attend this weeklong clinic, so it's no wonder why this concert is the one we spend the most time preparing for. During the weeks before the performance, having a four-hour rehearsal is not uncommon.

Aside from the performance preparations, we are also hired to work as staff for the clinic. The job assignments vary from being an usher, to setting up stages, manning registration tables, and moving instruments. You don't realize how heavy a harp is until you have to pick one up! After countless hours of setting up for others, we then set up our own band and rehearse. In years past, we've had rehearsals last until well after midnight and still had to wake up to work our 6 a.m. shift. Even though this is painful, it is not without reward. Once it is finally over, you gain a sense of satisfaction that is achieved only after you have done something of great merit. After everything is said and done, Midwest is



a great experience, and I actually can't wait to put myself through it again this year.

### JANUARY

My favorite part about coming back to school after winter break is the IMEA [Illinois Music Educators Association] Conference. We travel to Peoria, IL, and perform a ton of recently published music as a sort of "audio preview" to help educators decide if they want to purchase any of those pieces for their programs. This reading session usually is comprised of around 25 songs and all of the teachers and alumni in the audience are welcome to sit in the band and play with us.

### FEBRUARY

This month is relatively uneventful as far as concerts are concerned, so I get a chance to focus on class work without the added pressure of getting ready for a major performance. There is, however, one big change



to deal with: this semester is when all the seniors begin their student teaching experience. This means that most of the first chair players and sections leaders are gone and their positions need to be filled. Their absence changes the sound and cohesion of the ensemble, but every year we step up and fill their roles, and always make it work.

## MARCH

March marks the halfway point in the semester. Midterms loom in proximity with mid-semester break's shining light at the end of the tunnel. If you can just make it through midterms and one relaxed concert, then you are on your way to a five-day vacation!

## APRIL

April is by far the busiest month. Juggling Junior and Senior Recitals, the Student Conducting Concert, the Night at the Pops Concert, a Medium Ensemble Concert, a Chamber Ensemble Concert, and the Side-by-Side Orchestra Concert is no easy task. My two biggest concerns last year were my Junior Recital and the Student Conductor Concert. These were the most challenging and had the biggest impact on my class grades.

Somewhere in my VanderCook journey, I picked up the oboe and decided to declare it as my minor. I honed my skills and became the principal oboist in the VanderCook Symphonic Orchestra. With this new skill came another responsibility: I now have the opportunity to play with the orchestra in all of the symphonic performances. The Side-by-Side Concert was one where our orchestra and a visiting high school's orchestra perform literally side by side before we come together as a whole and perform a combined piece. This is just one more responsibility, but a rewarding one, on top of an already crowded month.

I spent all semester and part of the prior semester preparing for my Junior Recital. I wanted to show everyone the results of my hard work and dedication, and what better way that through 30 minutes of saxophone and oboe music. My family flew out from Las Vegas, NV, and San Diego, CA, to hear me play my recital. They travelled over 2,000 miles to see me, so I had no choice but to have a great performance, and fortunately I did.





The Student Conductor Concert was definitely the most nerve-racking performance I've done. I was the one on the podium; I was the one who rehearsed that piece with the band for two months; I was the one directing the ensemble and showing style, tempo, and expression; I was the one everyone was looking at; I was the conductor. It was terrifying! Having to instruct a room full of your peers is scary. They know you and they know the material that you are trying to instruct. They'll know when you make a mistake or do something you shouldn't. Somehow, I managed to put my fear behind me and brave through the concert conducting my piece with a certain degree of flare that I didn't know I had and I was very proud of.

The final big event of the month is the annual Night at the Pops Concert! This is a wonderfully relaxing experience. The ensembles played pop charts that have high energy and are exciting! The Pops Concert is a great opportunity to lower my guard and just have fun playing and listening to the music.

## MAY



Finally, the year starts to wind down. After our final exams, we have just one last event on the horizon: undergraduate commencement. Once May arrives, the count-down to the last day is on everyone's mind. "Six more days... three more days... two more... one more... TODAY IS THE LAST DAY!!!" At that point, I could have sworn that I wanted the summer to last forever and that I wouldn't miss school for one bit. However, at some point in the summer, I always find myself wanting school to start up again so this seemingly endless cycle could make one more revolution.

Next year, I'll be on the stage again but this time I'll be receiving my long-awaited diploma, and ready to take all that I've learned at VanderCook out into the classroom!





## The Process is the Product:

# Carlos Alban

When Carlos Alban came to VanderCook in 1999, he had little idea how much of what he learned would impact music education in his home country of Ecuador.

Alban had been a passionate drummer since age 11, growing up in Ecuador's capital, Quito. He switched from guitar to drums when an older friend in his neighborhood demonstrated various rock and jazz drum beats. Alban's fascination took root and he continued studying until he graduated from high school, dreaming of becoming a jazz drummer like his heroes Jack DeJohnette and Roy Haynes. Upon graduation, however, he was faced with a dilemma that challenges all Ecuadorian students with a passion for the arts. Ecuador's colleges and universities are widely respected for their training in engineering, medicine, and law, but none offer degrees for music.

"We don't have a middle level in high school for music or art in Ecuador," Alban explains. When students take music classes at the col-

lege level, "they have to start from scratch. When they graduate, they are probably at the level of a U.S. high school student, so they cannot compete internationally."

With his options limited, Alban came to study at the American Conservatory of Music in Chicago in April 1998. A year later, the school would be forced to close after losing its accreditation. Fortunately for Alban, a roommate mentioned a school on the south side for music educators. "I had never thought about being an educator before, but it turned out to be a very good decision for my reality in Ecuador, because Ecuador needs teachers."

Successfully completing the program at VanderCook affected Alban profoundly. "Sometimes people think that because you're an educator you can't perform. I think performance is important but sometimes it's not about you but what you can share. At VanderCook everything is integral: you can be an excellent musician, you have to be

good to be in ensembles, and you get a lot of experience in performances... They demand the best of yourself, so you can become a good teacher and a good performer... It changed me totally – the way I see life is different now."

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**"I had never thought about being an educator before, but it turned out to be a very good decision for my reality in Ecuador, because Ecuador needs teachers."**

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**Above:** Carlos Alban (L) with VanderCook percussion major, Juan Torres.

Alban pictured with percussion students at Estudio de Percusión.



After graduating, Alban taught in Chicago Public Schools for a year under the Optional Practical Training visa program, and the experience awakened an interest he didn't know he had. When the year concluded, Alban invested all of his savings into buying as many percussion instruments as he could – and a one-way ticket back to Quito. Within a few months, he opened Estudio de Percusión, Quito's first institution dedicated to percussion education. The school's mission – preparing percussion students to perform at a higher level – established it as a unique entity in Quito's music community. When the doors opened in 2004, only one student enrolled. Today, there are over 50, and a staff of 10 now performs duties that Alban initially assumed all by himself.

Alban speaks passionately and energetically about his school and students, although he is very aware of the limitations imposed by Ecuador's education system. "Almost all of my students start from scratch. Some may come from another school and maybe know a basic drum pattern, but at most they will have had only six years of training. After the three years of our program [at Estudio de Percusión], they are prepared to go to a higher level." Alban's enthusiasm for his students' success isn't just limited to seeing them through his program. When asked by his stu-

currently a junior, cherishes the experience he had as Alban's student: "It was like a whole new world. I feel like before him I was always focused on étude books, but he tries to get you more in touch with music and with performing, and through those pieces, he teaches you techniques and musicality, as opposed to a single focus. That way of teaching opens your mind to a lot of things. That's when I started looking at piano players and learning from them, and listening to other kinds of music. He's open-minded. He's like, 'What do you want to do?...' and with that he tries to guide you, as opposed to, 'This is what I'm going to teach you and you'd better learn it...' That was an experience I hadn't had before."

Alban's dedication to his school and his craft knows no bounds. He continues to perform, and is constantly seeking new ways of expanding opportunities for his students. When the director of the Fundació Conservatori del Liceu in Barcelona came to Quito looking for a partnership school, Alban jumped at the chance. The program, called Fundación Carolina, encourages cultural learning via student exchange agreements between Spain and Latin American coun-

John Riley, and VanderCook's own Professor of Percussion Kevin Lepper and President Dr. Charles Menghini.

"Mr. Lepper was the first clinician we had come to Ecuador as part of this festival," Alban explains. "He saw that we have excellent musicians who are very talented but they need more motivation in the process as well as the product." Lepper recalls, "I was struck by their enthusiasm, regardless of the lack of instruments and resource materials. The schools don't have traditional 'band programs' like we have in the U.S., so many times it is everybody for themselves."

Alban is undaunted by the challenges. The Estudio received accreditation from Ecuador's Ministry of Education and Culture in 2009, and Alban continues to expand international relations. "I would like to have more agreements with international schools and entities, and be accredited with national associations of music here in the U.S.," he explains. "That way, people who get a degree in Ecuador could work in the U.S., and somebody who gets a diploma from VanderCook could work in Ecuador." As a step towards reaching that goal, discussions are underway exploring a teacher-exchange program to bring VanderCook students to Quito to help develop general music programs. VanderCook looks to begin this student internship program in May 2013.

**"At VanderCook everything is integral: you can be an excellent musician, you have to be good to be in ensembles, you get a lot of experience in performances... They demand the best of yourself, so you can become a good teacher and performer... It changed me totally – the way I see life is different now."**

dents where they should go once they receive their diploma, he openly encourages them to continue studying outside of Ecuador. His already contagious smile widens even more when he talks about his students continuing percussion studies in Chicago, Paris, and Barcelona, all based on his recommendation.

One such student is Juan Torres, who came to VanderCook in 2008 at Alban's urging. Torres,

tries. One of Alban's students received a full scholarship to study at the Conservatori as a result of the partnership. Alban's Estudio also hosts an annual festival, having received support from Zildjian, Vic Firth, and VanderCook. Alban also personally reaches out to enlist guest clinicians and performers, some of whom include Gordon Gottlieb and Erik Charlston from the New York Philharmonic, Manhattan School of Music's

"VanderCook's mission really fits with our reality. We have to emulate what teachers are doing here, especially with the outcomes that VanderCook has. I think VanderCook grads are 'complete human beings,' and they are about the process, not the product necessarily." With his talent, vision, and passion, it's hard not to believe that Carlos Alban's successes are only beginning.



# — 10 Years of — “A Night at the Pops”

As the cost of a college degree continues to rise, VanderCook has long been committed to making institutional aid available to its undergraduates. For over 10 years, the Great Teachers Scholarship Fund has grown to be the single largest source of this essential support. “The Great Teachers Scholarship is awarded to students who excel both academically and musically,” says Sirena Covington, VanderCook’s Director of Financial Aid. “The prestige of being awarded this scholarship means the entire VanderCook community recognizes a student’s achievements. Students value the status of being a Great Teacher Scholar and wear it as a badge of honor... working that much harder to achieve their academic and career goals.”

Recognizing the critical need for this scholarship fund, Dr. Roseanne Rosenthal, then president of the college, knew that increasing the impact of the Great Teachers Scholarship Fund by supporting more undergraduates required more capital. Rosenthal says, “The best way I could imagine to ensure the survival of VanderCook through tough times – while also guaranteeing that

excellent music teachers will be in our schools for years to come – was to build an endowment fund in which the principal is preserved while providing scholarships to future great teachers. To me, it was a no-brainer.”

Over the years, the spring benefit provided the perfect opportunity to “friend-raise” as well as fundraise. Early efforts were hosted at the college as intimate cabaret-style evenings featuring student performances, light refreshments, and silent auctions to encourage support.

As these events grew, the college then moved the event off-site to a larger venue in the local community. This venture proved somewhat challenging as the pulsating rock music of an event in the adjoining room added an additional hurdle. For the next few years, musical theater performances took the place of VanderCook’s spring event until Dr. Rosenthal decided to revert to the cabaret-style format on campus.

