

# FRIDAY FANFARE - SEPTEMBER 5, 2025

# NEWSLETTER

**MIDDLE  
TENNESSEE**  
STATE UNIVERSITY.  
SCHOOL OF MUSIC

## DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

Dr. Christopher Dye, Assistant Director - christopher.dye@mtsu.edu



I see tremendous positive energy and passion in the School of Music community as we hit our stride finishing up the second week of the semester. This is one of my favorite times, as ensembles begin to dig into their first cycle of repertoire, student teachers establish relationships with their students, and I hear Dr. Perkins expanding students' vocal techniques through my office wall.

In this, my 11<sup>th</sup> year at MTSU, I am honored to be returning as coordinator of the music education area. I am appreciative of the long legacy of music education at this institution, continually connecting past, current, and future Blue Raiders through the collaborative process of music-making.

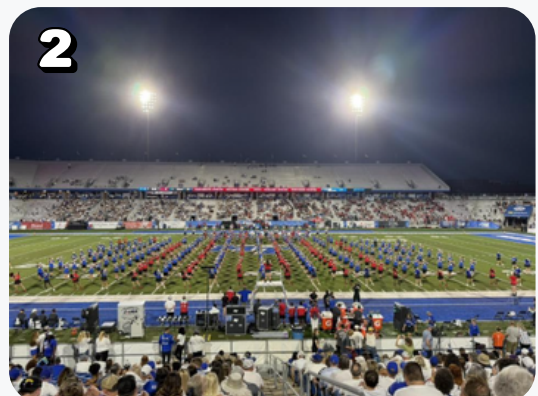
I am also thrilled to be serving this year as one of the Assistant Directors of the School of Music. My role includes supporting our initiatives in admissions, scholarships, and assessment. I will be working closely with Dr. Snodgrass as we recruit and support top musicians into our program with an increasing number of scholarships from our generous supporters. I also coordinate our efforts with both the university and School of Music's accrediting bodies.

I look forward to engaging with our alumni and guests at the numerous concerts and events already planned for what will be an exciting year!

## FEATURED ENSEMBLE OF THE WEEK: THE MTSU BAND OF BLUE

The MTSU Band of Blue, under the leadership of **Dr. Bryan Braue**, Associate Director of Bands and Director of Athletic Bands, and **Dr. Denny Hawkins**, Assistant Director of Bands is the heartbeat of Blue Raider game days. With original halftime shows at every home game and appearances at selected away games, the Band of Blue brings energy and tradition to the field.

Membership in the Band of Blue is open to all university students who demonstrate solid marching skills and fundamental instrumental proficiency. Students in guard, majorettes, and dance team join by audition, contributing to the color and motion that make each performance unique. This season has already been filled with memorable moments. Recent highlights include the band's spirited presence at Raider Walk (photo 1) and an exciting combined halftime performance with the Austin Peay State University "Governors Own" Marching Band (photo 2). Each of these moments reflects the Band of Blue's spirit of community, excellence, and pride in representing MTSU.



## BAND OF BLUE FEATURED IN "SIDELINES"



Photo credit: Sam McIntyre

This weeks featured ensemble, The MTSU Band of Blue is marching into the new school year with fresh energy and spirit. New uniforms, expanded performances, and reimagined game-day traditions are set to elevate the excitement both on and off the field. Read more in the Sidelines article by Brianna Sorrell and Jaeda Jackson (August 29, 2025).

<https://mtsusidelines.com/2025/08/29/mtsu-band-of-blue-is-in-its-new-era/>

## STAFF FEATURE: MARK BRITT, PIANO TECHNICIAN

After completing a Bachelor of Music degree in Vocal Performance and a Master of Music degree in Piano Pedagogy at Butler University, Mark went to the University of Western Ontario [UWO], in London, Ontario, Canada and completed a Certificate Program in Piano Technology. His first job in the States was at Steinway Hall in New York City, 2001-2008. His folks in Murfreesboro, TN called him up one day to say, "MTSU, as a new All-Steinway School, is coming to New York to select pianos!" It may have taken another 15 years, but the Steinways from his days in New York called to him, and Mark has been working with Faculty, Staff, Students, and Steinways at the MTSU School of Music since 2017. Whether on stage, in a lesson, or practicing, the Staff is here to enable your musical aspirations, needs, or simply retrieve a lost phone out of the piano's mysterious inner workings!



