

77th In-Service, *Mentoring~Investing in the Future*

The 2015 MMEA In-Service/Workshop Conference is approaching quickly! MMEA area vice-presidents and advisory board members have assembled a wide variety of clinic offerings to compliment the variety of performances and events that make up our conference. I am excited to be able to share some of the conference highlights found in this issue. I hope that as you review this issue it will peak your interest and convince you to join us in January. I am anxious for you to see the renovations to the lobby and others areas at Tan-Tar-A. The new lobby is beautiful, much more spacious with a huge fireplace! You are going to appreciate these upgrades.

In October I had the pleasure of attending the NAFME National In-Service in Nashville, TN. As part of the conference we had the pleasure of hearing the National Honors Ensembles. I would like to express my sincere congratulations to all those students that participated in the Honors Ensembles. Missouri was well represented with a total of twenty five students participating in choir, orchestra, band and jazz band from Missouri. The performances were absolutely wonderful! I encourage ensemble directors to make your students aware of this remarkable educational opportunity and encourage them to submit an application for 2015. I will post the application to the MMEA web site after February 1, 2015.

I was able to attend several sessions during the National In-Service on the new National Music Standards and some great sessions where procedures and ideas for the collection of student growth data was reviewed and shared. A session on the *Portfolio Blind Peer Review for Music Teacher Evaluation* that is used in Tennessee and Virginia was very interesting. I see this as a real answer to the concerns surrounding music teacher evaluation by administrators who struggle with understanding the various methods of instruction that are part of our rehearsals and classrooms. I will share these ideas in a future issue.

I hope you enjoy this conference issue of the MSM. MMEA Editors Marty and Sally Hook have done a tremendous job organizing and presenting the information for this issue in a very professional and attractive manner. Thank you Marty and Sally!! It is our goal to help you prepare for your conference in advance of your arrival so you can maximize your experience. Please take a minute to look at the performing ensembles pages. We have included an ensemble bio with each picture so you have an opportunity to familiarize yourself with these outstanding ensembles and their accomplishments. A full schedule of offerings for the conference can also be found in this issue.

Mentoring~Investing in the Future is our 77th In-Service theme. It is also the focus of this issue. Why a focus on mentoring? The climate of change that surrounds all of us in Missouri with assessment, teacher evaluation and teacher certification is enough to make all of us feel confused and concerned. Veteran teachers have experience to fall back on. New teachers and pre-service teachers are not equipped with the experience safety net and need something or someone to look to for support, ideas, guidance and encouragement. The future of quality, sequential based music instruction lies with the next generation of music educators just beginning or those involved in our teacher training programs across the state. Mentoring is advocacy for our art form with the individuals that will assume the responsibility for the delivery of music instruction. We all know that success does not necessarily follow knowledge.

Mentoring can offer insight into the many undocumented aspects of our profession. *We exist temporarily through what we take, but we live forever through what we give.* (Douglas M. Lawson)

Think for just a minute about your favorite teacher. What made that teacher stand out? Was it subject knowledge? Was it teaching technique? I am sure that these elements contributed to your admiration but I bet the most prominent reason this teacher made a difference for you was because they believed in you. This is certainly the case for me. My college band director was much more patient with me than I deserved. I was very average and I am sure there were many times when he just hung his head in frustration. But he never gave up on me and continued to encourage me. Even after I graduated he would attend my concerts and give me honest feedback. He even attended my graduate conducting recital and you guessed it he was blatantly honest and absolutely correct. I am grateful that Warren Bellis believed in me and had the patience to give encouragement and nudge me in the right direction along the way.

Mentoring is an opportunity for those of us with an investment in this profession to give back and do a small but vital part to ensure the continued place of quality music education in our schools. Join me in reaching out to a young teacher and offering a word of encouragement.

If you need help with your request for release time to attend the MMEA 77th In-Service please visit www.mmea.net – 2015 In-Service/Conference feature box for a letter that I have posted to help with your request. Please adjust and edit to suit your needs. If you need additional information please give me a call.

Our Missouri NAFME-Collegiate Chapter organized and administered two Advocacy Mini-Conferences this fall. The first, November 1, at UMSL and the second December 6, at UMKC. Advocacy information and strategies were reviewed and shared. I am impressed and proud of our Missouri NAFME-Collegiate Chapters for taking the initiative to present these mini-conferences to advance the cause of advocacy for music education across our state. BRAVO!

I am happy to announce that our MMEA Music Advocacy Day is set for March 12, Jefferson City, State Capitol. We will have displays for both the senate and house sides of the rotunda. Both the House and Senate are in session that day so we should have a good pool of legislators available for appointments to discuss the benefits of music education for our children in Missouri. I hope you will be able to join me for the day. I will send additional information following the conference.

I am happy to announce that Sandy Collins, Parkway School District Fine Arts Coordinator-retired, has agreed to serve as MMEA's Music In Our Schools Month Chair! Those of you that know Sandy know that she is a tireless worker with a wealth of information and ideas to share to make this very important opportunity for advocacy a month of celebration about the benefits of music for our children. Please see Sandy's article in this issue and begin formulating plans to have a MIOSM event in your school in 2015.

Once again we will offer the MMEA Conference App for use during our In-Service. You can find the 2015 Conference App at www.eventmobi.com/mmea2015. I encourage you to

download at your convenience. Become familiar with how the App works and how to navigate this incredibly useful tool. Update your profile, start building your personal agenda, view the exhibitors that will be a part of our conference and read about the clinicians.

I am looking forward to seeing everyone at the 77th MMEA In-Service/Conference, *Mentoring~Investing in the Future*, January 28, 29, 30 & 31, 2015.

Best wishes for the holidays! If I can be of any service to you and your program please do not hesitate to call or write, president@mmea.net.