



2026 SOUTH CAROLINA MUSIC  
EDUCATORS ASSOCIATION  
CONFERENCE

USC ALUMNI CENTER  
COLUMBIA, SC  
FEBRUARY 7, 2026  
10:30 AM

**CHARLESTON COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT**

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**PROUDLY PRESENTS**

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# **Thomas C. Cario Middle School Symphonic Band**

**IN PERFORMANCE**

**2026 SOUTH CAROLINA MUSIC EDUCATORS  
ASSOCIATION CONFERENCE**

**CHRISTIAN GORDON, DIRECTOR OF BANDS**

**KALYN TODD, ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF BANDS**

**BOBBY LAMBERT, WANDO HIGH SCHOOL, CONDUCTOR**

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## GREETINGS FROM THE PRINCIPAL

I am proud to highlight the outstanding band program at Thomas C. Cario Middle School, which has been selected to perform at the South Carolina Music Educators Conference—a prestigious honor that reflects the sustained excellence, dedication, and musicianship of our students and directors, Mr. Christian Gordon and Ms. Kalyn Todd.

Under their leadership, the Cario Symphonic Band has established a tradition of excellence. The ensemble has consistently earned Superior with Distinction ratings at Concert Performance Assessment, performed at the 2025 State Concert Performance Assessment, maintained strong representation in Region and All-State Bands, and received the South Carolina Band Directors Association Outstanding Performance Award. These accomplishments speak to a program built on high expectations, disciplined practice, and a deep commitment to musical growth.

The band program is an integral part of the culture at Thomas C. Cario Middle School, providing students with opportunities to develop confidence, teamwork, and pride in their work. We are grateful to the organizers of the South Carolina Music Educators Conference for recognizing our students and for providing them the opportunity to represent our school and community on such a distinguished stage.



Sincerely,  
Bryan T. Coleman  
Principal  
Thomas C. Cario Middle School  
[cario.ccsdschools.com](http://cario.ccsdschools.com)



## GREETINGS FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

It is with great pride that I extend my congratulations to the Cario Middle School Band on the honor of being selected as a featured ensemble at the South Carolina Music Educators Association Conference.

This invitation is a testament to the talent, discipline, and dedication of these outstanding students, as well as to the exceptional leadership of their directors. Performing at SCMEA is a distinguished recognition reserved for programs that exemplify musical excellence, educational rigor, and a deep commitment to the arts.

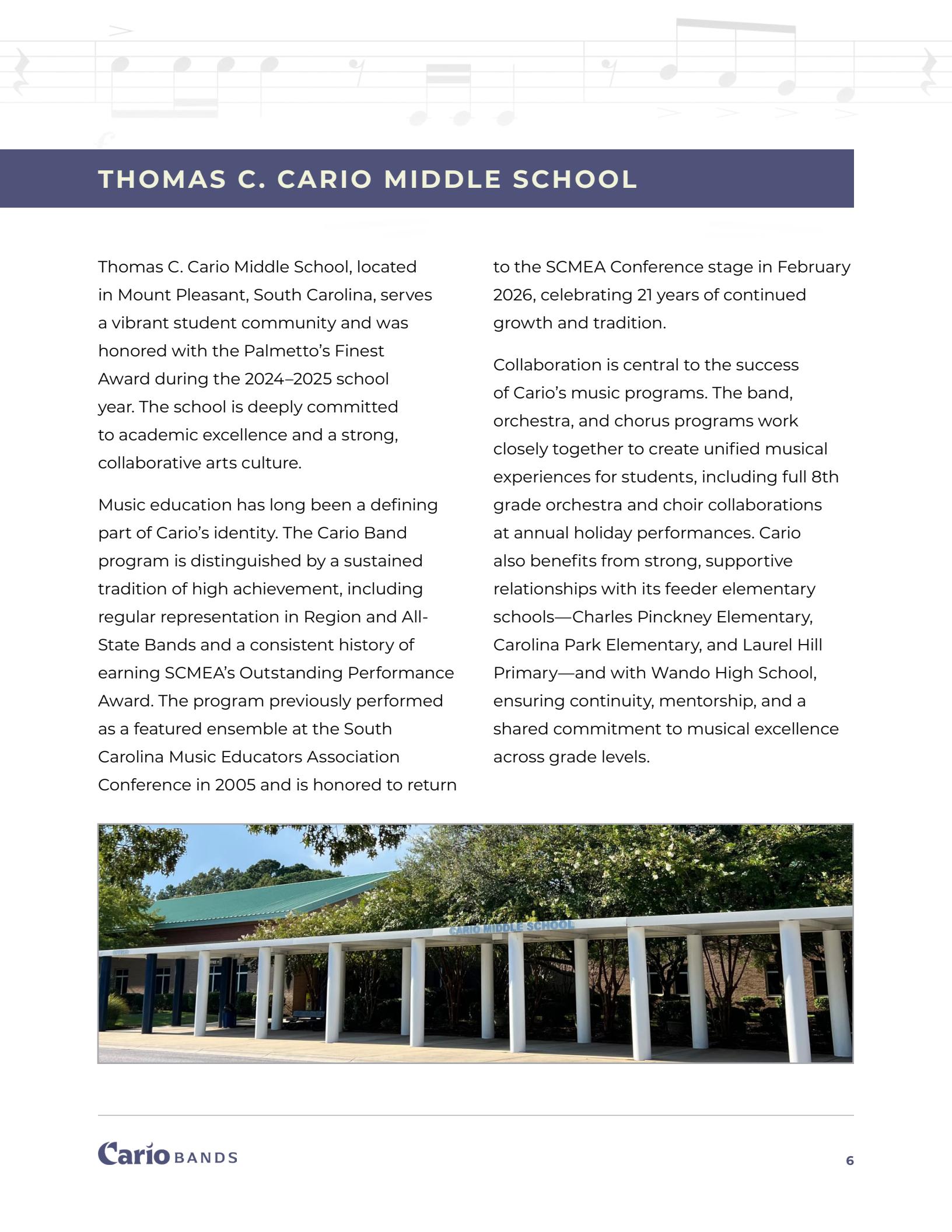
In Charleston County School District, we believe the arts are essential to a well-rounded education. Music education builds creativity, confidence, collaboration, and perseverance, skills that serve students far beyond the stage. The Cario Middle School Band reflects these values at the highest level, and we are incredibly proud of the work they do each day.