Dr. Cedric Dent with Mark Britt (right)

## STUDENT HIGHLIGHTS



Congratulations to **Katie Beatty**, senior Music Industry major at MTSU, who recently completed a month-long residency at the Sewanee Summer Music Festival in Sewanee, Tennessee. During her time at the festival, Katie served as Orchestra Manager, a role that required her to collaborate closely with several professional conductors and musicians. She gained valuable, hands-on insight into the daily operations of a major summer program, from rehearsal planning and stage logistics to artist coordination and communication. This immersive experience not only strengthened her organizational and leadership skills but also provided a real-world perspective on the complexities of managing large ensembles—abilities that will serve her well as she pursues her career in the music industry.



This summer, **Ryan Hungerpillar** was contracted by Cumberland County Playhouse to perform in musicals all season (and will continue on weekends during the school year).

He has been making music alongside fellow MTSU connections:

- Jacob Miller, MTSU Recording Industry alum and current band director at the Playhouse
- Ben Rattanavong, MTSU alum
- Zicky Hart, MTSU alum and newly appointed adjunct professor

Left to right: Ryan Hungerpillar, Ben Rattanavong, Jordan Morack, Jacob Miller, and Zicky Hart.

## ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT



Congratulations to MTSU School of Music alumni **Reggie Coleman**, and **Garrett Doo**! Both have been named 2025 CMA Foundation Music Teachers of Excellence.

- Reggie Coleman serves as Band Director at Rocky Fork Middle School
- Garrett Doo serves as Choir Director at Smyrna High School

The CMA Foundation, the philanthropic arm of the Country Music Association, honors outstanding music educators each year who are making a positive impact on students and their communities. Honorees receive a \$5000 award, split evenly between personal use and their music program, along with a year of professional development and engagement opportunities through CMA—including recognition at CMA Fest and on the red carpet at the CMA Awards Gala at Nashville's Schermerhorn Symphony Center.

Since the program began in 2016, MTSU alumni have been honored in every CMA Music Teachers of Excellence class—a proud testament to the strength and reach of our music education community.



## 11th and 12th Grade Mid-State Audition Prep Clinics



**Saturday, September 6**  
2:30 - 3:50 pm -- Violin  
3:00 - 4:20 pm -- Cello  
4:00 - 5:20 pm -- Viola



Led by MTSU String Faculty  
Dr. Andrea Dawson, violin and viola  
Dr. Bryan Hayslett, cello

Free for students who reserve a  
spot by 5:00 pm on September 4  
Cost for walk-ins: \$25



Location: 1272 Dow Street

To register:  
Send e-mail to [info@dowstreetmusic.org](mailto:info@dowstreetmusic.org)

- include student full name
- parent contact e-mail
- instrument

Hosted by MTSU Faculty  
Dr. Keith Sorrels &  
Dr. Staci Spring

## MTSU Double Reed Day 2025

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 21

Workshops, Games, Vendors, Faculty/Guest  
Concert, Double Reed Ensemble, and More!

Featuring special guests!



Paul Hanson,  
Jazz/Electric  
Bassoon Specialist

Dr. Kristin Sarvela,  
Oboe Professor @ Sam  
Houston State University

Register [HERE](#)



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## Faculty Recital Dr. Keith Sorrels, oboe Gyuhee Kim, piano

Music by  
York Bowen  
Althea Talbot-Howard  
Kevin Day  
Benjamin Britten



6pm, Monday, September 8, Hinton Music Hall



MTSU KEYBOARD ARTIST SERIES

# ADAM CLARK PLAYS RACH 3

in a new arrangement for piano and string quintet



Friday, Sept. 12, 6 p.m.  
Hinton Music Hall

Free and open to the public  
Featuring Andrea Dawson, Emily Walsh,  
Katja Yeager, Bryan Hayslett, and  
Tiffany Freeman

### PROGRAM

Bach: Piano Concerto in D Major  
Rachmaninoff: Piano Concerto No. 3  
in D Minor (arr. Sahun Hong)