**Above:** A Night at the Pops 2011.

**“The best way I could imagine to ensure the survival of VanderCook through tough times – while also guaranteeing that excellent music teachers will be in our schools for years to come – was to build an endowment fund in which the principal is preserved while providing scholarships to future great teachers. To me, it was a no-brainer.”**

– Dr. Roseanne Rosenthal



**Above:** Silent auction items were displayed along the 1st floor corridor in the 3140 building (Pops 2004).



The college hosted its first “A Night at the Pops” in the spring of 2004 as a musical “crawl” through the halls and classrooms of 3140 South Federal. Families and friends of the college were invited to join in the fun, enjoying a variety of performances, games for the younger set, and an hors d’oeuvres buffet. The silent auction returned to generate support for the Great Teachers Scholarship. College president Dr. Charles Menghini saw the importance of Pops from the beginning.

“From our first event, it was obvious that A Night At The Pops resonated well with people,” Menghini reflects. “Our attendees had fun and were amazed at something everyone at VanderCook take for granted, the incredible talent and diversity of our student body. VanderCook students love to perform, and they love this opportunity to be a part of a broader musical scene, playing in different types of ensembles, and playing music that appeals to people of all ages and walks of life.”

When plans for Pops 2005 began, the invitation response was greater than expected as the date approached. Clearly, the college simply would not be a large enough venue and it would be impossible to provide the VanderCook brand of hospitality. With just one week to go, the event was moved to the Hermann Union Ballroom of the Illinois Institute of Technology, just steps away from VanderCook’s building. The ballroom allowed ample space for displaying 90-plus auction items and an adjoining room for food service. The focus, as always, was on friend-raising and fundraising, and encouraging our students to stage original performances, outside the boundaries of their curriculum.

Pops 2005 was a huge success, welcoming 145 guests and adding over \$10,000 to the Great Teachers Scholarship Fund. Pops was fast becoming a popular tradition on the spring calendar. Proceeds and crowds steadily increased each year, eventually outgrowing the Hermann Union Ballroom. Pops 2009 was the first to be hosted at the De La Salle Hilton Commons on the campus of the De La Salle Institute, a few blocks southeast of VanderCook. The Commons has been the Pops home ever since, accommodating up to 300 guests. De La Salle staff continue to provide a wonderful buffet and great hospitality, helping with every detail of the event from beginning to end.

To date, A Night at the Pops has added over \$80,000 to the Great Teachers Scholarship Fund. The program now includes performances by an alumni ensemble and members of VanderCook’s board of trustees. Audience members “pay to play” in the percussion section with the band, and a live auction for a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to conduct the band closes the night. Silent auction items regularly number over 90, and an electronic raffle for iPods, video recorders, and an iPad was added in 2011. Event sponsors ABC7 Chicago, Grasso Graphics, and alumna Carmen Rivera-Kurban (BMEd. ’81) have provided invaluable support for the past six years.

On Saturday, April 6, 2013, VanderCook will host the tenth annual A Night at the Pops in the De La Salle Hilton Commons. As this college tradition crosses the threshold into its second decade, faculty, staff, and students alike look forward to continued success, great talent, and good company. Save the date! Make plans now to attend and bring a table of friends. Help us make history and support the Great Teachers Scholarship Fund at the same time.

**Left:** Refreshments were served in Room #100 (Pops 2004).



Schuman performing with the VanderCook Symphonic Band at the October 2012 Large Ensemble Concert.

## All About the “Wow!”: Leah Schuman

Asked to sum up the most rewarding aspect of teaching trumpet at VanderCook, Dr. Leah Schuman has only one word: “goosebumps.”

There's a fervor and excitement in her voice that almost vibrates the air as she describes the moments of perfect harmony, mixed with a sense of accomplishment in her students, that fill her trumpet class from time to time. “How do you describe it? It's the musical moments that you can just feel in the room. There's a really perfectly in-tune chord and you go, ‘WOW!’ inside.”

Getting goosebumps from an undergraduate ensemble might be rare enough for most teachers, but for someone with a pedigree as extensive as Schuman's, the odds would

appear even more unlikely. Playing second trumpet in the Leningrad (now St. Petersburg) State Chamber Orchestra and touring Japan with the Eastman School of Music Wind Ensemble are just two highlights in a long and winding road that brought Schuman to VanderCook 10 years ago and reunited her with her deepest passion: teaching.

A North Carolina native, Schuman credits her musical instincts as having started at birth. Although she first took to the piano at age three, her relationship with the trumpet began in 3rd grade, when her older brother began playing it. “I just loved the sound of the instrument, so I started sneaking and playing on his trumpet before I was allowed to play in school. And I was just one of those

kids that no one had to tell to practice. I just loved doing it, loved the sound of the instrument, and I still do. Every time I pick up the horn it's that same basic sensation.”

The teaching bug first bit when she studied under Vincent Chicowicz as an undergraduate at Northwestern. “It was through a program with the Chicago Chamber Musicians, going into lower income public schools in Chicago and teaching students there. It was a volunteer thing. It was one of those situations where almost the moment I walked in the door, I felt like, ‘Wow, I've found my niche.’” While at Northwestern, she also found the time to work as an usher at Orchestra Hall, where she spent countless hours hearing and observing one of her

**“I want them to have at least one experience where they literally get goosebumps and just feel that incredible power of music. I want to give them that whenever I can, as often as I can.”**

Below: Schuman in the classroom



earliest heroes, Chicago Symphony Orchestra principal trumpeter Adolph “Bud” Herseth (“He had this huge, rich sound, and a style like he was leading the orchestra...”).

Upon graduation, Schuman went to Russia on a student visa (“just six days after the fall of the Soviet Union,”) and landed a position in the Leningrad State Chamber Orchestra, a spot all the more impressive given that she was the first female trumpet player to perform in a professional orchestra there. She also taught students privately for the two years she was there. When she returned to the States, she taught at Merit School of Music for two years, then enrolled at the Eastman School of Music, where she would eventually earn both her master’s degree and doctorate. Eastman also reunited her with formal teaching via their Community Music School program.

Returning to Chicago, she taught at Merit as an endowed chair, and eventually ran their afterschool program. But the bug for teaching renewed its bite, and soon she became an adjunct professor at VanderCook, starting with only eight trumpet students. Today she averages over 40 students between High Brass Techniques, Brass Methods, Brass Ensemble, Applied Brass, and Music Fundamentals. Equally adept at one-on-one and ensemble teaching, Schuman finds particular satisfaction in the common denominator between the two: mentoring.

“I like working with students to help them find a way to realize their potential. I feel like every student, every person, has musical instincts. We’re born with them, and sometimes, just as a result of life or the wrong sort of musical training, they get buried. I think I’m pretty good at taking students and sort of uncrossing those wires and getting them back to the point where their musical instincts are at the forefront, and methodology is something they think about after they finish a phrase... Sometimes they just need someone to say, ‘It’s okay, you can show some emotion when you play. You can play this with anger, you can play this with tears, or you can play it whatever,’ and that is what they’ve been waiting to hear. For somebody to just give them license to do that.”

A sign adorns the wall of her teaching studio, a mantra learned from one of her own professors: “To be a poet on the trumpet, you must be an athlete on the trumpet.” Schuman still performs professionally, frequently subbing with the Illinois Philharmonic as well as playing private events, and harvests inspiration from modern trumpet marvels like John Faddis and Alison Balsom. At the end of the day, she considers juggling teaching and performing to be a healthy balance. “I feel like teaching is something I have a natural knack for, and performing is something that just challenges me. Still, I’m never satisfied, never happy with the way I sound. And it’s good to have both: something that just keeps driving you to try and get better and better, and something else where you feel like, wow, I was kind of born to do this. This is where I belong.”

Leah Schuman’s dedication to her students is clearly evident in her passion for the trumpet as well as the process of teaching. When asked what she would like her students to come away with and remember in years to come, her conviction is tangible as she puts her dedication into words: “I want them to come away knowing that when in doubt, come back to your own musical instincts, that voice inside you that is unique, that is unlike anyone else, that will always serve you well if you listen to it. And I want them to have at least one experience where they literally get goosebumps and just feel that incredible power of music. I want to give them that whenever I can, as often as I can.”

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# A Common Bond of Excellence

Even before they shared a workspace and a rehearsal hall at Loyola Academy in Wilmette, IL, alumni Corey Ames (BMEd. '07), Christopher Nakielski (MMEd. '09), and Christopher Kuzmanoff (BMEd. '03) shared a tradition of excellence that has flourished into a common bond and a familiar mission. VanderCook's mission to enrich the lives of students through music education, and to develop attributes of strength in character, skill, and professionalism, has now become their own and something they strive to embed in the students with whom they work. "Above everything, VanderCook has taught us how to be professional educators and how to find a teaching moment in every situation," says orchestra director Kuzmanoff, the newest member of this dynamic VanderTrio.

"We hold each other accountable," says choir director Nakielski. "We know what we are capable of and we don't let ourselves forget where we came from." He says the support shared not only between the three of them, but within the entire VanderCook community, is remarkable. VanderCook remains a steady source of support, information, and resources. Nakielski enjoys discovering new things that have come as a result of his VanderCook education, and marvels at VanderCook's ability to teach people skills. "There is no doubt that I am a better musician, teacher, and performer. But perhaps the most notable change I see is the development of my people skills. Going into VanderCook, I was pretty set in my ways, but after two years I have learned to adapt and teach in any situation."

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**"We hold each other accountable.  
We know what we are capable of  
and we don't let ourselves  
forget where we came from."**

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Band director Ames enjoys having an all-VanderCook crew. "VanderCook taught us to learn from each other. We are always bouncing ideas off of each other. Sometimes when we need some down time," he chuckles, "we tell VanderCook stories." He has also noticed a unity among the students since the three teachers have teamed up. "It used to be that the band, choir, and orchestra kids did not do things together. Now they see that we are all proficient in one another's areas and we get along so well, they want to do the same."

Kuzmanoff says his ability to teach all aspects of music education has been a great selling point in the jobs he has obtained thus far. At



Kuzmanoff (l), Ames (c), Nakielski (r)

one point, he was first chair trumpet in the VanderCook Symphonic Band, and now he has been teaching orchestra and loving it for seven years. Ames recalls that when the orchestra position opened up, all of the VanderCook applicants were brought to the top of the list because of the quality of work both he and Nakielski displayed. In fact, Kuzmanoff was first choice to a very close second runner-up and recent VanderCook graduate whose high school orchestra director in Ohio was... none other than Chris Kuzmanoff!

Though Ames, Nakielski, and Kuzmanoff did not cross paths at 3140 South Federal, their ties to VanderCook go way beyond what is contained in that small building on the south side of Chicago. Ames met his wife Megan (née Pionke, BMEd. '08), who attended high school with Kuzmanoff. Kuzmanoff also met his wife Misty (née Huber, BMEd. '05) at VanderCook. Kuzmanoff, his wife Misty, and Ames were all classmates at VanderCook. Furthermore, Dom Bertino (MMEd. '01) and Paul Nielson (MMEd. '98) were Kuzmanoff's and Megan Ames' high school band directors. Nakielski's wife is a current master's and certification student at VanderCook. Loyola Academy is also familiar to them because the immediate past band directors at Loyola were also VanderCook alums, Philip Donley (BMEd. '98; MMEd. '01) and Nick Rojek (BMEd. '01).

VanderCook clearly has a strong connection at Loyola Academy, and the number of VanderCook alumni teaching together in the same schools is on the rise. Principals and school administrators continually reach out to the college's Employment Placement Office, asking, "We want to hire a VanderCook person, can you help me?" The word is out, due largely to alumni and friends who want to stay connected by the incredible bond of friendship and the tradition of excellence we call VanderCook.



# Ron Korbitz

## Alumni Board President

I am privileged to be able to communicate with all of you as the president of the Alumni Association. This year, VanderCook is embarking on a bold new campaign as we begin to move forward with the renovation of an additional building on campus.

The new campaign is framed by three simple yet powerful words: **Inspire, Build, Sustain**. The dictionary tells us that to **inspire** is to fill with an animating, quickening, or exalting influence; to **build** is to construct by assembling and joining parts or materials, to establish, increase, or strengthen; to **sustain** is to keep up or keep going as an action or process. So how do these three words fit with VanderCook and music education?

As VanderCook alumni you'll find these three words have great meaning. Somewhere along your life path, someone **inspired** you to pick up an instrument or join choir. During that time, you would practice to **build** skill to make you a better musician. You also had people in your life to support and **sustain** your musical growth. Maybe it was your parents who attended every concert with a proud smile. Maybe it was a friend or group of friends who you jammed with. It could have been an amazing band, choir, or orchestra director who somehow managed to get you to do things you didn't think possible. Whatever the circumstances, you were impacted deeply enough to choose to **inspire, build, and sustain** others through music.

