

Band Echoes

2024

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Note from John

Alumni Band President

Greetings, Grizzly Band Members!

October 11 & 12 are the dates for our 36th Annual Homecoming Reunion. Can you believe it? We have had 36 years of fun getting together with our wonderful alumni for the joy of performing at Montana's BEST Parade - the UM Homecoming Parade. In addition, we've performed as part of the Grizzly Halftime at the Homecoming game, as well as participating in a multitude of other mixers and opportunities to sit back, relax, and enjoy one another's company.

YOU ARE OFFICIALLY invited to join us this fall. I've put in my request for a BEAUTIFUL autumn day for the parade. We're going to have a blast pushing out those wonderful tunes for the crowd that packs the street down Higgins and University Avenue.

If this would be your first time, your 36th time or any number in between, I invite you to look at the carefully prepared schedule of events and figure out a way to make your way to Missoula for this very special event. Your UM Alumni Band Committee looks forward to seeing each and every one of you each fall.



There are a few fun changes this year. We've had a dickens of a time getting the Grizzly Marching Band to the Holiday Inn for the past several years. They've always made it and blown the paint off the wall once they arrive but transportation has been a bugger. Therefore, we've changed the location of our annual banquet to a new and exciting venue on campus: the ALI. You'll love the room and the marching band will easily be able to get to us for their amazing performance.

We can't wait to see you! We have an instrument waiting for you if needed, just let us know on the registration form. Take a few minutes to look it over, fill it out online, and join us. I know you'll be glad you did!

**Go Griz!
Fight ON!
REGISTER HERE!**

John Combs
UM Alumni Band President

Relive the Glory!

On The Road to Frisco!

Attending the National Championship Game of 2023 will be a memory I will always treasure! Following the most exciting finish to the double overtime win over NDSU I wasn't sure anything could reach that level of euphoria. My children and I traveled to Frisco for the championship game and that feeling of UM Grizzly energy followed us to Texas. You could feel the excitement for the game growing as we traveled closer and closer to the game. The layover at Denver International started uniting Griz and Jack Rabbit fans together from across the world. It is such a strange comfort to land in a balmy Dallas, Texas and hear "Go Griz" as you exit the plane and make your way to the hotel. The amount of people cheering on their home team was inspiring, and to see that the representation was equal was a great feeling in the stadium. Griz fans were there in force. As opponents, the Jack Rabbit fans were gracious and encouraging throughout the game. The highlight was the U of M Grizzly Marching band. No one could play our school song better on that turf in Texas. The UM Grizzly Marching band was fantastic and an overwhelming sense of pride enveloped among the Griz fans. The ending of the game was not as we had wanted but Montana was represented in a most favorable way and we look forward to next year and hopefully a repeat trip to the national championship.

Scott McKenzie UM 2004

Peter McKenzie UM 2002

Angela McKenzie-Tucker - Life long Griz fan and supporter

Samuel McKenzie UM 2009



UM Alumni Band & the National Association of Alumni Bands

NAoAB is an association dedicated to helping alumni band organizations around the country. They focus on leadership and mentorship, and offer virtual networking and roundtable discussions in addition to an annual symposium.

The UM Alumni Band periodically joins the roundtable meetings and we've had a few members present before. This year, our big focus was on the Annual Symposium.

NAoAB is associated with the College Band Directors National Association (CBDNA).

UM Alumni Band was represented at the 1st “National Alumni Band” Symposium!!

by Carl Smart, Past Alumni Band President

This first brainstorming gathering included how to create a permanent ongoing National Association of Alumni Bands! The host for this event was the VERY gracious University of Washington Director of Athletic Bands, Dr Brad McDavid. We were treated like Royalty, meeting in the exclusive suite above the UW Football Stadium and looking down on the entire Football field & out across Lake Washington! All meals and details were well planned!! Betty and I loved the time visiting with representatives from all across the USA, and a highlight for us was the Dinner Cruise on the UW Tour Ship across Lake Washington!!

