

FRIDAY FANFARE - SEPTMEBER 12, 2025

NEWSLETTER

**MIDDLE
TENNESSEE**
STATE UNIVERSITY.

SCHOOL OF MUSIC

DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE



Dr. Jenny Snodgrass - jennifer.sndograss@mtsu.edu

There is something special about week three in any School of Music –it's when we hit our stride. Lessons are in full swing; repertoire is chosen in lessons, ensembles are preparing for first performances and sounds of the Band of Blue are echoing throughout the campus every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday afternoon. At some point every day, I walk the halls of our building just to hear the sounds and enjoy the moment on why we all come to work every day. These students are doing amazing work both inside and out of the practice room and the faculty that teach them are invested in not only teaching music but preparing students for life. I am so fortunate to have this vantage point.

This week brought something new: our "Faculty Unplugged" sessions during Tuesday and Thursday's recital hours. Picture this – five chairs on the recital hall stage, incredible faculty members, and students brave enough to ask anything and everything, from graduate school advice to life's challenging moments, even favorite ice cream flavors and pet names. The vulnerability and authenticity shared by Will Perkins, Andrea Dawson, Jamila McWhirter, Bryan Braue, Don Aliquo, Chris Combest, Keith Sorrels, Cedric Dent, Angela Tipps, and Brian Mueller created truly powerful moments of connection.

The week ahead is full of exciting events. Tonight, don't miss faculty member Adam Clark's recital. On Saturday, we're rolling out the red carpet for future Blue Raiders at our Preview Day. Then on the 18th, area high school students will step inside our classrooms for Careers in Music Day and we cap off the evening with electrifying jazz ensemble concerts. Come visit and enjoy the music.



FEATURED FACULTY: DON ALIQUO

Professor of Saxophone and Jazz Studies Don Aliquo is a cornerstone of MTSU's jazz community. A Vandoren and Conn-Selmer artist, he has performed and recorded with leading musicians including Gary Burton, Rufus Reid, and Greg Osby, while releasing acclaimed solo projects that balance lyricism with bold improvisation. At MTSU, Aliquo leads the Saxophone Studio and Jazz Studies program, mentoring students in both classical and jazz traditions. His teaching emphasizes strong fundamentals, creative exploration, and the pursuit of a personal voice. Raised in Pittsburgh and shaped by the sounds of jazz greats, Aliquo brings decades of experience and a global perspective into the classroom.



CAREERS IN MUSIC DAY - TUESDAY SEPTEMBER 16TH

Thinking about college and a future in music? Join us at Middle Tennessee State University for CLA Open Classroom & Careers in Music Day on Tuesday, September 16, 2025!

What you'll get to do:

- Experience real MTSU classes
- Tour our campus
- Meet current students
- Discover what life is like as a CLA student

This is a chance to explore your passions, ask questions, and imagine your next steps in both education and career. **REGISTER TODAY HERE**

Learn more about majors in the College of Liberal Arts:
www.mtsu.edu/liberalarts

Careers In Music Day on Tuesday, September 16, 2025

Attend classes and experience student life at MTSU. Register online or with the QR code:
<https://forms.office.com/r/wxsftOukAD>



Question?
Email Jennifer.Rice@mtsu.edu

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I AM trueBLUE



FEATURED ENSEMBLE OF THE WEEK: MTSU TEBA (TENOR-BASS) CHORALE

Next semester, the MTSU TEBA (Tenor-Bass) Chorale is joining with TigerChor from the University of Memphis and BucsWorth from East Tennessee State University to be a demonstration choir for an interest session at the Southern Division conference of the American Choral Directors Association in Memphis. The interest session is entitled "The Tenor-Bass Choir: a Tennessee Directors' Panel." Conductors Angela Tipps (MTSU), Dr. Emily Frizzell (Memphis), and Dr. Lauren Ramey (ETSU) will explore the challenges of being female conductors of tenor-bass choirs (vocal modeling and understanding the male voice), programming ideas (beyond pirate songs and sea chanteys), and gendered expectations/perceptions. The three choirs will perform a combined concert on the first night of the conference and sing for west Tennessee high schools on the way.