As music teachers, we run across these three words again as we move into the music classroom. We strive to **inspire** our students to become great musicians, great thinkers, and ultimately, great human beings. We spend hundreds of extra hours and myriad sleepless nights trying to **build** a program that will reach as many students as possible with the power and passion of music. We deal with frustration and disappointment as we work to **sustain** our programs in the wake of tightened budgets, challenging schedules, and a long list of other demands.

Now you are sitting and reading this report and these three words are still there. This time, though, the words come in the form of challenging questions. What can we, as VanderCook alumni, do to **inspire** the way we were **inspired**? How can we help **build** something strong enough to last long after we are gone? How do we help **sustain** the VanderCook tradition of excellence and this great calling of music education?

I invite you to seek an answer to these questions here at VanderCook. Maybe you can **inspire** a promising student in your program to pursue music education

and attend VanderCook.

Perhaps you might

**inspire** a current VanderCook student as a mentor or cooperating teacher. Consider your ability to **inspire** and to be **inspired** by attending a concert at the college. VanderCook students are amazing young people and really appreciate performing to a packed house. Maybe you can **build** new relationships by joining the Alumni Association and working with us to **build** a better

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**“The bottom line is this: Your college needs you. The VanderCook Alumni Association needs you to partner with us so we can continue to *inspire, build, and sustain* young people through the *inspiring, life-building, and soul-sustaining* gift of music.”**

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VanderCook. Your membership will strengthen the college and increase our capacity to do more for music education. Finally, I consider your ability to **sustain** VanderCook through a supporting gift. The size of the gift isn't important. Every donation is valuable and makes a difference. If every VanderCook graduate on our current mailing list gave \$5 a month to the annual Share Your Passion Campaign, we could easily raise over \$130,000 for the college.

The bottom line is this: Your college needs you. The VanderCook Alumni Association needs you to partner with us so we can continue to **inspire, build, and sustain** young people through the **inspiring, life-building, and soul-sustaining** gift of music.

I can be reached via e-mail at [rkorbitz@vandercook.edu](mailto:rkorbitz@vandercook.edu). I welcome your thoughts and ideas and appreciate your support and encouragement. Have a great year and stop in at VanderCook sometime soon.



## A Jazz Musician's Daughter:

# B.J. Quigley

When newborn B.J. Quigley (née Dunlap) was brought home from the hospital, a 17-piece jazz band was playing in the basement of her parents' southside Chicago home, under the direction of her father, Niel Dunlap. Now a general music teacher in District 109 in Justice, IL, Quigley (BMEd. '84) is clearly her father's daughter. Memories of a childhood steeped in all things musical are precious, and Quigley recalls those basement rehearsals with unmistakable fondness.

"My mom says I would crawl down the stairs, turning around to go one step at a time, and go down into the basement. I do remember often pulling a chair and the guys would let me in the middle of the trombones or in the middle of the trumpets. They'd make a little spot and I'd sit there with them in the middle of all the playing."

Renowned as a pioneer in the school jazz band movement, Dunlap was also esteemed as a generous, selfless teacher with a warm personality and a love of education. Dunlap began his teaching career at Morgan Park Academy, a coeducational, college preparatory, independent pre-K–12th grade school located in the Morgan Park neighborhood in southwest Chicago. Here, he taught history and also started the school's sixth and seventh grade band, where Quigley herself would ultimately play tenor sax years later.

In addition to his day job at Morgan Park, Dunlap worked with the Marist High School Marching Brass and also taught private lessons. Quigley recalls, "He was involved in so many things. I grew up with him teaching 30–35 students in our basement every Monday through Thursday night and occasional Saturdays. Amazing people came

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**"One by one all these amazing people were getting up to rehearse us. It was those kinds of times when you have people in front of you, you've seen their names on sheet music, and now they're directing your college band. I wanted to be more."**

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out of our basement." Her mother's famous cake, as well as her father's jazz chops and devotion to his students, were legendary and kept the house filled with eager students – some of whom eventually ended up playing professionally with Quincy Jones, Maynard Ferguson, and Count Basie.

Dunlap's path toward a combined master's degree and doctorate at the University of Chicago was interrupted by life: marriage,

children, and gigging at night. He eventually left Morgan Park to join the faculty of VanderCook in 1969 where he taught U.S. history and sociology, upper and lower brass, and directed the VanderCook Jazz Band until his retirement in 1991. Michael Boo (BMEd. '77) has high praise for Dunlap, whom he regards as "one of the most original and stimulating teachers I've ever had. Thoroughly unorthodox, he was most happy when his students learned to think for themselves in his academic courses, even when they disagreed with his own conclusions. I was fortunate to participate in his IIT Jazz Band, a community band with some VanderCook students, helping establish a bridge between the two institutions." Quigley describes her father as a brilliant, talented man whose experience and love of education made up for the "fancy degrees" he did not have.

Quigley's immersion in music came naturally – an outgrowth of her family life where, she says, "All the walls were lined with books and then shelves of these suitcases of the alto sax, alto sax 1, alto sax 2... In the summertime I'd be more than happy to stamp music charts in the air-conditioned basement." She was simply enthralled by music and mesmerized by all of the instruments she played during her childhood. She started piano lessons at the age of four, learning jazz piano through her father's connections. When she turned 12,



Niel Dunlap directing the VanderCook/IIT Jazz Band.



B.J. Quigley sings with the Southwest Community Band. Ray Forlenza (BMEd. '85; MMEd. '93) is the director. July 2012.



The Quigley family: Quigley's husband, Kevin and triplets Abby, Neil, and Jake with Quigley.

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**“Many of us are teachers because we want to teach and to guide children. I tell them, ‘If you can learn something from me that makes you feel good about who you can be and who you are, then I’ve succeeded.’”**

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her father sent her to the National Stage Band Camps. Here, Quigley spent one week each summer on the campus of Illinois State University for a jazz band experience. At camp, Quigley met jazz greats Marian McPartland, Gary Burton, and a young Pat Metheny before he encountered fame.

Quigley even accompanied her father to jazz bars throughout the city. If a doorman tried to stop Dunlap with his young daughter in tow, Dunlap would proudly announce, “This is my daughter and she’s going to listen to jazz.” Together they visited jazz hot spots like The Back Door on Rush Street and The New Apartment Lounge on East 72nd Street. As Quigley looks through an album of family photographs, she speaks of her father with great admiration. “Anybody who had anything to do with jazz knew my father. He was so influential, to the point where I didn’t even realize how much.”

After graduating from Morgan Park in 1977, Quigley was admitted to the University of Illinois at Champaign-Urbana. She knew she was interested in working with children and started with a plan to study child development and psychology. But her first attempt at college was not a good fit. “After being at a little school like Morgan Park Academy, I was lost. I got down there and was more social than anything. I realized I didn’t know what I was doing...what I wanted to be when I grew up.” At this point, a music education degree was not even on Quigley’s radar. She returned to her parents’ house in Chicago and spent the next three years working downtown in secretarial positions. Music continued to part of her life as she took voice lessons at the Fine Arts Building on South Michigan Avenue and attended concerts and music conventions with her father. At a

National Association for Jazz Education conference, Quigley and her father were among the first to see a newcomer with the Northern Illinois jazz band: Wynton Marsalis.

By the fall of 1980, Quigley decided to attend VanderCook. “When my good friends were seniors in college I finally figured out what I wanted to do.” Of course, her father was enthused and supportive. Quigley knew she didn’t want to be a band director, but VanderCook had just begun to accept voice majors at that time; her love of music was satisfied. She played in the lab band with non-band and non-orchestra majors, and recalls being terrified by Victor Zajec at the podium. By sophomore year, she made the transition from being a voice major to being respected by her classmates. She knew how to count, thanks to her piano background, and she recalls, “I actually slid right in perfectly into the percussion section and started playing all the mallet instruments. I ended up doing a great job. Little by little, I got the technique down for a whole bunch of the other instruments.”

Quigley’s memories of her time at VanderCook are intimately tied to her father. She worked hard to please him and to prove to everyone she was not getting favored treatment because she was “Niel’s daughter.” Quigley realized VanderCook was the right fit – the place to be – at her first Midwest experience. “One by one all these amazing people were getting up to rehearse us. It was those kinds of times when you have people in front of you, you’ve seen their names on sheet music, and now they’re directing your college band. I wanted to be more. I wanted the respect that I was seeing in my father’s trumpet students.” Names like Revelli, Reed, and Gabriel pepper her stories as she

relates how she just knew she was headed in the right direction. She switched from a voice-piano major to voice-percussion, taking private lessons with Steve Betz (BMed. ’77; MMed. ’84) and George Hattendorf (MMed. ’80). Quigley also credits Brian Logan (BMed. ’83) for his unwavering support and encouragement as well.

Hard work and dedication paid off for Quigley: she graduated in 1984 as class valedictorian. Though she thought she would teach high school choir, the choir job she pursued was not to be, and instead she accepted a general music position. After a summer course at VanderCook – “Sing, Play, Dance” – in 1985, Quigley knew she had found her passion. “I remember sitting on the floor and playing these little instruments I’d never played in my life. It was me... this is me... to make little kids laugh.”

Quigley has never looked back. She acknowledges that teaching general music is an afterthought for most, and she wishes that was not the case. For Quigley, teaching general music allows her to bring everything practical she learned at VanderCook, everything she learned from her father, and her own passion to the classroom. Like her father, she loves bringing people together. Like her father, she loves education. Like her father, she personifies VanderCook, its passion and its legacy.

“I feel that what I do is teach kids to feel good about who they are and who they can be... and get excited about it. I feel that music is the vehicle that I just happen to use. Many of us are teachers because we want to teach and to guide children. I tell them, ‘If you can learn something from me that makes you feel good about who you can be and who you are, then I’ve succeeded.’”

# A Disciplined Musician, a Lifelong Teacher, A Great Man: Tom Drake

Tom Drake's musical life began in the third grade when his father arranged for private clarinet lessons with a Pasquali Cuscente. Drake was eager to play and band would not begin until fourth grade, but young Drake would not be deterred by the work and practice that lay ahead.

By the end of elementary school, his private instructor suggested Drake move on and study in Chicago with some very fine instructors at VanderCook College. Drake recalls, "At that time VanderCook had a different set up then now. You either went Tuesday–Thursday, Wednesday–Friday, or Saturday. Saturday was an independent school completely. And a lot of guys were out teaching who didn't have a degree. All you had to have was two years to get your certificate. Those guys were driving into VanderCook on Saturdays to finish off their degrees." Each Saturday, Drake rode from Joliet into the city with a couple of local gentlemen taking Saturday classes. Arriving before 8:00 a.m., he would wait alone at the small college at Washington and Paulina for his 3:00 p.m. lesson with Richard Brittain.

A genteel, soft-spoken man, Drake speaks with undeniable affection about his very first day at VanderCook. "There were three brownstone buildings and two of them leaned on the middle one. The whole upstairs of all three of them was a dormitory. For exercise, we used to run up the stairs to the top floor... run across the top floor... run down the other stairs to basement... just make that loop," he recalls. On one of those Saturdays, sitting on the front porch waiting for his lesson, Drake first met H.E. Nutt.

Nutt was not content to let Drake sit with nothing to do all day and took him under his wing. Drake says, "I had the distinct privilege of my entire high school career spending every Saturday with H.E. – all day long, with every one of his classes." At the same time, Drake's high school band experience included student directing, piano lessons, and assuming the responsibilities of drum major. Still, Drake had considered accepting a scholarship to attend the General Motors Institute to study automotive engineering. A typical high school boy, Drake says he had an interest in fast cars and hot rods. But in the early '50's, automobile manufacturers began to pursue more affordable, efficient engineering. That didn't suit Drake's affection for muscle cars and power cars. And Nutt's constant encouragement was also hard to ignore.

"I had to deal with H.E. every weekend telling me exactly what I was going to do. And maybe it wasn't a music 'aloha,' but it was a kick out from the automobile engineering thing," Drake laughs, confessing that he had a love of music from the first moment he picked up a horn. Add to that a long musical heritage that includes parents and

grandparents who played instruments, worked in the music business, and played with area bands, and music ultimately won over cars.

