



Iowa Regional Championship, presented by Yamaha
ADJUDICATION PANEL BIOGRAPHIES
September 30, 2023 - Waukee, IA



MUSIC PANEL

Ryan Brittain (Houston, Texas) began his teaching career as the Associate Director of Bands at Cedar Ridge High School in Round Rock, Texas. During his time at Cedar Ridge, he served as the marching band director and conductor of the symphonic band. Within a short timeframe, the Cedar Ridge Marching Band was a consistent Bands of America (BOA) Regional Finalist and Caption Winner, a University Interscholastic League (UIL) 6A State Marching Band Participant, as well as a BOA Grand National Championships Finalist in 2013. In the same year, the Cedar Ridge High School Low Brass Choir was invited to perform at the prestigious Midwest International Band and Orchestra Clinic in Chicago. Concert bands under his direction have been awarded consistent UIL Sweepstakes awards and best in class awards at state concert band festivals. After five years of teaching at Cedar Ridge, Brittain accepted a position as the Director of Bands at Wells Middle School in Houston, Texas. He helped the program achieve sweepstakes at UIL and grew the program's numbers substantially. His final year of teaching was as the Director of Bands at Westfield High School in Houston, where he aided in the continued success of the marching band and concert bands. Brittain's primary focus now is building his insurance company, helping student groups travel around the world, and being a resource to directors across the country.

Ryan Demkovich (Houston, Texas) is currently the Director of Bands at Pearland High School in Pearland, Texas. Under his direction, the Pearland High School Band has been a Bands of America (BOA) Regional Championship, Super Regional Championship, and University Interscholastic League (UIL) State Marching Band Contest finalist. Prior to his position at Pearland, he was the Director of Bands at Stephen F. Austin (SFA) High School in Fort Bend ISD. In his time at SFA, the band was a consistent BOA Regional and Super Regional finalist. The band also consistently qualified for the UIL State Marching Band Contest. He was privileged to direct the SFA Symphony Orchestra in 2018 and conduct the SFA Percussion Ensemble in 2021 at The Midwest Clinic. Demkovich is originally from Jenison, Michigan. He has a bachelor's degree in music education from Western Michigan University and a master's degree in conducting from the University of Houston. Demkovich marched in the Glassmen Drum and Bugle Corps in 2003 and was a two-time World Champion with The Cavaliers Drum and Bugle Corps from 2004-2006. His drum corps experience continued as a member of The Cavaliers Brass Staff from 2007-2009, and the following 13 years as a visual instructor at the Santa Clara Vanguard. Demkovich is also on the faculty of SASI - The Leadership People, is on faculty for The Breakdown Camp, and is an active adjudicator for BOA and UIL. Demkovich currently resides in Houston, Texas with his fiancée Cyndi and his dog Biscuit. He spends his free time as a season ticket holder for the Houston Rockets, working out, and enjoying Houston's amazing culinary scene.

Jodie Rhodes (Canyon Lake, Texas) has been involved in music education for the past 30 years. Rhodes received the coveted University Interscholastic League (UIL) Sweepstakes Award every year of her career. She taught at both middle school and high school levels during her teaching career. Rhodes serves as a clinician, consultant, and program designer/coordinator for several marching bands, drum corps, and concert bands around the country. Her groups have been frequent finalists and champions at local and state championships as well as Bands of America (BOA) Regionals, Super Regionals, and Grand National Championships. Rhodes is also a frequent adjudicator for Bands of America, Drum Corps International, Winter Guard International, and several state and local marching and percussion contests.

Kyle Weirich (Elkhart, Indiana) is in his 31st year of teaching instrumental music in the public school system. He is currently the K-12 Music Coordinator for Elkhart Community Schools and Director of Orchestras at Elkhart High School in Elkhart, Indiana. Since his arrival in 2006, the Elkhart High School Symphony Orchestra has been a regular Indiana State School Music Association (ISSMA) state finalist. The Symphony Orchestra has also performed at the Indiana Music Education Association (IMEA) Professional Development Conference and twice as a clinic ensemble at The Midwest Clinic. He received Teacher of the Year at Elkhart Central in 2015 and was named the 2019 High School Orchestra Teacher of the Year by the Indiana chapter of the American String Teachers Association. Previously, Weirich earned music

education degrees from Western Michigan University and VanderCook College of Music. He also performed with the Star of Indiana Drum and Bugle Corps for three seasons. He then served as Director of Bands at Central Noble High School, Knox High School, and East Noble High School, where his groups were consistent ISSMA state finalists. Weirich continues his involvement with the marching arts as a music judge for Bands of America, Drum Corps International, Western Band Association, and various other marching band organizations. He has judged state qualifying and finals events throughout the country. Weirich has also been chosen as a presenter at IMEA Professional Development events.

