

tlautzenheiser@conn-selmer.com Cell: 269.410.0717

Kelly Bryan

mkamphuis@conn-selmer.com Work: 574.523.0677 Cell: 574.607.6000

gjohnston@conn-selmer.com Work: 574.523.0701

VOL. 1 • Issue 12 • September 24, 2013

A Note from Dr. Tim

Greetings. In this edition of *Touchpoint*, **Mark Lane**, Associate Director of Bands at Central Washington University shares with us his perspective on **COMMUNITY** in education and the vital-importance of continuing **GROWTH** and **DEVELOPMENT** beyond the collegiate experience.

The most important ingredient





preparation program has convinced me that there is an ingredient missing in teacher education programs, an ingredient that I'm not sure can be added to the teacher education curricula, but it may be the most important element in the success of educators and education! That ingredient is the knowledge that comes from master educators who are doing it. You can't learn what they know from a book. You can't learn it by watching. You can't learn it from someone who hasn't done it. It is knowledge that only a master educator has. "Been there...done that" is a saying that can denote a jaded kind of feeling, but it also describes perfectly that which gives the master teacher his/her authority. Most important, this is knowledge that you will never get....unless you ask for it!

My experience here in the university teacher

Mentors guide practice

Teaching is an art and just as in the musical performing arts, the process of practice is crucial to success. This being true, how does a new or young teacher without or with very little practice time, succeed, or even survive the first 10 years in the profession The answer lies in another characteristic of most great artists: they never stop practicing. How do great music teachers continue to pursue and help their students achieve excellence for 30 years (a rarity) or more? The answer is simple: Successful music educators never stop practicing, and their practice tends to be guided.

Who does the guiding? Mentors. This model has been around since the beginning of recorded history. Masters have long passed on their professions by guiding those new to the profession for an extended period of time called an apprenticeship. In fact, successful individuals realize that there is always someone who knows more or knows more efficient ways of doing things, and they seek them out.

Student teaching is modeled after this concept, but there is one glaring flaw....time. It is simply an impossibility to pass on what is needed in such a brief amount of time as one or two quarters. What is really mind-boggling is that the majority of university education programs limit student teaching to nine weeks! If this is the reality imposed by the constraints of the university structure, this can't, and does not have to be where

our teacher training ends. More must be done.

The need to seek/give advice

Success in our profession has been and will continue to be a result of one's willingness to seek and learn from those who have been there and done that. This is one of the things that makes our profession unique and special. The content of our profession is intrinsically connected to that which makes us human and unique, and for those who engage in successful mentoring, the human need to engage in intimate relationships is realized by the powerful bond created through the practice of mentoring and being mentored.

How do we make sure all who graduate from our music education programs are aware of the need to seek the advice of their colleagues? How do we instill the self-confidence that it takes to reach out and ask for help? On the other hand. how do we arouse in our master music educators the awareness that they need to reach out towards their fledgling colleagues? One answer lies in what we do everyday in our classrooms, that is, the dynamic with which we relate to our students. I often tell my students that the music we rehearse everyday will never mean fully what the composer intended until we give it away. This is what our groups do when they perform, and this is what we should do as teachers in the classroom. One of the most basic concepts of the arts is the concept of giving it away, of freely sharing with others what we find ennobling and enriching.

We have much to do if our profession is to continue to grow and become what it can become. We need to do more in terms of helping each other develop as individuals and professional music educators. We, as music educators, must do, as we constantly tell our groups, to work together, support each other and unselfishly give our best to each other, keeping the best interests of the whole (our profession) at the center.

The longer I teach, the stronger my convictions on this topic become. I've had and continue to have great mentors in my life. They have been the key to my longevity in the profession. Remember: surround yourself with those you want to be like. It is a formula that will not fail you. True mentorship is giving to each other and giving to our profession all of the time!

Institute 2014

Conn-Selmer

Click here to register now!

Early-bird registration discount ends October 1st and spots are filling up

Our Next Issue Featuring: An article by **Frank Troyka** the Director of Bands and Coordinator of Fine Arts at Berkner High School in Richardson, Texas.

In Our Last Issue: How to Buy a Brass **Instrument That Fits Your Needs** By Wayne Downey