Symposium Highlights included each Alumni Band Represented giving a presentation of what their band's Goals and Purpose and Functions were! For our University of Montana Alumni Band I was proud to be able to share copies of our 2014 Summer “UM Band Echoes” newsletter with everyone! Included in it was our great schedule of events we have on Friday and Saturday of Homecoming! Folks were really interested in the way we have put Homecoming Activities together, including trying to actively work on visibility with current students to help with recruitment!! The Circle of Bands before the Homecoming Parade was a hit!! Our Ice Cream Social during Current Marching Band Camp the week before school begins and our playing with the Pep Band for basketball games, especially during the Holidays were exciting ideas for some of the college Alumni Band folks!!

This 1st Symposium included 42 participants! They represented 18 college “Alumni Bands” of all sizes!! Yes, we were the smallest University at the Symposium, but still we were proud of what we do and were able to share! Also, Betty & I were motivated to continue nurturing new & better ways to get folks involved in our Alumni Band!! At the conclusion of our Symposium discussions, it was decided that the best way to develop a permanent “National Association of ALUMNI BANDS” was to connect it to the “College Band Directors National Association”!! Because several of the attendees were college band directors, they said several of the directors involved with the College Band Directors National Association had already mentioned that marriage with the “National Association of Alumni Bands, so they hoped to carry that idea through!

Because my time was up as the UM Alumni Band President, I didn't keep close contact with the discussions over the next 3 years among leaders across the country, but I chuckle at the fact that the University of Texas likes to brag “From the organizations' conception at a National Alumni Band Symposium held in 2018 at the University of Texas”!! I'm sorry Texas, but the conception and a weekend of Symposium sharing & learning had already happened at the University of Washington in 2015!!

UM Alumni Band & the National Association of Alumni Bands

2015 Symposium Discussion Sessions:

1. "Building Strong Student/Alumni Relations through joint Performance Tours"; Brad McDavid - lots of work, but amazing relationships built.
2. "Membership Recruitment/Retention": thru Feeling of Family; Keep Traditions Alive; Recognitions; Regular Communications; Events During the Year; Welcome New Grads!
3. "Reunion Organization & Communications!"
4. "Fundraising for Giving back to Music School AND for Scholarships"
5. "Maintaining a Uniform/Apparel Inventory and Instruments accessibility"
6. "Effective Communication with University Alumni Association and Administration!!"
7. "Alumni Bands Role in the University Overall Structure"
8. "Other??"

It is great to know that the 2024 National Association of ALUMNI BANDS is being held right here on our University of Montana Campus this May 29th thru June 1, 2024!! A special thanks to Dr Griggs and his many helpers for bringing this all together! I hope there is a good turnout, because there are so many great ideas shared when you get the leaders from Alumni Bands all over the USA!! I know John Combs, our President, Steve Armstrong, our Historian on the Board, and Kathy McCaughy, Past President as well as Dr Ben Kirby & others are all attending!!! My best advice for young Band Alumni is to jump in and get involved!! If you can make time to visit with Band officers & board members, share ideas to help the band grow!!

I look forward to seeing the next generation of UM Alumni come alive with their own ideas of how to make our own University of Montana ALUMNI BAND the best ever!! As I get older, finding ways to bring the generations all together and want to continue year after year will be the biggest challenge from my perspective!! Betty & I tried to get those connections to happen!! To an extent, the BBQ Lunch in McGlynn's backyard was a time where young and old folks could relax and visit, before the next big rush to get to the Football game!! Betty & I look forward to seeing you again this Fall for another great Homecoming Weekend!! Stay safe and healthy, which is some advice this old goat needs to take to heart. Maybe Denley will have that oversized golf cart here again!!



UM Alumni Band & the National Association of Alumni Bands

CBDNA Report - Connecting with our Nation's Marching Band Directors

John Combs - UM Alumni Band President

It was my pleasure to help Dr. Griggs with some aspects of the CBDNA Athletic Band Symposium. Kevin asked me to help get folks from the airport to their hotels with a shuttle service to help defray the costs of coming to the Wilds of Montana. Our service was much appreciated. Dr. Ben Kirby was the other driver and we had a great time getting to know these people on our short drive from the Missoula Airport to their various lodgings.

I was surprised to discover that this was the first trip to Montana for most of the directors. Fortunately, Montana put on a real show at the end of May. The place was bursting with colors and had a fresh dusting of snow on the mountains.