When Drake was ready for college, Nutt reviewed Drake's progress and arranged for Drake to pay \$5 for each credit hour he had already taken. Drake was able to pay off his debt, complete the remaining credits in two years, and begin teaching in District 91 at the young age of 20 in 1956. His biggest challenge, he claims, was that his students were so close to his own age. Still, Drake remembers those first, young students for their ability to recognize good musicianship, and consistently win contests with superior ratings.

That early success and accomplishment would continue as Drake embarked on a 37-year career in Lockport, IL, directing contest winners year after year. After four years in District 91, teaching middle school band and elementary music, Drake taught in District 92 for two years. In 1963, he began teaching high school band at Lockport West (now Romeoville) High School where he remained until his retirement in 1995. Not just a job, Drake's teaching was clearly his passion.

Drake credits VanderCook and the exceptional faculty he was privileged to study under for providing him with the foundation and skills necessary to teach. Dick Brittain, Forrest Buchtel, and H.E. Nutt each impressed Drake with the expertise, wisdom, and experience they shared with him. "Everything worked. Without fail. My band would be playing something," he recalls, "and I knew what was wrong but what the heck do I do to fix it? I'd think, what did H.E. say, or I'd thumb through some notes I had... then it dawned on me: he said do this. I'd try it and it would work."

Drake says Nutt and Brittain went throughout the Chicago area doing clinics during his tenure at VanderCook. This provided a very practical basis for the college's curriculum, making VanderCook, for Drake, more of a trade school than a music conservatory. When Drake taught conducting and H.E. pedagogy some years later, he would ask his students what brought them to the south side during the heat of the summer. Without exception, Drake says they were committed to learning what the directors whose bands were winning contests knew. Those directors were VanderCook grads, directors who, like Drake, had learned how to make a band sound better. "The best teachers," he agrees, "know how to fix problems to make a band sound better."

But it wasn't all about the sound. As Drake talks about his teaching career, he shares memories of several of his students. There are those who went on to become excellent musicians playing in the Army Band

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**"I had the distinct privilege of  
my entire high school career  
spending every Saturday with H.E.  
– all day long, with every one  
of his classes."**

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Tom Drake directing the Joliet American Legion Band.

or earning a degree in performance. But his memories also include those students for whom band was a life-changing experience, providing an opportunity for personal and social growth, self-confidence, and expression. “You never know what’s in the package,” he muses. “Those are the kinds of things that really make it worthwhile... being a teacher.”

As if teaching band, working marching band seasons, traveling to contests, and managing band fundraisers weren’t enough, Drake also became involved in the Joliet American Legion Band. The brainchild of Archie McAllister and Bill Austin when the two were serving on an island in the Pacific during WWII, the band started in 1946 with about 20 members. In 1956, McAllister was judging a contest and, impressed with Drake’s band, he asked him to check out the Legion Band at their Tuesday night rehearsal. Drake auditioned with Tchaikovsky’s 5th Symphony, slyly pulling the piece from a band folder, he says, “like I hadn’t seen it before. I said, ‘This looks kind of interesting,’ and I played the first page.”

That was enough and Drake was given his seat in the clarinet section. By the end of his first week, he was asked to take the podium and direct a march. Soon after, McAllister asked Drake to stand in for him at a county fair. Before he knew it, Drake was made associate director and held that position until

1963, when McAllister stepped down and the board named Drake director. Looking back, Drake believes McAllister chose him as his protégé and led the way to his appointment.

Drake’s dedication to the Legion Band and loyalty to VanderCook came together in 2009, when a generous patron of the band wanted to give Drake a gift to recognize his service to the band and to the community. Drake, though honored, humbly declined, saying that he was content and comfortable at that stage of his life. The patron, unwilling to relent, contacted Drake’s wife who suggested a gift to Drake’s alma mater. The next thing Drake knew, a \$20,000 trust was established to provide an annual scholarship in Drake’s name to a VanderCook student.

Drake is still awed and humbled by this gesture, and gives all of the credit to the donor whose generosity he applauds. “Not only does he give money away, but if some organization is in trouble, he steps right in.” Drake has also been inducted into Joliet’s “Hall of Pride,” awarded the Chicagoland Outstanding Educator and Saint Genesis Awards, and has been recognized with an Illinois State resolution for his service to the Joliet American Legion Band.

Although he retired in 1995, Drake did not end his teaching career. He currently serves as an adjunct faculty member of Lewis University’s

music department. And earning two degrees at VanderCook, a master’s degree in performance at Eastman, and studying at Northwestern did not mark the end of Drake’s education. Drake is reluctant to rest on those laurels and still wonders about the importance of a degree.

“What’s a degree? It’s like a pedigree. A dog can have a great pedigree... but the proof that he’s a good hunter? You gotta get him out in the field and see him do it.” Perhaps that “do it” philosophy is what continues to drive him now as he studies piano, taking private lessons with a young man whose friendship he cherishes and for whom he has enormous respect. And he has also grown to enjoy practicing!

Drake’s life has been and continues to be rich – from the VanderCook years studying with the greats, through a teaching career in the southwest suburbs, to a second career directing the Joliet American Legion Band, to a third career as owner/operator of Drake Aviation, Inc. – music has been at the beginning and end of every step of Drake’s journey. “Music is like flying,” he says. “You think you’re a bird. It transfigures you.” Drake wants the VanderCook way of teaching to continue. It is, in his estimation, far too important to fade away. Drake’s loyal support and the promise of his continued legacy through his scholarship will guarantee it.

Q&A with:

# Sara Tischler



Tischler on the podium  
at the 2012 Student Conductor Concert.

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**“It was in the band room at 11 o’clock one night when it just hit me: This is what I’m supposed to be doing with my life. This is where my passion is.”**

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## **When did you start playing?**

I’ve been involved with music and playing all my life. My mom worked for Karnes Music when I was little, so she would always bring me with her. I’d always find sticks and stuff to hit and the teachers would show me new beats and rhythms. It was a really cool environment in which to grow up. My mom is a pianist and organist, so even at home we would jam together on piano and drum set. I was really blessed to be raised in music.

## **What instrument did you start with when you joined band?**

In fifth grade band, I started off on percussion and oboe. During concerts I was the kid going back and forth between the wind and percussion sections so I could play songs on both instruments.

## **Who have been your most influential teachers along the way and why?**

My very first private lesson teacher, Mr. Ryan Bennett, and my band director at Larkin High School, Mr. Patrick Henning, have been my most influential teachers.

Mr. Bennett really molded me to become a musician instead of just a drummer. He taught me all aspects of music and really developed my technique and playing so that I was able to experience a variety of opportunities: Elgin Youth Symphony Orchestra, Larkin High School’s Visual and Performing Arts Academy, tenor pan soloist in the Elgin Steel Pan band and I was also fortunate to do some solo marimba work for the show “From the Top” accompanied by interpretive dancers.

Mr. Henning provided me with opportunities and chances to really succeed not just in music, but in everyday life. He taught me to never quit and to always give everything I had to what I was doing. He nurtured my passion and gave me many opportunities to grow as a musician, a leader, and a human being.

## **At what point did you realize that you wanted to teach music?**

Ironically, I was studying pre-veterinary science at Carroll University in Wisconsin when I realized that music was the most important part of my life. I walked to my classes, listened to my professors talk about math and other subjects and then went home and did my homework. When I finished all of my responsibilities, I would always steal off and find the band room – I would spend hours in there playing marimba and timpani. It was in the band room at 11 o’clock one night when it just hit me: This is what I’m supposed to be doing with my life. This is where my passion is. Although I love animals and still try to do as much volunteer work with shelters as I can, I realized that music is where my heart is.



Tischler's love of music resonated throughout her childhood.

### Why VanderCook?

I made the switch from Carroll University to VanderCook because I realized I had to make a change in my life. I had to follow my passion. I searched a lot of schools and researched a lot of programs and I didn't find anything I liked. I was really close to just giving up and working at my parents' music store for another semester when one of my friends mentioned VanderCook. I immediately went online to look into this school and found that it had a lot of things for which I was looking. I visited, did a campus tour, and immediately fell in love. The energy, excitement, and the true passion for music at VanderCook was nothing like I'd ever experienced. Everyone was so welcoming and so ready to help me get started with my career – I felt like I was already a student rather than on a tour. The size of the classes, the great teachers, the availability of the teachers and their eagerness to help you was so refreshing. I knew it was the place for me to truly become the best music educator I could be.

### Why do you want to do this?

I want to give students the same feelings that I get when I think about music and play music. I want to give students the same opportunities that I had growing up. You can't go to Disney World with your math class and perform for the world, but you can with your music class. You can share the art and the passion of music with the world and you can give that gift to your students. The feeling that I got performing on a big stage was priceless, and I want to be able to give my students that joy in their life. The sense of pride and the sense of family that comes with being part of a music class is unprecedented. Not only do you learn how to be creative, think critically, and explore all your talents, but you learn how to be responsible, how to be a leader, how to take pride in the work and practicing that you do, and to work with your friends to create musical memories that will last forever. I want to be a part of that. I want to create that environment and that experience for everyone who comes into my classroom.

### Best teaching moment you've ever had... so far?

The best teaching experience I've had so far happened last year while running a drum circle clinic for a visiting school. This school had just put together a music program and brought their students to VanderCook to be around all of us who had a love and a passion for music. I remember looking at these kids in a circle around me and being kind of nervous since they hadn't had a lot of musical experience. We started the group off with three different rhythms and then gave solos to students when we pointed to them. The smiles that these kids had when they played their solos in front of their friends was priceless. As the clinic went on, we did more exercises with creating their own rhythms and passing them to their friends, it was really inspiring to listen to the creativity these kids had with hardly any classroom experience. At one point we even got their teacher to play along and that brought a whole new sense of fun to the group. The laughter and pure joy was everywhere and we were all just jamming, being creative, listening and learning from one another. It was truly one of the best experiences of my life.



Tischler playing marimbas at a VanderCook concert.

From Bronzeville to Brownsville:

# A Legacy in Texas



The first Brownsville High School Band, established in 1937.

In the 1930's, Brownsville, nestled on the banks of the Rio Grande River in the southernmost part of Texas, was a town poor in wealth but potentially rich in talent. This small community would not be a place one would imagine would, in time, have a major impact on the school band movement in the United States. The band program was rooted in a small afterschool drum and bugle group which morphed into a band organization in 1937. The band was a typical small town band of that period: a band of little distinction.

At the end of World War II, VanGrad James R. Murphy (MEd. '52), who had been an Army Air Corps band director became the head band director of Brownsville High School and began to build a program hiring VanGrads Wayne Coleman (MEd. '50), George Borich (BMed. '53), and Dr. Robert Vezzetti (BMed. '54, HD '11). Murphy's organization soon set the standard for other bands in the region and the entire state of Texas.

In 1950, the program gained national recognition performing at the Mid-West National Band and Orchestra Clinic<sup>1</sup> and again in 1952. The band received numerous 1st Division performances in the University Interscholastic League concert, sight-reading, and marching competition and also won the coveted Best in Class award in the Tri-State Band Festival hosted in Enid, OK. The Brownsville band under the direction of Murphy became the standard for band programs in Brownsville Independent School District (BISD) band program.

In 1956, Murphy accepted the position of Band Director at the University of Minnesota – Duluth. In 1957, Vezzetti returned to Brownsville after serving a two-year stint in an Army Band and was named head band director. During his absence, two additional Junior High Schools were constructed and incorporated into BISD. VanGrads Arcadio (BMed. '58) and



Current Brownsville, now Hanna High School, Golden Eagle Band.

Segundo (BMEd. '61) Guajardo, Dan Vitello (BMEd. '60), Javier Vera (MMEd. '78) and David Norris (BMEd. '69) were added to the band staff to fill positions in these facilities.

Under Vezzetti's leadership, the band continued to grow and gained additional success and notoriety. The band was named the Texas Music Educator Association's (TMEA) Class AAAA Honor Band and performed at its convention, performed twice at Mid-West, and twice at the Mid-East National Band Clinic in Pittsburgh, OH. They were twice selected the Outstanding Concert Band at the Buccaneer Music Festival in Corpus Christi, TX, and three times the Region Nine Honor Band. In addition, the band performed in Canada, Paris, Rome, Venice, and Amsterdam during a European concert tour, and performed many concerts in Mexico. The band was one of nine American high school bands cited in Dr. Al Wright and Stanley Newcome's book, "Bands of the World."

