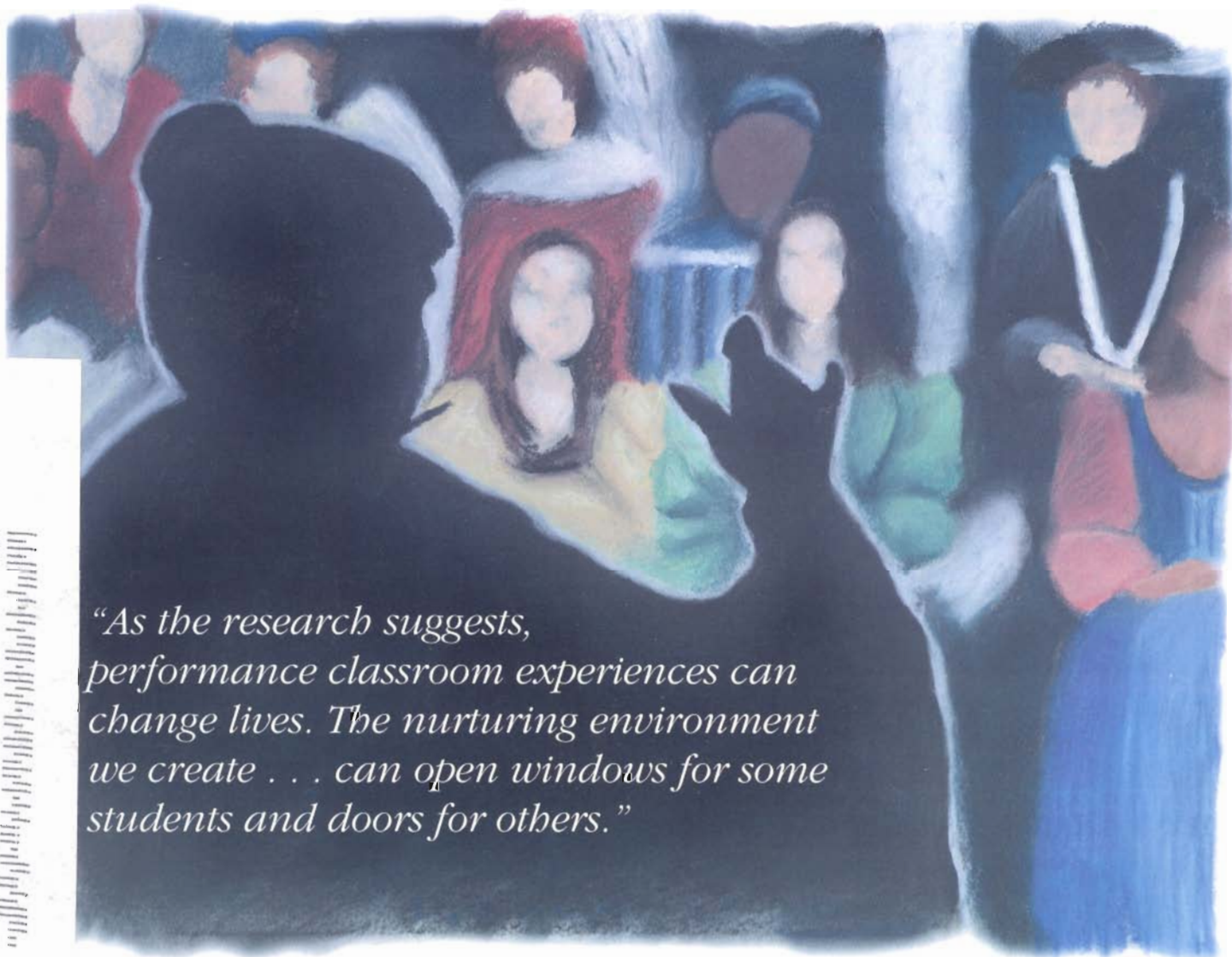


THE NEXT GENERATION OF MUSIC TEACHERS



“As the research suggests, performance classroom experiences can change lives. The nurturing environment we create . . . can open windows for some students and doors for others.”