The directors I spoke with were genuinely thrilled to be coming to Montana. The symposium facilities were top notch and their schedule gave them many opportunities for conversation, discussion and growth.

One of the highlights was the opportunity to take four bus loads of directors up north for a dinner on the banks of Flathead Lake. Kevin scheduled the dinner at the Kwataqnuq resort. Being a former teacher, I took the bus's microphone several times along the

route to give my bus riders a brief highlight about the area. I pointed out the Rattlesnake Wilderness, talked about the Salish-Kootenai Reservation, and the National Bison Range. We even saw a few bison running along a trail on the way up the hill. When we reached the top of the hill the Missions were fully in their snow capped glory. It was a strikingly beautiful day and as the Missions came into view all bus conversation came to a halt and audible oo's and awe's were heard.

The trip to the University of Montana was, at that moment, secured as one of the top destinations in the CBDNA repertoire. It was capped off with a delightful dinner, a brief talk from a Salish Elder, and the deep blue of Flathead Lake at their feet. Taking our directors back to the airport revealed that Montana had been a memorable and fascinating location for them.

Your UM Alumni Band was well represented throughout the symposium. We might be the only FCS school in the National Association of Alumni Bands but we will be remembered for our hospitality, beauty of location, and enthusiastic participation.

Kathy McCaughey What I Learned at the CBDNA.NAoAB Symposium:

One of the first presentations addressed the benefits of marching band to college students. And while I always knew that band improves quality of life, it was great to see that research backs up my belief. The three areas addressed were social, physical, and cognitive health. Common issues with college students are depression, stress, anxiety, financial issues, and family issues. I was amazed to learn that colleges and universities have struggled to address these issues and concerns. However, it has been shown that marching band does help. Band is a social event. In band we see the same people day after day, year after year. We also have a common goal, working together to produce something wonderful and noteworthy. The friends we make in band last a lifetime, and that socialization helps alleviate chronic disease, serious illness, stress, anxiety, depression and improves sleep. Wow!

Playing an instrument also requires a hefty lung workout. Stats show that the exercise from band increases our VO₂, or amount of oxygen consumed. This improves brain function or cognitive health.

And, lastly, marching band is physical. We won't forget about those long practice sessions on the field working up a pre-game or halftime show. Those hours are physical! They help improve muscle tone, endurance, fitness. And so, the wellness benefits of marching band are multifaceted and include emotional, physical, and cognitive improvements. Yay Band!

If you are interested in reading more about the latest research on the health benefits of music and arts therapies, pick up a copy of *Music and Mind*, edited by world-renowned soprano and arts and health advocate Renee Fleming. Its pretty fascinating what music can do for us!

Homecoming 2023

Huge thanks to Lizz Dellinger for the amazing photos of our 2023 Homecoming!



UM Concert Bands

Greetings, Alumni Band Members!

The 2023-2024 season for the UM Bands was another terrific one. Here are the highlights! We are humbled by your continued generosity in supporting the UM Alumni Band Scholarship Fund for music education students. This year's awardee is Janis Jones from Sentinel High School. Janis is an upcoming sophomore music education student who plays saxophone in the Grizzly Marching Band and Symphonic Wind Ensemble. She is also a wonderful singer in the Chamber Chorale.

Our November High School All-Star Festival was one for the ages. Renowned composer and conductor, Julie Giroux was our headliner drawing interested students from near and far. We had over 300 nominations from AK, ID, MT, WA and WY which we narrowed down to three wind ensembles. Ms. Giroux threw pearls of wisdom and peppered rehearsals with amazing stories from her past as a composer for film, TV and video games. The Symphonic Wind Ensemble performed her Symphony No. 6 "The Blue Pearl" with a giant projected movie also created by Ms. Giroux.



We welcomed a thousand middle school and high school students to campus in February for the 42nd UM Concert Band Festival. The festival clinicians were two of the finest high school directors in the Northwest: Meghan Wagner (Auburn Riverside High School, WA) and Elizabeth Hering (McNary High School, OR).

Twelve members of the UM Band were selected to perform in the CBDNA Western/Northwestern Region Intercollegiate Band in Las Vegas. UM had more students in the ensemble than any other university. The experience culminated in a performance at the Las Vegas Academy of the Arts under the director of Dr. John Lynch.

