



Utah Regional Championship, presented by Yamaha
ADJUDICATION PANEL BIOGRAPHIES
November 4, 2023 - George, UT



MUSIC PANEL

Bob Chreste (*Spring, Texas*) is a retired high school band director from Texas where he is also an active arranger, consultant, and adjudicator. Chreste spent 16 years teaching at several prominent programs in Texas. During his career, his bands won the Texas UIL state championship, multiple Bands of America (BOA) class championships, and many other marching contests across Texas. Chreste is currently the Assistant Brass Caption Head for the Bluecoats Drum & Bugle Corps and has also worked with Carolina Crown, Santa Clara Vanguard, and The Cadets. He is one of only a few instructors in Drum Corps International (DCI) that has been both a brass caption head and a visual caption head at a DCI finalist corps. Chreste has been a clinician at The Midwest Band and Orchestra Clinic, the Music for All Summer Symposium, Texas Bandmasters Association, and many other conferences. He currently adjudicates for BOA, Winter Guard International, Texas UIL, and several other local, regional, and state-level circuits.

Andrew Cook (*Carmel, Indiana*) is the Associate Director of Bands at Carmel High School in Carmel, Indiana. His duties include co-conducting the Marching Band; Wind Symphony II, III, IV; Freshmen Concert Bands; Jazz Ensemble III; Color Guard; and Basketball Pep Band. The Carmel Marching Greyhounds have been Bands of America Grand National Finalists since 1997 and Grand National Champions in 2005, 2012, 2016, 2017, and 2018 as well as Indiana State Champions in 1990, 2001, 2002, 2012, and 2018. Carmel Wind Symphony I was named ISSMA State Champions in 2013, 2015, 2017, 2018, and 2021. The ensemble also performed in December 2005 at the Midwest Band and Orchestra Clinic in Chicago, Illinois. All six of the concert bands consistently receive division I ratings at ISSMA Concert Band Festival. In addition to teaching at Carmel High School, Cook taught eight years in Frederick County Maryland at Brunswick and Catoctin High Schools respectively and was department chair as well as band and choral directors at both schools. Cook has been an active music judge for Bands of America and Drum Corps International. He has also worked as a freelance adjudicator and clinician throughout the country. In addition, he was on the Bands of America Summer Symposium staff for the Marching Band Track from 2003 to 2012 and was on staff for the 2010 MENC/U.S. Army All American Marching Band. Cook is a 1986 graduate of Ball State University in Muncie, Indiana, and he was a member and an officer of the Delta Lambda Chapter of Phi Mu Alpha Sinfonia. He is also included in Who's Who Among America's Teachers. Cook has two wonderful daughters: Bailey, a 2010 graduate (French horn) of Carmel High School and University of Arizona, who is currently at Ft. MacDill, Tampa, Florida, and Makenna, a 2015 (oboe, color guard) graduate of Carmel High School. Makenna was a member of the Boston Crusaders and Carolina Crown Drum and Bugle Corps Guard and 2016, 2017, 2018, and 2019 WGI Champion Pride of Cincinnati Winter Guard. Cook also has two wonderful grandchildren, Brody and Rose.

Joni Perez (*The Woodlands, Texas*) spent 19 years serving The Woodlands High School Band and 13 years as Director of Bands for the highly accomplished and well-respected program. Perez conducted the Wind Ensemble and Concert Band as well as The Woodlands High School Marching Band. Under her leadership, the concert and marching ensembles received exclusively superior ratings from the University Interscholastic League from year to year. The Woodlands High School Wind Ensemble was a featured ensemble at the prestigious Midwest Clinic International Band and Orchestra Conference held in Chicago, Illinois (2012). The Woodlands High School Wind Ensemble was also recognized as a National Wind Band Honors Mark of Excellence Winner. During Perez's tenure as Director, TWHS marching ensembles earned six consecutive appearances at either the 5A or 6A Texas State UIL Marching Band Championships (2010-2020). The marching band was a regular participant, finalist, and champion at Bands of America Regional, Super Regional, and Grand National Championships. In 2013, The Woodlands High School Band was recognized as the Bands of America Grand National Champion. As a result of these various accomplishments and scholastic accolades, the Phi Beta Mu International Bandmasters Fraternity recognized Perez as the Outstanding Young Bandmaster of the Year in 2013. In 2018, more highly-acclaimed recognition followed when the John Philip Sousa Foundation recognized The Woodlands High School Band by awarding them the highly-coveted Sudler Shield. Most recently in 2019, Perez was honored with the Award of