Being a Texas-Mexico border city, Brownsville relies deeply on trade between the two regions. Consequently, the band's concert tours of Mexico became an important part of the band activities. The programs would include classics, Broadway show overtures, marches, and the usual concert-in-the-park fare with encores of traditional Mexican songs arranged by the Guajardo brothers Arcadio and Segundo.

The BISD superintendent received a number of letters praising the band's performances. Typical comments echoed those of Robert F. Jordan, director of the Mexican-North American Institute for Cultural Relations (MNAICR): "May I request that you convey to the people of Brownsville our most sincere gratitude for the splendid tour recently made to Mexico by the Golden Eagle Band....Everyone was very much impressed with the high quality of their repertoire, their fine execution, and discipline of these young artistic ambassadors from our United States."

An English language newspaper published in Mexico reported at the time, "The band...spent some time in Monterrey, first appearing on a television program. This was followed by a concert in Zaragosa (the main plaza in that city) which was heard by an estimated 8,000 persons." Another MNAICR official reported that their performance on XEB TV Channel 3 was seen by approximately 300,000 people. Needless to say, the recognition the band received during this period raised the prestige of the band among the citizens of Brownsville.

In the mid 1970's, two additional high schools and another junior high school were opened. However, the advent of new campuses did not hamper the growth of the older programs, and the need for staff for second, and in some cases, third bands in the existing schools became apparent. VanGrads Carl Becker (BMEd. '55, MMEd. '69), Paul Brazauskus (BMEd. '53, MMEd. '62), Dan Williams (BMEd. '72), Willie Owens (BMEd. '85), George (BMEd. '62, MMEd. '78) and Audrey (MMEd. '78) Paterson, and Bob Hickford (BMEd. '65) were hired to fill both head and associate band directors' positions. Continued growth resulted in yet another junior high and high school. Paul Flinchbaugh (BMEd. '81), was named head director at the new junior high, and within two years the band was selected in statewide competition

**"We would hire VanderCook grads because we knew they were well prepared to teach and willing to grow professionally. It gave us a commonality of teaching techniques and language."**



The Brownsville High School Band in 1940.



The Brownsville Golden Eagle Band in the 1950's under the direction of James Murphy.



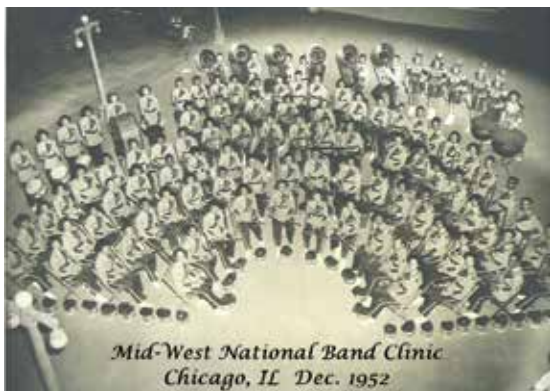
You help us...





make a difference.





**“...Through the apprenticeship traditions of band staff, VanderCook concepts remain the core of the Brownsville band curriculum. Hale VanderCook and H.E. Nutt would certainly recognize the fundamentals and teaching techniques being used today in the Brownsville band programs.”**



Sombreros from the south Texas-Mexico border were often presented to hosts or guest conductors at out-of-state performances. Here, the Golden Eagle Band presented a sombrero to Chicago Mayor Richard Daley after its Mid-West clinic performance, December 1968.

Since 1945, the Brownsville Golden Eagle Band has been under the direction of VanderCook Alumni. It set the standards which other BISD bands emulate. The directors were:



Mr. James Murphy



Mr. Bob Vezzetti



Mr. Arcadio Guajardo



Mr. Paul Flinchbaugh



Mr. Dennis Ewing

as the TMEA Best in Class Junior High Honor Band. Stacey Dunn (BMed. '83) was Flinchbaugh's associate director and Rolando Zapata (MMEd. '81) assumed the position of head director at the new high school. Foreseeing the need for additional band directors in the near future, Mick (BMed. '84) and Bryan (BMed. '95) Kuntz, Dennis Ewing (BMed. '88), Mike Dawson (BMed. '90, MMEd. '00), Dave Graeber (BMed. '91, MMEd. '02) and Armando Medrano (BMed. '75) joined the BISD band staff.

VanderCook grads were preferred because they were known to be well prepared to teach and willing to grow professionally, which fostered a commonality of teaching techniques and language. The staff would hold in-house workshops conducted by staff members to re-enforce VanderCook concepts. Any new staff member not a VanGrad was assigned a VanGrad mentor. These members were encouraged to bring into the workshop any ideas they may have gleaned from their education and incorporated into the curriculum. The staff developed a true team spirit as a result. Associate directors would conduct a selection in concerts and at performances such as Mid-West. In addition, directors exchanged sectional rehearsals on their major instrument. High school directors would often conduct band rehearsals in the junior highs that fed into them. This would introduce the students to their future director and the junior high students and their director would gain from the experience. To enhance the team spirit, all directors taught elementary beginning classes. Thus the more experienced instructors were in place to build a stronger program.

Flinchbaugh, today the Instrumental Music Supervisor for BISD, reports, "Today, the BISD Bands are made up of 11 middle schools and six high school programs. These programs serve over 3,000 students and have a staff of 58 full time directors and two full-time instrument repairmen. The BISD Band programs continue the proud tradition of excellence through continued region, area, and state level student success. These accomplished directors on staff continue the tradition of an ongoing collaboration, which promulgates ever-improving pedagogy and rehearsal techniques."

In 1982, there were 22 band directors on staff, 18 of whom were VanGrads. While today there are 58 directors on staff due to retirements, VanGrads are in the minority. However, through the apprenticeship traditions of band staff, VanderCook concepts remain the core of the Brownsville band curriculum. From mottos like "Results, not excuses" to five-count whole notes, Hale VanderCook and H.E. Nutt would certainly recognize the fundamentals and teaching techniques being used today in the Brownsville band programs.

The BISD Band staff takes great pride in being a part of the traditions of the Brownsville Band programs. The truth and timeless quality of the teachings and spirit of VanderCook College of Music have created a unique heritage in Brownsville, TX, which has survived the test of time and continues to flourish to this day.

<sup>1</sup> former name of The Midwest Clinic, An International Band and Orchestra Conference

# The First Voice You Hear: Stephanie Lopez

To many a visitor or caller, she is the “front face” of VanderCook, ready to answer questions about outreach programs, give driving directions, or connect colleagues with faculty and staff. To others, she is the college’s “den mother,” keeping stock of general supplies, coordinating cap and gown rentals, selling VanderWear, and lending a supportive ear. Stephanie Lopez wears many hats at VanderCook, all of them critical to the day-to-day success of its students.

As she starts her seventh year at the college, Lopez takes all challenges and crises with a formidable grain of salt. Her beaming smile and grounded, poised composure give no indication about the services and logistics under her care. It might be because of the eight years she worked as office manager at Merit School of Music prior to joining VanderCook. Or it might be the personal commitment she feels to all the students, virtually all of whom will interact with her at some point in their curricular journey.

“I love them all the same, like a mom,” she admits. “But I love them all each in their own way.”

A mother of four herself, Lopez grew up in the Pilsen neighborhood just blocks away from VanderCook’s current location. Although she never learned an instrument herself – or perhaps just for that reason, she slyly hints – she made sure her own children took advantage of the opportunity, and enrolled them for lessons at Merit as soon as they were old enough. But she was always keenly aware of the vital role teachers play, and the short shrift they often receive. “It’s a shame that in our society they aren’t getting the respect they deserve,” she laments. Consequently, Lopez relishes the opportunity to help students and teachers at VanderCook.

“No two days are ever the same here,” Lopez relates as she acknowledges that, even after seven years of cycles and schedules, there are still surprises around every corner. “I try to keep my eyes and ears open for what students will need from semester to semester, and keep everything on hand that the professors will need.” That could easily mean stocking required textbooks, keeping a supply of spare reeds for instrument emergencies, creating recital programs, or programming the digital welcome screen in VanderCook’s main lobby. Yet she always has time to lend an ear to the students, no matter what demands she happens to be facing at any given moment. “It could be anything, from, ‘I don’t know where my classroom is,’ to, ‘I miss my family.’ It varies from day to day, hour to hour.”

Whether as counselor or confidante, Lopez will often see a side of students that no one else does, watching freshmen grow into graduates with the eyes and heart of a surrogate mother. “Some freshmen wouldn’t even talk when they first got here, and now you can’t shut them up,” she chuckles. And many students stay in touch after they’ve graduated. “A lot of them will call to give me an update or yell at me for not checking my Facebook.”

Although she shuns the spotlight herself, Lopez orchestrates her responsibilities with such assurance that it’s hard for anyone to imagine a day going by without her helming the front reception desk. “I’m proud to be a part of this organization. I believe in everything we stand for.” Beloved by students, faculty, and staff alike, Lopez can be rest assured that the feeling is mutual.



Lopez at her post in VanderCook’s Office.

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**“I love them all the same, like a mom.  
But I love them all each in  
their own way.”**

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Ueno and Sheraton doorman, Nick Elizondo.



Ueno and co-worker Paula Fortney, Chief Concierge.

Friend

# Rick Ueno



Ueno and wife, Ann, at the 2012 TrustEE Open.

Great relationships often begin because one person takes the time to make an introduction. Several years ago, VanderCook trustee Jimmy Lee introduced college president Dr. Charles Menghini to his friend and business associate, Rick Ueno, general manager of the Sheraton Chicago Hotel and Towers. What Lee didn't know at the time was that VanderCook happened to be looking for a hotel to regularly house visiting professors and guests of the college. The rest, as they say, is history.

"During our lunch meeting, Rick got real excited about what we did at VanderCook," says Menghini. "He could not believe that our students learned to play every instrument in the band and orchestra." After a few more meetings, arrangements were made for the Sheraton to house VanderCook guests, and Ueno and Menghini struck up a personal friendship as well.

That December, Ueno was invited to attend the Symphonic Band's Midwest Clinic performance. He was there, front and center, and continues to make attendance at the VanderCook Midwest Concert a priority. "One of my most favorite things to do is to go to the Midwest Clinic and listen to the VanderCook band perform," he says. "I love the music and I love that every student I see on stage is going to be a future music teacher."

Ueno believes in the VanderCook mission and he makes a special effort to personally welcome each VanderCook guest to the hotel with a personal note or phone call. In addition, the Sheraton Chicago Hotel and Towers has become the signature sponsor of the VanderCook TrustEE Open Golf Benefit for the Great Teachers Scholarship Fund.

And it all started with an introduction.

**"I love that every student I see on stage is going to be a future music teacher."**



# Outreach

## VanderCook and the Bridge Academy

When Illinois Congressman Bobby Rush gathered a group of community leaders in a small room adjacent to the sanctuary at Beloved Community Church in Englewood, his message could not have been clearer. He described a vision of bridging the gap between a regular school week and Sunday church services. Saturday, he explained, was the only day our young people are missing structure in their lives. Saturday is the day they are unattended, and happens to be the day when crime is on the rise in the city of Chicago.

With that vision in mind, Congressman Rush created a program called the Bridge Academy. The Bridge Academy serves a community known to many as the highest crime area in the city, plagued daily with violence and gang activity. As the community pushes to deploy additional police officers, the congressman stands firm in the value of education and deploys additional teachers. Beginning with the most logical teachers, Congressman Rush starts with the parents,

gathering them for an orientation and encouraging them to become involved.

VanderCook has been a part of this community effort since the beginning, providing a motivating start to each week's session with a drum circle. Immediately after breakfast, students gather in a circle, grab a drum of their choice, and begin with a "rumble." The rumble is used to warm up the group by hitting the drums loudly and rapidly. Each drum circle following the rumble is unique. Exercises like "call and response" have proven to be the most popular. Each student creates a rhythmic call and the group mimics the call with a drummed response.