The UM Bands continued its spirit of service and outreach this academic year. In December, the Symphonic Wind Ensemble spread holiday cheer by sending ten chamber ensembles to perform for eight different senior living and memory care homes in Missoula. In late February the same musicians performed at five high schools in the Billings area. The outreach efforts produced strong numbers of auditions and scholarship acceptances keeping pace with last year's record numbers.

The final concert of the year, Rhapsodic, featured Concerto-Aria Competition winner, Owen Kirby (BM '25) on baritone saxophone. Owen is studying composition and saxophone at UM and is the son of Dr. Ben Kirby (tuba & music theory) and Jennifer Kirby (Florence Carlton School Bands). The Symphonic Wind Ensemble dove into some classic literature featuring Dr. Katie Martin (soprano) on Copland's Old American Songs.



This fall, the UM Bands will welcome graduate teaching assistants, Jacob Krieger and Tony Nguyen into the program. Both are taking a one-year leave of absence from their high school positions to dive into collegiate level work with the UM athletic bands, concert bands and jazz program. Jacob teaches at Mercer Island High School and Tony teaches at Capital High School in Olympia.

Thank you for your support of our music community!

Dr. James Smart

The Grizzly Marching Band

Hello UM Band Alumni!

Wow! What a year we had in 2023! It was great to see the team do so well and to be there as part of the show. I think the students would all say that the highlight of their season was the trip to Frisco, TX for the FCS National Football Championship. We had a fantastic trip and got to do some things that many students had never done before. The band really appreciates all the support we received as money was raised to get us to Texas. We know that many of you, as alumni band members, stepped up to help us raise the needed money.



This spring involved a special event for the Grizzly Marching Band. A year and a half ago, I submitted a proposal to the College Band Directors National Association to be the host site for the annual CBDNA Athletic Bands Symposium. The National Association of Alumni Bands also holds its annual conference in conjunction with the CBDNA Symposium at the same host site. The Grizzly Marching Band and UM was fortunate to be chosen as the 2024 site, the first time an FCS school has ever been chosen. This is the 23rd year the conference has been held and it has visited schools such as Ohio State, University of Washington, University of Louisville, Michigan State, and Arizona State to name a few.



The conference was an amazing experience with around 200 attendees from colleges and universities from all over the country. We had informational sessions, social events to network and catch up with colleagues, and an excursion through the Mission Valley to KwaTaqNuk Resort. Everyone who has talked to me about their experience was amazed at our scenery, strong arts community, and the overall strength of the University of Montana. Our alumni band organization also made a great showing with their work as liaisons for the NAOAB conference. Thank you, John Combs, for all your work! We were able to put UM on the map as a university and program that can stand proudly next to any other program in the country!

I am looking forward to this fall, with 7 home regular season games, another high school Band Day event, and of course seeing all of you again at Homecoming. I am looking forward to an exciting season and hope you will be able to work out your schedules to come to Homecoming and perform with the band.

See you this fall! GO GRIZ!!

Dr. Kevin Griggs

The UM Jazz Bands

What another fantastic year for all of us in the School of Music and our Jazz Program. We hosted the Buddy DeFranco Jazz Festival, the 12th Jazz Arrangers Concert and our Annual Holiday Swing at the Wilma as well as many fantastic guest artists. We are so thankful for our community helping us raise over \$50,000 for the program and our incredible trip to Europe with the Jazz Ensemble in July!

EUROPE HERE WE COME!

The University of Montana Jazz Ensemble will be traveling to Europe this summer to tour and perform in a once in a lifetime opportunity touring three countries and performing at two prestigious international jazz festivals in France & Italy. The trip will also include an additional five members of the Jazz Program joining us in taking advantage of this amazing trip.

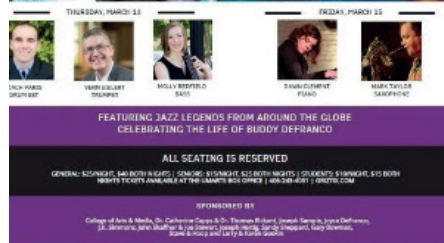
Our goal is to have our student musicians benefit from this opportunity of international travel, performing in some of the most sought-after international venues in the world and taking this experience back to the university and our students.