Excellence for her many years of contributions to the band world from the National Band Association. In addition, TWHS Band program was named an NBA Blue Ribbon of Excellence Winner for the 2019-2020 school year for its successes and leadership as a total band program over many consecutive years. Perez attended the University of Houston earning a Bachelor of Arts degree in Music Education (2005). While at the University of Houston, she was afforded the opportunity to learn from musically respected giants such as Eddie Green, Tom Bennett, David Bertman, and John Benzer. Perez was a Drum Corps International (DCI) mellophone member with The Cadets of Bergen County and aged out on the year of a DCI World Championship victory. Perez was an original cast member of the Tony Award-winning and Emmy nominated production, *Blast!* As an original London cast member, she toured four years performing on both horn and mellophone. She also completed two separate US performance tours and was a featured solo performer in both the Broadway and Disney productions. Perez has served as a DCI brass-staff member for the Blue Knights (2003-2004), leading the brass program from 2005-2007. She has also served as a brass instructor and consultant to The Cavaliers and Madison Scouts. Most recently, she was named a Brass Consultant with the Bluecoats Drum and Bugle Corps. Perez is a member of the Texas Music Educators Association, Texas Bandmasters Association, and the National Band Association. She served on the Bands of America Advisory Committee, the UIL Rules Committee, and the Sudler Shield Selection Committee. She is an active clinician, consultant, and judge around the state and country. Perez resides in The Woodlands, Texas with Brian Perez, her husband of 16 years, and their two kitties Ziggy and Biskitt.

Will Pitts (Atlanta, Georgia) is a composer, conductor, and arranger. Growing up in Carrollton, Georgia, Pitts graduated summa cum laude from Emory University, where he studied saxophone, conducting, and composition. He has completed graduate study in Music at North Georgia University and the University of Michigan. Pitts most recently served as the Brass Arranger for the Phantom Regiment Drum and Bugle Corps of Rockford, Illinois. In addition to his role as arranger, he has also served on Regiment's management staff, and as the Brass Arranger and Composer for the Spirit of Atlanta Drum and Bugle Corps. Pitts is active as a music designer, adjudicator, and instructor for high school band programs throughout the country. Marching ensembles performing his arrangements have been recognized as State Marching Band Finalists and Champions, along with Bands of America Regional Finalists, Regional Champions, and Grand National Finalists. His concert compositions and arrangements have been commissioned and performed across the world. He has written works for and been commissioned by the Boston Pops, the University of North Texas, the Canadian Staff Band of the Salvation Army, and numerous other high school and collegiate wind and chamber ensembles. He has also served as a production consultant and talent for Tom Blair, Inc., Drum Corps International, and MTV. He currently serves on the Board of Directors for the Atlanta Youth Wind Symphony Foundation. As a music educator, Pitts has served on the faculties of Duncanville High School in Duncanville, Texas, and Pace Academy in Atlanta, Georgia, and currently serves on the faculty of the Westminster Schools in Atlanta, specializing in instrumental music, conducting, and media technology.

VISUAL PANEL

Austin Greene (Raleigh, North Carolina) is a professional visual designer and educator from Raleigh, North Carolina. He is in regular demand as an adjudicator for Bands of America (BOA), Winter Guard International, and numerous local circuits. Greene previously instructed The Cadets Drum and Bugle Corps from 2012-2015 and served as Visual Caption Head from 2014-2015. He also served as Education Director for the Blue Knights Drum and Bugle Corps and as a Drum Corps International adjudicator. He is currently the Assistant Visual Caption Head for The Cavaliers Drum and Bugle Corps. Previously, Greene was Director of Bands at Concord High School in Concord, North Carolina, and Director of Bands and Performing Arts Department Chair at Durham School of the Arts. In 2010, he was hired as an adjunct instructor at the Dublin Institute of Technology's National Conservatory of Music in Dublin, Ireland. He has served for 10 years as a program consultant and clinician for the BOA Grand National Championships Finalist Kennesaw Mountain High School Marching Band. Greene attended Western Carolina University, where he earned his Bachelor of Science degree in Music Education in 2003. He went on to earn his Master of Music in Conducting from the University of Connecticut in 2006. He is in regular demand as a designer, clinician, and adjudicator throughout the United States and abroad.