NON-PROFIT
U.S. Postage Paid
Austin, Texas
Permit No. 789



Illustrations by Stephanie Black

The Next Generation of Music Teachers

by Alan C McClung, PhD

According to the High Education Arts Data Services, the number of 2003-2004 baccalaureate degrees awarded in music education was 3,766.¹ The number of music teachers who leave the workforce each year has been estimated at 11,000.² Such disparity, sustained over time, corroborates the assertion of a serious teacher shortage. In a letter to the music faculties in higher education, the Executive Committee of the National Association of Schools of Music (NASM) refers to this K-12 music teacher shortage as a “critical matter facing the entire field of music. If we don’t solve the teacher shortage, the consequences are serious: substantive, sequential music programs will be removed from the schools. Once such programs are gone, it is almost impossible to get them back.”³ To address this multi-faceted teacher shortage, the music profession is beginning to define the challenges through small meaningful steps. One important step is the effort to determine the factors that influence a person’s decision to pursue a career in

music education.

Nearly everyone can recall a memory that describes an early musical experience. Such experiences are frequently cited as the reasons for an individual’s initial decision to become a music teacher. The factors that surround these influencing experiences were explored in “First Remembrances of Wanting to Become a Music Teacher,” an article by Clifford Madsen and Steven Kelly from Florida State University.⁴

Ninety undergraduate music education majors were asked to write an open-ended essay that described influencing remembrances. Participants reported that the most memorable experience that influenced their decision to become a music teacher happened in elementary school (6%), middle school (14%), high school (56%), college (22%), and 2% provided no information. A large majority of the respondents indicated that the person that influenced them the most was their school music teacher.⁵

These findings support the results of a similar study sponsored by MENC, The

National Association for Music Education. Martin J Bergee from the University of Missouri, Columbia, and his co-authors conducted a national survey of randomly selected Collegiate MENC (CMENC) members resulting in 431 useable surveys.⁶ A majority of the respondents indicated that their decision to become a music teacher was made while in elementary school (3.5%), middle school (11%), high school (62%), and college (23%). In another category, respondents indicated that the person most influential in their decision-making was their high school music ensemble teacher, followed by parents/guardians, and private music teacher.

Bergee’s respondents indicated that their school music ensemble was the most influential factor in their decision to major in music education, and that this experience was enriched by several influencing factors listed in descending order: (a) All-District/All-State ensembles; (b) contest/festival solos and ensemble events; and (c) summer

music camps. A large percentage of the respondents (77.3%) indicated that their participation in their high school ensembles included opportunities to conduct, rehearse, or teach classes. From these respondents, 95.5 percent indicated that up-front opportunities influenced their decision to choose music education as a career path. Other influencing factors included a love of music; a desire to work with people; a calling to teach; and a desire to conduct, perform, and attain visibility.⁷ From the research and from our own life experiences, one could infer that meaningful musical experiences, enriched with a variety of opportunities associated with school performance ensembles, influence a student's decision to become a music teacher.

Choosing to major in music education requires forethought.

A teacher's response to a student's initial query about becoming a music teacher can be a sensitive topic for the teacher and the student. The first appropriate response is to recognize the student's inquiry for what it is, a tribute to you and to the music profession. Accept the compliment graciously. A career in music education offers a long list of rewards, but the challenges should be considered as well. An important response to a student's interest in a music career is the thorough discussion of a series of thoughtful questions.

In his book, *Music Advocacy and Student Leadership*, Tim Lautzenheiser, a leading personality in the music education world, provides a set of questions that every student should carefully consider before choosing to pursue a degree in music education. Is the student willing to . . .