Students have lit up to the idea of playing solos and creating their own musical ideas. Facilitator Mike Becker, music history teacher at VanderCook, often plays calming melodies on a Native American flute to the delight of all. Becker has also trained the

**Above:** Michael Becker with the Bridge Academy students.



Above: Bridge Academy students.



Left: Congressman Bobby Rush and VanderCook president Dr. Charles Menghini discuss plans for the Bridge Academy.

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**“This program influences the kids  
in ways we can’t see in their everyday lives.  
No matter what neighborhood we are in,  
the impact music can make  
on a child’s life is immeasurable.”**

– Pedro Garcia,  
Junior Guitar Student

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VanderCook student crew to lead drum circles, and they have been facilitating them on their own for several months. Recently, VanderCook students have also covered music fundamentals with the group. They have introduced note names, counting rhythms, music history, and identifying instrument families. The program has gained momentum with the VanderCook student body as well, and groups have volunteered to travel to the site and perform for the students.

This diverse program also provides classes in martial arts, health and nutrition, engineering, math, and basketball. It’s a non-stop day of enriching activities that benefit all the participating students immensely. Bridge Academy staff member Cynthia Rashid says she gets frequent calls from parents when their children come home showing off a new rhythm on the dining room table or sharing a recipe they learned in class. Seventh grader Jonathan Steels says, “I’m able to recognize certain rhythms when I listen to the radio and know that I have played them on the drums.” He likes music because his older brother, James, who also attends the Bridge Academy, plays music all the time. The program is keeping families engaged in conversation, open to new ideas and activities, and away from the dangers of the streets.

VanderCook prides itself in having top-notch outreach programs and this is no exception. The Bridge Academy program has opened the door to new opportunities for VanderCook students and exciting experiences for the Bridge Academy students. VanderCook student Pedro Garcia says it best: “This program influences the kids in ways we can’t see in their everyday lives. No matter what neighborhood we are in, the impact music can make on a child’s life is immeasurable. These kids look up to us. I didn’t feel that way in the early stages, but now they greet us at the door, they don’t want us to leave, and they are enjoying the music as much as I enjoy teaching it.”

**Graduation:**  
Morgan performing with  
the 2012 Graduate Band  
at commencement.



I am a First Year Teacher:

# Sarah Morgan

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**“I never really thought about *teaching* music before. Working with children became such a joy that I realized I wanted to do it for a living.”**

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When asked why she chose the path of music as a career, her answer is simple: “There was never anything else I imagined myself doing.”

It is this type of steadfast attitude that VanderCook seeks in its students. Along with humble confidence and the knowledge she gained as a master’s and certification candidate, alumna Sarah Morgan was well equipped to tackle her next mission: being the first-ever general music teacher at Schmid Elementary School in Cottage Grove, IL, where she teaches Kindergarten through 8th grade.

Being the school’s first music teacher doesn’t intimidate Morgan in the least. “It’s a good thing because I get to decide what I want to implement instead of following traditions that may be outdated,” she says. While perusing the VanderCook garage sale, she carefully scouted every shelf, nook and cranny, making sure not to miss a thing. She watched as veteran teachers passed up old scores thinking them “unsuitable” for their music program, and she scooped up every one.

“I am a first year teacher. My classroom is completely empty,” she said. “I’m taking everything I can get my hands on.”



**Dastardly promo:**  
Morgan with Dastardly bandmates.  
Photo by: Tiela Halpin



Though Morgan is ecstatic about her new journey, teaching music wasn't always the plan. "I never really thought about *teaching* music before," she explains. "But I had a wonderful experience volunteering at the Museum of Contemporary Art with its family program, and working with children became such a joy that I realized I wanted to do it for a living."

Upon meeting Morgan, it's difficult to believe that teaching wasn't always what she initially set out to do. Her warm, comforting smile, calm composure, and positive outlook are all vital ingredients to make a successful music teacher, and Morgan already had them by the time she came to VanderCook.

"Sarah Morgan is a model music education student because of her diverse background and passion for teaching," says percussion ensemble director Kevin Lepper, speaking to her wide knowledge of several instruments, including the euphonium. "To add to this, Sarah has a personality that engages people and makes them want to be a part of her efforts."

While anticipating the school year, Morgan expresses her love for music by playing accordion (an instrument she learned to play completely on her own) in her band, Dastardly. "Playing the accordion is not as hard as it looks," she claims. "VanderCook taught me how to play several instruments that I had no idea how to play before arriving. From what I learned here, I figured I could teach myself how to play *one*."

**Wicker Park:**  
Morgan performing with  
Dastardly in Chicago.  
Photo by: Michael Komessar



Killion with the Trustee Ensemble at A Night at the Pops 2012.

# Innovator, Musician, Trustee: Mead Killion

Off the beaten path in Elk Grove Village, a suburb northwest of Chicago, you'll find a two-building enterprise devoted to designing products that accurately assess hearing, improve the lives of those challenged by hearing loss, protect hearing, and enhance the listening experience of musicians and music lovers. You'll find Etymotic Research, Inc.

Etymotic's team of 65 includes audiologists, audio engineers, and musicians who all share a commitment to arguably one of our most important senses. Founded in 1983 by Dr. Mead Killion, Ph.D., Etymotic embraces a mission of innovation, education, and hearing conservation. The word etymotic means "true to the ear." The company's catalog of products is widely used and renowned by the scientific research community, musicians at every level, audiologists and hearing practitioners, consumers with hearing concerns, and just about anyone looking for an affordable experience of superior sound quality. Etymotic set the standard for noise-isolating high fidelity in-ear earphones in 1984, and then began producing hearing protection earplugs to block loud percussive noises – those that damage and diminish hearing – while allowing softer tones to be heard. Killion estimates nearly 3,000,000 pairs of plugs have been sold to date.

Killion leads his team with a steady, collaborative hand as he recognizes and supports everyone's unique contributions and individuality. Together, they have over 100 patents issued and pending. Named one of Crain's Chicago Business Most Innovative Companies in June 2012, the facility in Elk Grove houses state-of-the art lab facilities, an off-site classroom for Northwestern University's School of Communication, and an impressive archival collection of hearing and audiology aids and technology.

Etymotic's commitment to hearing protection for musicians brought the company's technology to the attention of VanderCook in 2010. "Etymotic's products have been leading the industry for years," says Kevin Lepper, director of applied studies and percussion at VanderCook. "Mead Killion has single-handedly developed the products and raised awareness for the need of musicians' hearing protection." Lepper and Dr. Charles Menghini, president of VanderCook, helped with the production of an informational video promoting Etymotic's hearing protection programs and products. As a result, Menghini invites Killion to lecture VanderCook students each year on the importance of hearing protection.

Under Killion's leadership, Etymotic has launched the "Adopt-a-Band" program, educating young musicians about healthy playing and listening habits and the risks of hearing loss. Supporters – parents, band directors, school administrators – sponsor a band or music group by supplying ETY-Plugs to the members at a discounted price. Superior to conventional earplugs, ETY-Plugs protect the user's hearing while accommodating different playing styles, sound levels, and venues. VanderCook's own band, as well as many faculty and staff members, are users and staunch advocates of ETY-Plugs.

Killion's passion for his life's work cannot be missed. Bright, lively eyes spark with energy above a constant smile that peeks out beneath a perfectly maintained handlebar mustache. Killion delights in showing off Etymotic, its technology, and its team, who are unwavering in their dedication to Etymotic's mission.

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**"Mead Killion has single-handedly developed the products and raised awareness for the need of musicians' hearing protection."**

– Kevin Lepper

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Although an avid learner, Killion was not a particularly good student. "I ended up with just a math/econ major in college because the physics labs were too laborious to write up...being naturally lazy," he laughs. One can't help but question Killion's self-professed laziness in light of his accomplishments: numerous published works, accolades and industry recognition, and the unmistakable dedication he has to excellence.

Working his way through Wabash College as a T.V. repairman, he also took a job in a machine shop his senior year. In 1962, a fraternity brother at Phi Kappa Psi suggested Killion check out Knowles Electronics, a company that made microphones and earphones for

hearing aids, looking to fill an engineering vacancy. Killion interviewed, landed the job at \$6,900 a year, and figured he'd work for a few years. He worked for two decades with a wonderful, brilliant man, Elmer Carlson, who was also a "fabulous engineering mentor." "He taught me how to solve problems," Killion says. And he's pleased that 40% of Etymotics' patents have someone else's name listed first – evidence he's been able to become an advocate for problem-solving with his own team. At his mentor's urging, Killion would go on to study at the Illinois Institute of Technology, where he earned a masters degree in mathematics and a Ph.D. in audiology. In 1979, he earned a doctorate in audiology at Northwestern University. Killion says, "It was the first time in my life I got A's. Because I was interested." In 1997, Wabash College awarded Killion an honorary doctorate of science.

Killion's passion for and interest in music are lifelong. By his own admission, he was "immersed in music" from an early age. His parents sang in a radio quartet. Always close to his mother, Killion was encouraged by her to sing. By the age of two, he was singing church music and hymns. For the past 30 years, he's joyfully directed his church choir. He went through several piano teachers beginning in the first grade, even one who recommended he quit. Undaunted, Killion's skills progressed with "vigorous" practice, despite his father's disapproval of his boogie stylings in junior high. In fifth grade, he took up the violin. "In junior high and high school, the orchestra and the band were the only useful courses I took, except for typing, as far I was concerned," he says.

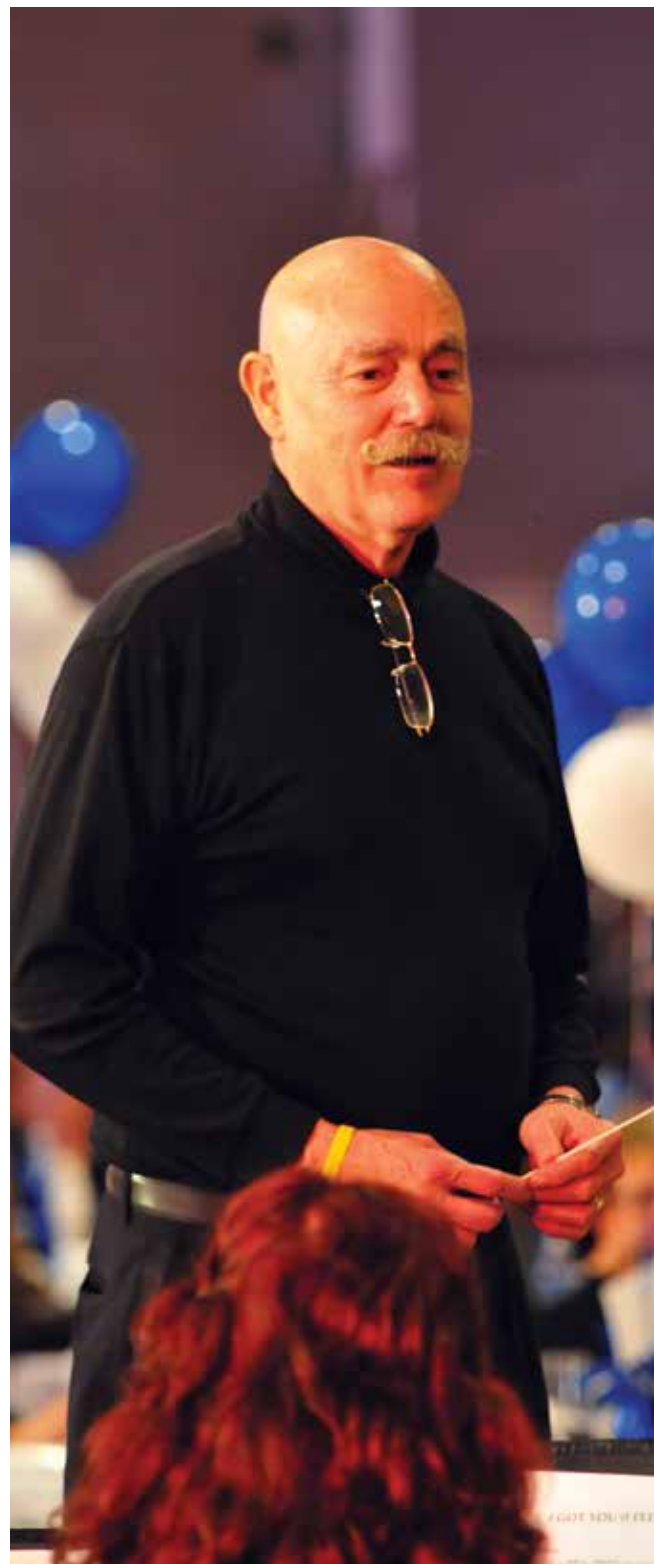
In high school, Killion took one year of violin in the orchestra and was accepted by the Battle Creek Symphony. "I played last chair, but I was in," Killion says. "And that was so much better than the high school orchestra that I dropped out of the high school orchestra." As a result, his high school orchestra director imposed upon the Battle Creek Symphony to enforce a rule mandating that all high school players had to play in their high school orchestra as well. Killion left both orchestras. He is quick to add he also picked up a trumpet for \$15 at a pawnshop in high school, making him a pianist who played the violin and trumpet and sang. College didn't dampen his enthusiasm for music, and he worked on his piano chops with

a fraternity brother who gave lessons. In 1999, around the age of 60, Killion picked up the violin again and recently had the privilege of “playing as an amateur” with some very accomplished professional musicians.