FACULTY NEWS

Dr. Jamila McWhirter was recently interviewed by Dr. Amity Bryson as the initial Maestra in the Maestra Series for the podcast "Divas, Ingenues & Vixens". Dr. Bryson is former professor of music at Avila University. Her podcast explores historical context, gender dynamics, and cultural analysis of iconic voices and performances. The interview with Dr. McWhirter includes insight into her Carnegie Hall conducting experience from the summer of 2024 when she conducted Eric Whitacre's "The Sacred Veil" with over 100 voices, many of them MTSU SOM alumni, with piano and cello. The focused interview also includes discussion of her invitation to conduct Vivaldi's "Gloria in D Major, RV 589" in Honolulu, Hawaii in May 2026 at the Kawaiaha'o Church.



Dr. McWhirter is Professor of Choral Music Education and Director of Graduate Studies for the MTSU School of Music.

Podcast link:

<https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/divas-ing%C3%A9nues-vixens-podcast/id1811657441>

STUDENT HIGHLIGHTS

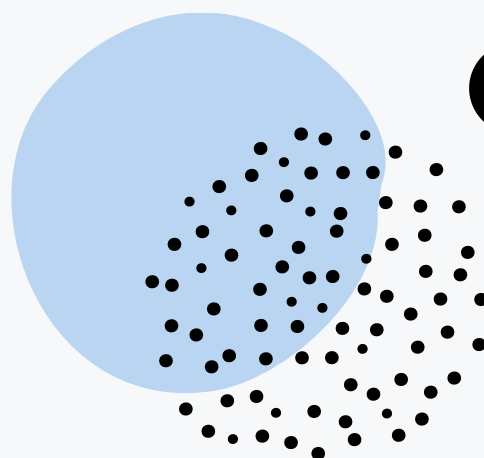
Big congratulations to Ethan Assad (jazz bass) on an amazing summer of music and growth! Ethan was selected for two prestigious jazz internships:

Bernard Jazz Institute (NC)

Jazz Aspen Snowmass Academy (CO) – where he received a full scholarship to attend.

At Aspen, Ethan had the chance to study and perform with some of the finest jazz professionals and educators in the country, including Rodney Whitaker, Charles Bergeron, and Etienne Charles. What an incredible opportunity to learn, grow, and share music with the best.

We're so proud of Ethan and can't wait to see where his music takes him next!



Junior Performance Major Grace Whitten has been selected through a competitive audition process to perform with Fanny Ray and the Sinners' Symphonic/Alternative Orchestra from September through April 2026.

This nine-piece ensemble brings together flute, clarinet, violin, viola, cello, guitar, bass, drums, and vocals. Their sound blends the artistry of commercial songwriting with the depth of classical composition, creating music that feels both fresh and invigorating.

Learn more about the group here:
sinnerssymphonic.com



UPCOMING EVENTS

Friday, September 12 - David Zerkel Guest Tuba Recital, 8:00 pm (Hinton Hall)

Tuesday, September 16 - Careers in Music Day/CLA Classroom Day - [Register HERE](#)

Thursday, September 18 – Jazz Ensembles 1 & 2 Concert, 8:00 pm (Hinton Hall)

Saturday, September 20 – Matt Lund Faculty Modern Jazz Recital, 6:00 pm (Hinton Hall)

Sunday, September 21 – Double Reed Day, 8:00 am (WMB 173, SFA 117, SFA 101, Hinton Hall)

PARKING IMPACTS

September 15–16

7:30 am – 5:00 pm

- SCCM FRCA Board Meeting – Ezell Lot (North), 15 spaces

September 17

7:00 am – 3:00 pm

- Constitution Day – Smith Lot and 2 spots in front of Tucker Theatre, All spaces

September 19

10:00 am – 6:00 pm

- Golden Raiders and Alumni Awards – ING Lot, Back Lot

7:00 am – 1:30 pm

- COE-URP Scholars Meeting – Founders Lot, 10 spaces

9:00 am – 3:30 pm

- Honors College Board of Visitors Meeting – Ezell Lot (North), 10 spaces

7:00 am – 4:00 pm

- Football Game Tailgating – RV Lot, All spaces

8:00 am – 3:00 pm

- ASID TN Conference – Ezell Lot (North), All spaces