- prepare now to meet the requirements of a college music program?
- fulfill the rigorous curriculum requisites for an undergraduate degree in music education?
- embrace the pressure of a music major's extensive schedule including the number of academic hours required in academic core and music courses, the extended group rehearsals, the private practice on a major instrument (eg, voice) and a secondary instrument (eg, piano), and the demanding performance schedules?
- thrive and develop in a competitive environment?
- set and maintain high levels of personal commitment?
- master the necessary people skills?

- recognize the trade-off between financial income and life-mission satisfaction?

- discover a balance between a personal life and a professional life?⁸

If the student remains steadfast and eager to pursue a music degree, the student may wish to consider the following list of qualifying traits that are



From the research and from our own life experiences, one could infer that meaningful musical experiences, enriched with a variety of opportunities associated with school performance ensembles, influence a student's decision to become a music teacher.



essential to the successful music educator. Does the student have . . .

- a positive attitude?
- a willingness to accept extreme challenges and to make tough decisions?
- an endless supply of energy?
- the skill to control one's temper in emotionally charged situations?
- the open mindedness to be genuinely fair?
- an affable personality that works well with all types of people?
- a highly developed set communication skills?
- a love of music?
- an insatiable desire and a genuine passion to teach children the art of music making?⁹

Although not all-encompassing, the list does provide the student with some important questions to mull over. If, after considering various career options, the student remains firmly committed, it is the teacher's responsibility to help that student make important informed choices (eg, audition preparations, piano lessons, theory and sight-singing skill development, college choices). When in-service teachers create opportunities for potential music education students to make meaningful music from both sides of the podium, and when these students are provided with informed counseling,

the student, the teacher, and our profession benefit.

The unedited essay that follows was written by a college freshman music education student. Her inspirational message is a reminder that our work should not be limited to the product, but that our work should always include and embrace the process. Her memory of a special musical experience demonstrates how the power of process can impact the students who will make up the next generation of music teachers.

For the Love of Music
By Amanda Caldwell

As I stood in front of the girls' choir, my hands began to shake. It was the first time that I had ever directed anything. I looked up at the girls to give them a sense of confidence, but truly, it was I who needed the confidence. Now as I stood in front of a wall of faces with the audience behind me waiting for the song to start, I was a little scared. What if I gave them a wrong cue and the whole choir came in early? I felt as if everything depended on me — quite a responsibility for a mere high school student. I stopped there and began to reassure myself. I had practiced this song with them so many times I could do it in my sleep.

They had worked on my piece for four and a half weeks. I came in every Friday, and we spent the class period learning the piece. First, I had them sight read, warming up to the music with solfège, until they were ready to sing the words. I sat down with them and discussed what I wanted dynamically and why. For instance, I explained that I wanted only the sopranos to start, to enforce a greater dynamic difference later in the song. The girls and I had worked hard and managed to have fun in doing so. The concert was the pentacle moment for which we had worked.

It was time to start. Anymore delay and the audience would begin to wonder what I was doing. I opened my music, raised my hands, signaled the choir to open their folders, and started the accompanist. The moment I brought in the sopranos something came over me. I had never felt this way. I had a different kind of control of the music.

The girls' fluid voices filled the

auditorium, with a sound just as I had imagined. They sang beautifully and I was so proud of them. As I lowered my hands at the end of the song and the audience began to clap, I had such a feeling of accomplishment. Here I was just in high school, and I had had the opportunity to direct and work with a choir.

At the beginning of my senior year, I was torn between the idea of majoring in vocal performance or music education. As I walked off the stage, I had a better sense of what I really wanted to do. When I was younger I had a choir director that put a love of music in me that could never be extinguished. I realized after that performance that I wanted to be that teacher for someone else. I discovered that I wanted to get in front of a choir, teaching them not only the fundamentals of music, but also to love music in a way that can only be expressed by singing it.

I had always enjoyed helping people with their music; now, however, I sought to help others be better singers. Every time I would

go to Region clinics or choir camps I would soak up any information on the music, the composer, and how each person was directing. I wanted to know it all. Now, I understood why I liked doing that more than just singing the music. I love to sing, but more than anything, I love to convey an idea or an emotion through the music.