Killion's love of music also brought VanderCook to his attention. At a Midwest Band and Orchestra Clinic concert where Etymotic was marketing hearing protection, Killion heard an amazing band perform. He remembers that moment like it was yesterday: “I went up afterwards to see the director (Charlie Menghini). And I told him how impressed I was with the sound. He told me half the musicians hadn't played their instrument previously...wow...at the beginning of the year.” One thing led to another and Menghini was so impressed by Killion, he asked him to serve on the VanderCook board of trustees. Killion was unsure and asked to attend a meeting where he met the board and that sealed the deal. “You have some neat people on the board. You have the support of a lot of really good people – both musicians and non-musicians,” he continues, “I love music and I love the idea of students who not only know how to teach each instrument but also know how to play each instrument.” The high employment rate of VanderCook graduates also impresses Killion. Joining the board in 2010, Killion brings his passion and wisdom to the board, as well as his talent, having played with the trustee ensemble at A Night at the Pops for the last two years.

Another long, productive day at Etymotic has ended as Killion congratulates his staff for their successful completion of the ISO [Internal Organization of Standardization] 13485 and 9001 Certification Audits. Killion sits contently at his desk surrounded by books in a small cluttered office which, as an employee points out, has three doors and a piano. The piano is a gift from Killion's wife and Etymotic's Managing Director, Dr. Gail Gudmundsen. Killion surveys the clutter with a wink and a chuckle. “This is a messy place. But you know, somewhere I heard, ‘The person who keeps a clean desk has never experienced the ecstasy of finding something that was lost forever.’” The three doors affirm Killion's accessible, collaborative management style and his willingness to share his time with anyone who comes by.

A fourth grade teacher, struggling to say something nice about a young Killion said, “Mead likes to share his thoughts with others.” VanderCook is grateful for Killion's candor, and for the passion he brings to the board as they work together to shape the future of VanderCook and to secure the future of music education.



Killion conducting the VanderCook Symphonic Band at A Night at the Pops 2012.

# Statement of Financial Position

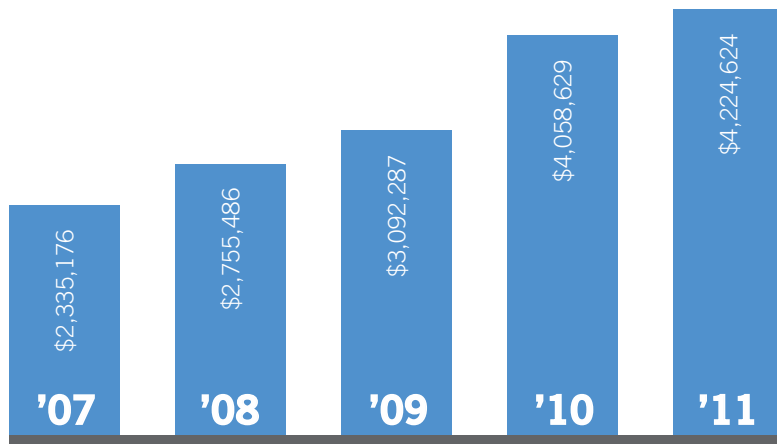
## Fiscal Year Ending July 31, 2011 and 2010

Assets	2011	2010
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 419,339	\$ 132,327
Tuition receivable	144,633	174,531
Grant receivable	752,475	1,000,000
Pledges receivable	184,516	96,642
Prepaid expenses and other assets	69,650	78,673
Cash held on behalf of the Alumni Association	31,609	30,006
Investments	2,101,280	2,032,067
Property and equipment, net	511,122	504,383
Deposits	<u>10,000</u>	<u>10,000</u>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>\$ 4,224,624</b>	<b>\$ 4,058,629</b>

Liabilities and Net Assets	2011	2010
<b>LIABILITIES</b>		
Accounts payable	\$ 57,794	\$ 169,595
Accrued expenses	109,449	39,602
Unearned revenue	68,137	69,488
Deferred rent obligation	375,924	318,251
Obligations under capital lease	49,552	58,481
Funds held on behalf of Alumni Association	<u>31,609</u>	<u>30,006</u>
Total liabilities	\$ 692,465	\$ 685,423
<b>NET ASSETS</b>		
Unrestricted:		
Undesignated	\$ 1,036,453	\$ 962,303
Designated	<u>208,188</u>	<u>200,043</u>
Total unrestricted net assets	\$ 1,244,641	\$ 1,162,346
Temporarily restricted	\$ 1,876,726	\$ 1,800,068
Permanently restricted	<u>\$ 410,792</u>	<u>\$ 410,792</u>
Total restricted net assets	<u>\$ 2,287,518</u>	<u>\$ 2,210,860</u>
Total net assets	<u>\$ 3,532,159</u>	<u>\$ 3,373,206</u>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES and NET ASSETS</b>	<b>\$ 4,224,624</b>	<b>\$ 4,058,629</b>

# College Assets



## College Assets

Since 2007, the assets of the college demonstrate a pattern of progress. This steady increase is attributable to:

- new scholarships
- interest income on investments
- increased fundraising efforts
- support pledged for the capital campaign

# Institutional Aid

2012:

\$596,209

2011:

\$706,956

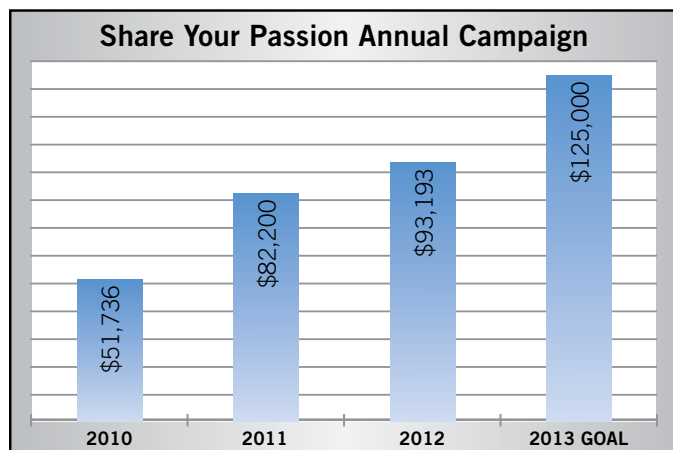
2010:

\$658,317

While the economy has improved for many, our students are still vulnerable to fluctuations in federal and state aid opportunities. As part of our goal to attract the best and brightest candidates from across the country, VanderCook is committed to providing substantial assistance with institutional financial aid through a number of opportunities including:

- presidential awards
- academic scholarships
- student work study
- the Great Teachers Scholarship
- talent grants
- graduate assistantships
- privately funded scholarships

# Share Your Passion Campaign



**Our alumni...** As of the 2011-2012 fiscal year, 9% of our addressable alumni participate in the annual Share Your Passion Campaign. 100% of the Alumni Association Board of Directors participates in annual giving.

**Our trustees...** 100% of our Board of Trustees participate in annual giving, as well as solicit support from family, colleagues, and business connections.

**Our faculty and staff...** 80% of our faculty and staff "gave at the office" to support the annual Share Your Passion Campaign in 2012, as well as many of our restricted scholarships.

**Our friends...** Community partners, parents, friends of students and staff make a considerable investment in VanderCook. 45% of the 2012 Share Your Passion Campaign dollars were invested by our friends.



# Dr. Lewis Schmidt

Chairman of the Board of Trustees

## Greetings, alumni and friends of VanderCook College of Music!

As we move into the first phase of renovating our second building, I am reminded of some of the basic qualities that make VanderCook College of Music such a great learning environment, and I think “connection” is a perfect word to explain why VanderCook is so special.

To me, “connection” has always meant a bond or link; people united or brought together by a shared belief or interest; a surrogate family bound together...

My connection to VanderCook began as an undergraduate at Lakeland College under the guidance of band director and advisor Edgar Thiessen, who earned his bachelor's ('56) and master's ('65) degrees at VanderCook. He continually spoke of the “VanderCook method,” or would proclaim, “Mr. Van or H. E. would say this...” After teaching for a year or two, I soon realized how much I *didn't* know and decided to check out this “VanderCook” place. It was one of the best decisions I ever made.

---

**“At this very crucial time, the college needs each and every one of you to help accomplish the task ahead of us, and expand our connections throughout the world of music education.”**

---

My connection to VanderCook grew through the *people* I studied with – H. E. Nutt, Forrest “Frosty” Buchtel, John Beckerman, Haskel Harr, Victor Zajec, and others – as well as the *way* they taught, just as Hale A. VanderCook had taught them. Their belief in his teaching method remains a foundation of the college's tradition today, as well as their people skills: inspiring students, caring for them personally, and influencing their lives forever. Today, the staff and faculty at VanderCook are second to none in expertise and in dedication to their students.

All of us who are connected to VanderCook, whether as alumni, friends, or associates, are called to continue carrying the torch lit by those pioneers. We are called to carry their message to prospective students and friends, to promote the love of music and the profession of teaching music. By faithfully upholding these traditions, we can continue to build connections and expand the VanderCook family and legacy!

At this very crucial time, the college needs each and every one of you to help accomplish the task ahead of us, and expand our connections throughout the world of music education. I look forward to your loyal, enthusiastic support as VanderCook embarks on this important step in the future of the college.



VanderCook College of Music

KEITH MARDAK  
SCHOLARSHIP

Josue Quintana

On this 80th Day of September, 2012



*David T. Mangione*  
Chair of Musicology Studies

*David T. Mangione*  
President



## CAMPAIGN OVERVIEW

*VanderCook College of Music traces its origins to 1909, when the legendary Hale A. VanderCook opened his cornet school on Chicago's west side. The school grew quickly and became a four-year college in the 1930's. VanderCook was one of the first three institutions in the country to offer a degree in music education.*

*VanderCook has been housed in its current location, a Mies van der Rohe building at 3140 S. Federal Street on the Illinois Institute of Technology campus, since 1996. At the time VanderCook moved to this location, enrollment was about 60 students. Today, VanderCook has approximately 120 students using the same space that 60 did 15 years ago.*

*Rehearsal rooms are over-crowded, our students do not have adequate places to practice, and the college has never had a dedicated performance area.*

---

**INSPIRE. BUILD. SUSTAIN.** is VanderCook College of Music's \$6,000,000 capital campaign, dedicated to transforming a second building for the college into an educational music center. Also of Mies van der Rohe design, this building is located steps from VanderCook's current location. The 24,400-square-foot facility will provide much-needed rehearsal and practice areas, the college's first dedicated performance area, teaching studios, faculty offices, a lobby/reception area that will double as a rehearsal area, and much more.

The transformation will occur in two phases. Phase one will develop over half of the space including the mezzanine area, practice/teaching studios, a large classroom, faculty offices, a piano studio, and ensemble rooms. The first floor area will include a renovated entrance; band, choral, and orchestral libraries; an audio-visual production area; upgraded restrooms; an ADA-compliant elevator; student lounge; and special event café. In addition, the first floor will be home to the George Quinlan, Sr. Lobby and Recital Hall. It will be the largest expansion in the history of the college. Construction is planned to begin in the spring of 2013.