VISUAL PANEL

Robert W. Elliott (*Union, Kentucky*) began his teaching career in 1985. Beginning in 1991 as Band Director at Grant County High School, Elliott developed an award-winning marching band program that included three appearances in the Kentucky Music Educators Association (KMEA) State Championship Finals, highlighted by a KMEA Class A State Championship in 1995. Elliott then moved to Lexington, Kentucky to assume the Director of Bands position at Tates Creek High School. During this time, the Tates Creek Marching Band was a KMEA State Marching Band Finalist in 2000, 2001, and 2002. The marching band was also named a Bands of America Regional Finalist at Louisville in 2000 and 2002, and at St. Louis in 2001. Elliott was named Director of Bands at Larry A. Ryle High School in 2012. During his tenure, the Ryle Marching Band was named a KMEA Class 5A Semifinalist from 2012-2016, highlighted by a 5th place finish in 2015. The marching band was named a Bands of America Regional Finalist at Dayton in 2013 and 2014. The Ryle Marching Band was also a Bands of America Grand National Championships Semi-Finalist at the 40th Bands of America Grand National Championships in 2015. Elliott is also a member of Phi Beta Mu International Bandmasters Fraternity and has been awarded the KMEA District 6 Teacher of the Year Award.

Matt Hartwell (*Claremont, California*) is a full-time visual designer, educator, and adjudicator. Hartwell has marched with The Cavaliers Drum and Bugle Corps (2005, 2006, 2007, and 2008) and Aimachi Marching Band (2007). He taught at the Santa Clara Vanguard from 2010-2021, serving as the Visual Caption Head from 2017-2021. In 2022, Hartwell taught both The Blue Devils and The Bluecoats. He currently serves as the Visual Caption Head at The Phantom Regiment Drum and Bugle Corps. Hartwell taught George Mason University Indoor Percussion from 2010-2013 and has held the title of Visual Caption Head and Staff Coordinator for Pulse Percussion since 2017.

Bruce Jones (*North Huntingdon, Pennsylvania*) is from North Huntingdon, Pennsylvania. A graduate of the University of Pittsburgh with a degree in education, Jones has been involved in the pageantry arts for 40 years. His experience includes being a performer, designer, instructor, and consultant for many national programs in drum and bugle corps, marching band, and winter color guard. Many of the programs he's worked with have been finalists in Drum Corps International, Drum Corps Associates, Bands of America, and Winter Guard International events, as well as state champions and state finalists. Jones has also been involved as a clinician at many national marching band and color guard workshops throughout the United States. Jones' judging background spans 30 years in which he has been involved in judging local, regional, and international events. He has adjudicated in such prestigious events as Drum Corps International Championships, Drum Corps Japan Championships, Drum Corps Europe, Drum Corps Indonesia Championships, and Bands of America, along with numerous state and regional marching band, color guard, and percussion competitions across the United States.

CHIEF JUDGE

John Howell (*Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania*) resides in North Huntingdon Pennsylvania just outside of Pittsburgh. He is currently employed as a Business Education Teacher in the Hempfield Area School District where he serves as the Department Chairperson and teaches Sports and Entertainment Marketing, Web Page Design, Video Game Programming, and Personal Finance. Howell holds a Bachelor of Administration in Business Management and an Accounting minor from the University of Pittsburgh and a Bachelor of Science in Education from Indiana University of Pennsylvania. He is a visual designer and has taught and written shows for various nationally acclaimed marching bands,

drum and bugle corps, and indoor winter color guards. Howell continues to conduct clinics and consultations for bands, winter color guards, and judging associations across the United States. He has been a visual adjudicator for over 28 years and judges for Bands of America, Drum Corps International, Winter Guard International, and various other judging associations. Howell has had the opportunity to judge internationally on numerous occasions. He also conducts both the Trinity Handbell and Hand Chime choirs at his church in which he has performed for over 38 years.