The aspect of musically conveying your idea through a choir, rather than through one's self is something that only those who really love music can appreciate. I have listened to choirs that made me cry from the beauty of their singing and I have been in those choirs. Ultimately, I want to be in front of those choirs throughout the entire process of learning and performing. I want to be there from the moment the music is passed out to the moment they sing it on stage. That, to me, is more fulfilling than performing. Through directing, my love for music will be passed on to others so that they may one day put the love of music in someone else.

musical formats (eg, orchestras, bands, choirs, operas, and musical theater); (e) offer students opportunities to participate in solo/ensemble festivals, honor choirs, and all-state choirs; (f) value openly the merits and the challenges of a career in music; and (g) take the time to help students make informed choices about a career in music education.

As the research suggests, performance classroom experiences can change lives. The nurturing environment we create in our performance classrooms can open windows for some students and open doors for others. Influenced by their experiences, the young people who sing and play in our choirs, bands, and orchestras today are destined to become the next generation of music teachers.

For the special musical memories in her life, Amanda would like to thank the following music teachers: James Peiffer, Ken Stanton, and Dr Sarah Nell Summers. Now a college junior in music education, Amanda has been selected to serve as the 2006-2007 president of UNT's student chapter of ACDA.

Notes

1. Higher Education Arts Data Services. *Music, Data Summaries, 2003-2004*. (Reston, VA: HEADS).
2. Fall 2002 analysis of data collected by the MENC Information Resources Department
3. Executive Committee of NASM, An Open Letter to Music Faculty in Higher Education from the Executive Committee of NASM Regarding K-12 Teacher Shortages, <http://nasm,arts-accredit.org> (March, 2002).
4. Clifford K Madsen & Steven N Kelly, "First Remembrances of Wanting to Become a Music Teacher," *Journal of Research in Music Education* 50, (2002): 323-332.
5. Ibid.
6. Martin J Bergee, Don D Coffman, Steven M Demorest, Jere T Humphreys, and Linda P Thornton, "Influences of Collegiate Students' Decision to Become a Music Educator" <http://www.menc.org/networks/rnc/Bergee-Report.html> (Summer, 2001).
7. Ibid.
8. Tim Lautzenheiser, *Music Advocacy and Student Leadership* (Chicago: GIA Publications, Inc., 2005): 40-41.
9. Ibid. 41.
10. Ella Wilcox, "Recruiting for the Profession," *Teaching Music*, 8 (Oct, 2000): 24-31.

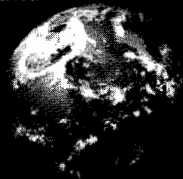
INTERNATIONAL PERFORMANCE TOURS

47 years in business.

2000 performing ensembles.

72 countries around
the world.

Add it up...
travel Intropa.



 **INTROPA**
INTERNATIONAL TOURS

800 INTROPA
www.intropa.com

Because the music teacher shortage is multifaceted, there is no single remedy. A broad list of reasons for the music teacher shortage was articulated in an article by MENC staff member, Ella Wilcox: (a) a large student enrollment in our elementary and secondary schools; (b) a teacher supply that is not geographically distributed; (c) small school positions that require candidates to teach both vocal and instrumental music; (d) early career exit by young, disillusioned teachers; (e) career retirements of in-service teachers; (f) candidates who lack the preparation to teach in the urban city school setting; and (g) salaries.¹⁰

Taken as a whole, the teacher shortage appears as a mountain of overwhelming challenges. Crossing mountains and solving challenges requires one committed and calculated step at a time. When planning those experiences that define your music classroom, consider the following influential steps: (a) provide a positive teaching and performance model; (b) offer students teaching, conducting, and leadership opportunities; (c) encourage the broad development of musical skills (eg, private piano lessons, and/or AP Theory); (d) encourage students to attend and experience a variety of