Jackie Gilley (Midwest City, Oklahoma) is a native of Stratford, Texas, and was the band director at Monroney Middle School in Midwest City, Oklahoma, for 29 years. She also taught color guard for Midwest City High School for 18 years.

Her first job was in Miami, Texas, teaching art and music. Gilley received her Bachelor of Arts degree in Ceramics and her Masters of Music Education degree from Southwestern Oklahoma State University. She also has accreditation in Secondary Education Administration from the University of Central Oklahoma. Gilley also earned accreditation in 2002 as a “National Board Certified Teacher” in Instrumental Music. She is past president of the Beta Chapter of Phi Beta Mu Bandmaster Fraternity. Gilley is also in the Hall of Fame for OkMEA and Oklahoma Bandmasters Association. She currently serves as president for the Stratford Education Foundation in her hometown. Gilley is well-known as a clinician and adjudicator throughout the United States. She has been an adjudicator for Winter Guard International, Drum Corps International, Bands of America, Texas Color Guard Circuit, and Oklahoma Music Adjudicators Association. She has also judged numerous state concert band and marching band championships and served as a mentor for the Judges Academy of Marching Roundtable.

Todd James (*Oklahoma City, Oklahoma*) is the former Program Coordinator, Visual Designer, and Colorguard Director at Winston Churchill High School in San Antonio, Texas. In the world of field pageantry, he was responsible for choreographing and staging 20+ San Antonio Schools in the annual Battle of the Bands/Battle of Flowers Band Festival. James staged and produced the Alamodome Grand Opening Celebration, and he was responsible for bringing together over 4,000 vocal students and color guards for the Northeast Fall Festival. He has also served as a guest speaker for Texas Bandmasters Association. Additionally, James served as the Director of Musical Theater at South Texas’ premiere fine arts high school: Northeast School of the Arts (NESA) in San Antonio, Texas. His musical theater productions were selected for both Texas and National Thespian Convention performances as well as the Fringe Festival. 2023 finds him visually designing, consulting, and serving as a guest clinician for various programs throughout the country, specializing in achievable design and effect for smaller programs. His performance background includes various summer stock, regional, and national productions. James was also a cast member of two international tours. He has appeared on numerous cruise ships and serves as the emcee of America’s Youth on Parade. Reality television fans may know him from *Toddlers & Tiaras*. James holds a B.M. and B.E. from Texas State University. When not inspiring those in the arts, he is the owner of Thompson’s Creations in Oklahoma City, a specialty fabric showroom providing winning looks and designs for a multitude of groups and individuals throughout performance genres.

CHIEF JUDGE

Ken Turner (*Apalachin, New York*) has extensive experience in music education. He has served as band director, music supervisor, clinician, music arranger, program coordinator, adjudicator and guest conductor. His bands have won numerous local, state and national honors. Turner was Music/Brass Chairman for the New York State Field Band Conference, Drum Corps Associates, the New York Federation of Contest Judges and Drum Corps International, and served as Judge Administrator for the New York State Field Band Conference as well as Drum Corps International. He has judged virtually every major state and national marching music event. He has been inducted into the DCI and New York State Field Band Conference Halls of Fame. Turner was Director of Music for the Johnson City Central School District in Johnson City, NY, which was honored on 6 occasions as a Grammy Signature School, and recognized as one of the 100 Best Communities in America for Music Education. He served as a member of the national advisory board for the Partners in Education Program at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, DC, and is currently a member of NAMM’s congressional advocacy group. Turner holds a US Patent for the angled shell drum, and is currently the President of ErgoSonic Percussion LLC.