Highlights:

- *Umbria International Jazz Festival performance*
- *Tour of Tuscany & Florence*
- *Vienne International Jazz Festival performance*
- *Tour of Rome*
- *Turino Buddhist Peace Temple performance*
- *Attend Montreux Jazz Festival*

Some of these folks have never left the Northwest. This life changing experience will challenge them as musicians and expand their minds as global citizens and will shape their growth and musicianship.

2025 UM/BUDDY DeFRANCO JAZZ FESTIVAL - "THANKS LANCE!"



The UM Jazz Bands

JAZZ EVENTS /JAZZ ARTIST SERIES

The Jazz Ensemble I and Jazz Band II performed along with guest artist and UM Alum Aric Schneller at our 12th Annual Holiday Swing & Swing Set for a wonderful day held at the Wilma - raising over \$40,000 for a fantastic trip to Europe in July! Thank you, Missoula!

We welcomed to campus saxophonist/composer artist Steve Owen (University of Oregon) in September playing with the Missoula Jazz Orchestra and were so happy to have composer/saxophonist/educator Dan Gailey (University of Kansas) with us for the 12th Annual Jazz Arrangers Residency working with our student arrangers. All three of the UM Big Bands along with Big Sky HS Jazz Band (Willi Prince - Director) performed numerous student arrangements with some spectacular music by Dan Gailey.

Keep your eyes and ears open for upcoming great shows in September with the Missoula Jazz Orchestra, the Missoula high school jazz bands and the PHENOMENAL Summer Camargo (trumpet) along with shows in January and the Montana All-State Jazz Weekend in March (new date) with guest conductors Ben Markley & Paul Krueger.

The 2025 Jazz Festival will bring a few new faces to the festival including the US Jazz Ambassadors's Jen Krupa (trombone), Matt Pivec (sax) from Butler University and Paul Krueger (tpt) from the University of Oregon. We also have returning favorites Ashley Summers (bass) and Ben Markley (piano) working and playing on campus for two great days of Jazz Education!



JAZZ BANDS, FACULTY AND TEACHING ASSISTANTS

The Jazz Program continued to run on all cylinders with three big bands and six small groups (combos). Rob Tapper was on sabbatical this past Fall working on a new Jazz Band Manual for Middle School & High School educators with big band arrangements, rehearsal videos, concept lesson plans and more!

We are grateful to have some amazing Jazz Faculty helping to mentor our student musicians including Owen Ross (guitar), Connor Racicot (piano), Tommy Sciple (bass) and John Wicks (drum set). We are excited to have such great jazz education happening on campus!

We have a wonderful Teaching Assistant helping out with the jazz, band program and brass offerings. Sean Stineford (trombone) is a phenomenal musician and worked with the trombone studio, coached a small group and directed a big band along with helping the Athletic Bands and Concert Band Program.

Joining us next year will be recent CWU graduate and Mercer Island High School (WA) educator Jacob Kreiger (saxophonist/clarinetist). Jacob is a phenomenal musician and will be working with Dr. Smart and coaching a small group and co-directing a big band. We are excited to have Jacob aboard!

I want to thank all of the Band Alumni, School of Music supporters and current UM student musicians (some are now Alums!). Have a wonderful summer and see you in the Fall!

Looking forward,

Rob

UM BAND ECHOES
John Combs ~ 2024 UM Alumni Band President
PO Box 1473
Missoula, MT 59806
Cell – (406) 396-0260

Thank you....

A special thank you to the following people and merchants for supporting the UM Alumni Band!

2024 UM Alumni Band Committee Members >>>

President – John Combs

Past President – Kristen Guidoni

Secretary – Suzie Flint

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Music Coordinator - Randy Zschaechner

Events Coordinator – Kathy McCaughey

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Committee Chairperson – Travis Suzuki

Committee Chairperson – Matt Rossmiller

UM Bands – Dr. James Smart

UM Jazz Bands – Rob Tapper

The logo for the UM Alumni Band, featuring the word "ALUMNI" in a bold, black, stylized font.

Photos: James Smart, Robb Tapper, Alumni Band Board Members, & Adobe Stock

Newsletter Editor: Suzie Flint