Phase two will construct a large main theatre space, which will adapt to performances of any size and genre. The perfect area for concerts,

lectures, and a variety of gatherings, it will accommodate up to 400 people. In addition, phase two will include a second classroom and a percussion studies area, while adding additional teaching/practice areas, student lockers, and storage. Completion of phase two is targeted for 2016.

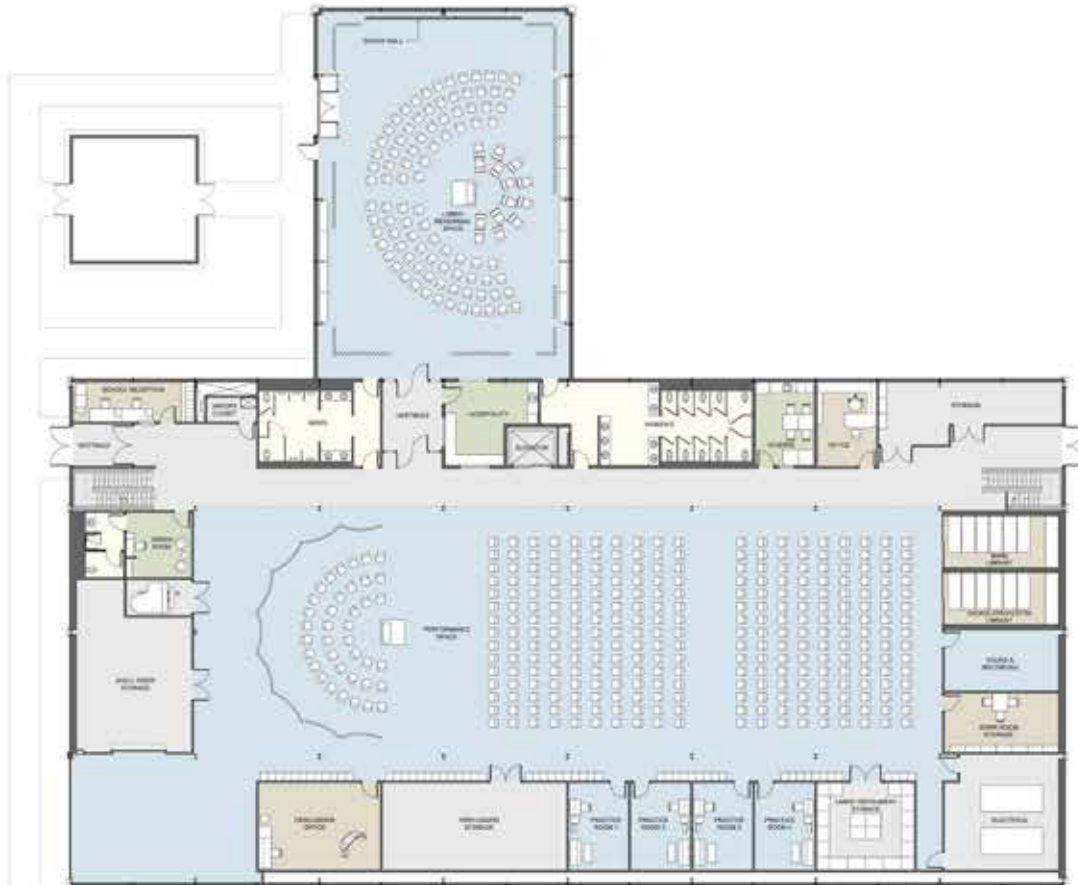
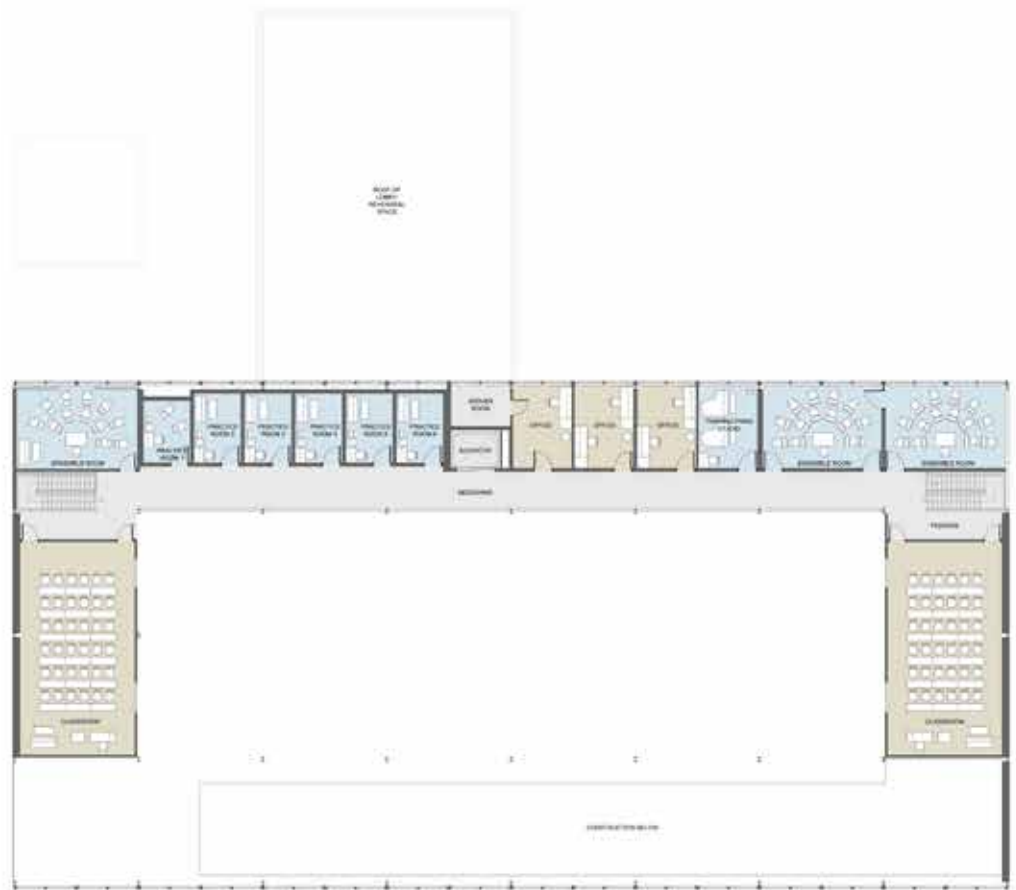
Along with the renovation of this second building, the college will also undertake renovations in its current location to provide additional space and work areas for the college library, and repurpose areas to provide additional teaching/practice rooms for our students.

The college has never had a greater need than it does now. Simply stated, the college is out of space. In order to provide our students the educational facilities they need and deserve while also meeting the needs of our curriculum, we must expand, upgrade, and enhance VanderCook's campus.

To learn more, contact Clairmarie Keenan, director of institutional advancement at: [ckeenan@vandercook.edu](mailto:ckeenan@vandercook.edu), or Dr. Charles T. Menghini, president at: [cmenghini@vandercook.edu](mailto:cmenghini@vandercook.edu).

Updates will be available on our website: [www.vandercook.edu](http://www.vandercook.edu).

**Mezzanine**  
Performing Arts Building



**First Floor**  
Performing Arts Building



## The Impact of Giving



Every gift has a unique story behind it. Some people give to honor a loved one, or to convey pride and loyalty to their alma mater. Some stories are left untold, but forever lie deep within the hearts of those who are giving. Much like a musical composition, each gift tells a story, makes an impact that can last for generations, and has the power to change a life forever. Band director Blake Wiener is calling on us all to be composers of gifts.

Wiener's story begins with reflection. The son of a minister, Wiener struggled financially through college, but always seemed to find a helping hand when he needed it most. He recalls with gratitude the time his father sold the family car to pay for the English horn he needed to continue his studies. With the sacrifices made by his family, and through scholarships and community support, Wiener would go on to share his passion for music and inspire students for many years as a band director.

Wiener was introduced to VanderCook while on the teaching staff of the nationally acclaimed Lake Park High School Marching Band. Longtime friends and colleagues Ken Snoeck (HD '08), Kevin Lepper, and Stacey Larson (MMEd. '98), all played an important role in bringing Wiener into the ever-growing circle of the VanderCook family. Wiener quickly became a friend of the college, bringing his students to outreach events, and attending concerts, MECA courses, and special events every chance he got.

Wiener will put a VanderCook education against any school because he has seen first hand the quality of its student teachers. "They are

by far the most comfortable at teaching; they like to get their hands dirty and are not afraid to try things," Wiener says. He credits that to the fact that VanderCook students are exposed to all aspects of teaching regardless of their major discipline or comfort zone. "That kind of education is priceless and one of the biggest reasons I give to this institution." He goes on to say that he is always impressed by the feedback he gets from students, feedback that comes in the way of action, integrity, and word. He faithfully keeps the handwritten thank-you notes he has received from VanderCook students throughout the years.

Wiener believes a culture of giving is critical and should start with small steps. "Think about it. It can be as simple as giving up one night out to dinner a month. It's amazing, what you can work out, if you want to. I can't afford to give a lot but I have made it a priority. I have stopped giving to some other organizations because I believe so strongly in what VanderCook stands for." He challenges everyone to make an effort to give, even if the check may not be easy to write. "It's the checks that *aren't* easy to write that sometimes mean the most."

Wiener tells a story of a former student of his. Jason was a troubled young man, raised by his grandmother after his parents were no longer able to care for him. Jason had turned to music and joined the Medinah Middle School Band under Wiener's direction. He was determined to become a good percussionist, and through sheer determination, he made it on to the Lake Park Marching Band. Working with VanderCook percussion professor Kevin Lepper, he gained further

momentum, inspiration, and confidence. Jason told his grandmother that if he could continue becoming a better musician, he would attend VanderCook after high school to study with Lepper and ultimately become a music teacher.

This newly discovered confidence, purpose, and hope would sadly never get the chance to flourish. Jason's dream ended abruptly one fall night when he was struck and killed by a train, crossing the tracks on a dare. Although this incident occurred a decade ago, Wiener thinks of Jason periodically, of the life and talent cut tragically short. Earlier this year, he was surprised to receive a check from Jason's grandmother, along with a letter that struck him profoundly:

"The music program saved my grandson. You know his legacy; you've met his father. It's been ten years since Jason passed away. I know he had planned to go to VanderCook, but if you do something in the world of music with this money, it will be well spent, and I think Jason would agree."

Aware of the grandmother's financial situation, Wiener knew the gift was a significant sacrifice. He has often wondered how many Jasons are out there discovering themselves through the power of music, able and willing to share their gifts with the next person but not having the resources to see it through.

Passing that gift on to VanderCook reminds Wiener how grateful he is to have received so many gifts in his life. Stories like this one, he says, will encourage him to keep giving. "But it has to be a group effort," he says. "Things built by many are often more powerful than those built by just one. So are people."

Every opportunity to give has a story behind it. What's your story?

---

**"Things built by many are often more powerful than those built by just one. So are people."**

---





# Our Donors

*Recognizing gifts received from August 1, 2011 through July 31, 2012.*

## ANNUAL PASSION CAMPAIGN

### \$5,000 to \$10,000

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Dr. George Quinlan, Sr. (HD99)  
Raymond & Sharon Spaeth

### \$1,000 to \$4,999

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Virginia Dugan (M92)  
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David Goodman

**“Our donors are the very lifeblood of the college – helping us sustain the VanderCook legacy and traditions. Every gift makes a difference, changes a life, and secures the future of music education. We cannot thank you enough for embracing our mission, inspiring our work, and sharing our passion!”**

– Clarmarie Keenan  
Director of Institutional Advancement

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Reid Hall (M00)  
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**“As you must already know, VanderCook is more than just an educational institution. It is a home for hundreds of students. It is a place to share a mutual passion with like-minded individuals. It is truly a place for students to grow into productive, encouraging adults. Thank you for helping provide the Vander-sperience to me and countless other students.”**

– Luke Moyta, Freshman Percussion Student

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 Ronald (B91, M88) & Joyce  
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 Kate Pohl-Nudd (M09)  
 Lauren Pruter (B10)  
 B J Quigley (B84)  
 Dennis Resor (B67)  
 Juliana Riecss (M07)  
 Salvatore Roti  
 John Russell (M71)  
 Steven Sanders (B09)  
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