STEINWAY PIANO GALLERY  
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Ascend

PROUDLY PRESENTS

MTSU *Arts*  
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ENRICH  
YOUR LIFE  
Associate your #2025  
College of Liberal Arts

FAM *true*  
BLUE

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## UPCOMING EVENTS

**Monday, September 8**

Faculty Recital Keith Sorrels/Gyuhee Kim, 6:00pm (Hinton Hall)

**September 9 and 11**

School of Music Faculty UNPLUGGED, 11:30am (Hinton Hall)

**Friday, September 12**

Keyboard Artist Series Adam Clark, 6:00pm (Hinton Hall)

**Thursday, September 25**

CONVOCATION: Wellness in the SOM, 11:30am (Hinton Hall)

## UPCOMING PARKING NOTICES

**September 5–7 | 12:00 pm – 9:00 pm**

*Panhellenic Sorority Recruitment*

Location: Greek Row (Front of houses)

**September 6 | 1:00 pm – 9:00 pm**

*Volleyball*

Location: Greenland Lot (All spaces)

**September 7 | 11:00 am – 7:00 pm**

*Volleyball*

Location: Greenland Lot (All spaces)

**September 7 | 12:00 am – 8:00 pm**

*Soccer*

Location: Greenland Lot (All spaces)

**September 9 | 9:00 am – 4:30 pm**

*Board of Trustees Meeting*

Location: MEC Lot (10 spaces)

**September 10 | 7:30 am – 4:00 pm**

*TN Deans and Directors Meeting*

Location: Smith Lot (25 spaces)

**September 11 | 12:00 am – 8:00 pm**

*Soccer*

Location: Greenland Lot (All spaces)

**September 11 | 7:30 am – 4:00 pm**

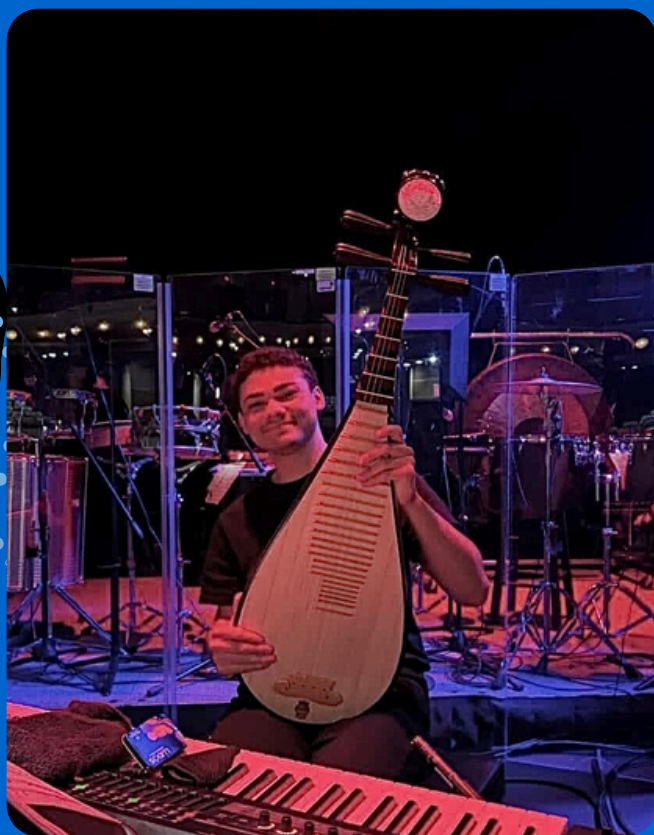
*TN Deans and Directors Meeting*

Location: Smith Lot (All spaces)

**September 11 | 11:00 am – 5:00 pm**

*Engineering Technology Fall Career Fair*

Location: Ezell Lot (North, 20 spaces)



The FRIDAY FANFARE is a weekly newsletter of the MTSU School of Music edited by Dr. Chris Combest - [chris.combest@mtsu.edu](mailto:chris.combest@mtsu.edu)

Want to see your event, faculty, student or alumni news featured? Submit it to the [Director's Advisory Box](#)

To learn more about our programs and events at the School of Music, please visit [music.mtsu.edu](http://music.mtsu.edu).