I commend the students for their hard work, the directors for their passion and leadership, and the families and school community for their unwavering support. Thank you to the South Carolina Music Educators Association for the opportunity to showcase the remarkable talent within CCSD.

Congratulations on this well-deserved honor, and best wishes for an outstanding performance.



With pride,  
Anita Huggins  
Superintendent  
Charleston County School District  
[ccsdschools.com](http://ccsdschools.com)



## THOMAS C. CARIO MIDDLE SCHOOL

Thomas C. Cario Middle School, located in Mount Pleasant, South Carolina, serves a vibrant student community and was honored with the Palmetto's Finest Award during the 2024–2025 school year. The school is deeply committed to academic excellence and a strong, collaborative arts culture.

Music education has long been a defining part of Cario's identity. The Cario Band program is distinguished by a sustained tradition of high achievement, including regular representation in Region and All-State Bands and a consistent history of earning SCMEA's Outstanding Performance Award. The program previously performed as a featured ensemble at the South Carolina Music Educators Association Conference in 2005 and is honored to return

to the SCMEA Conference stage in February 2026, celebrating 21 years of continued growth and tradition.

Collaboration is central to the success of Cario's music programs. The band, orchestra, and chorus programs work closely together to create unified musical experiences for students, including full 8th grade orchestra and choir collaborations at annual holiday performances. Cario also benefits from strong, supportive relationships with its feeder elementary schools—Charles Pinckney Elementary, Carolina Park Elementary, and Laurel Hill Primary—and with Wando High School, ensuring continuity, mentorship, and a shared commitment to musical excellence across grade levels.





## CARIO BANDS

The Cario Band Program provides a high-quality, sequential music education that uses music as a vehicle for personal and musical growth. Through daily effort, accountability, and pride in one's work, students develop as disciplined musicians and responsible members of a shared musical community.

### Beginning Band

The Cario Beginning Band includes all sixth-grade students enrolled in band and represents their first year of instrumental study. Membership is open to all interested students and is sustained through good behavior, consistent effort, and a commitment to learning. Beginning Band instruction focuses on developing sound fundamentals, musical confidence, and helping students build a strong identity as musicians.

The Beginning Band performs at semester concerts, are encouraged to participate in Solo & Ensemble, and participates annually in the Carowinds Festival of Music, providing students with an early opportunity to perform and represent the school beyond campus.

### Concert Band

The Cario Concert Band is composed of seventh-grade students who have successfully completed sixth-grade band. Students in this ensemble continue to refine their technical skills, depth of musical understanding, and ensemble responsibility while being held to higher expectations of ensemble performance and behavior.

The Concert Band performs at quarterly concerts, participates in Concert Performance Assessment, and performs at select school and recruiting events. These students are also encouraged to audition for Region and All-State Band. Students in this ensemble may also have the opportunity to travel and perform alongside the Symphonic Band on select trips.

### Symphonic Band

The Cario Symphonic Band is the premier performing ensemble of the program and is composed of eighth-grade students who have successfully completed both sixth- and seventh-grade band. Members of this ensemble demonstrate advanced performance skills, exceptional practice habits, leadership, and exemplary behavior.

The Symphonic Band performs at quarterly concerts, participates in Concert Performance Assessment, and represents Cario Middle School at school, community, recruiting, and festival events. Many of these students earn a spot in our Region and All-State bands. Each year, the Symphonic Band travels to Florida to perform at nationally recognized venues such as Disney World or Universal Studios, serving as ambassadors for the program and school.

### **Jazz Band**

The Cario Jazz Band is the most visible ensemble in both the school and local community. Membership is open to eighth-grade students with an interest in jazz who are able to commit to enrollment in both their core band class and Jazz Band.

The Jazz Band performs at quarterly concerts alongside the Beginning, Concert, and Symphonic Bands, and regularly appears at school, community, and recruiting events. Through jazz performance, students develop improvisation skills, stylistic awareness, and a deeper understanding of American music traditions.

### **Cario Lessons Academy**

Private lessons are widely recognized as the most effective way for students to make meaningful progress on their instrument. Through the Cario Lessons Academy, the band program hosts a long-established network of local professional musicians and educators who provide weekly, one-on-one instruction on campus.

This individualized instruction allows students to receive focused feedback that cannot be replicated in a large ensemble setting. Students who participate in private lessons consistently demonstrate stronger fundamentals, increased motivation, improved practice habits, and a deeper enjoyment of music. The Cario Lessons Academy represents a unique and intentional investment in student growth and is a cornerstone of the program's commitment to musical excellence.



## CARIO DIRECTOR OF BANDS



### Christian Gordon, Director of Bands

[director@cariobands.org](mailto:director@cariobands.org)

Christian Gordon began his teaching career in Leesburg, Georgia at Lee County Middle School East. He later served as Director of Bands at Westglades Middle School in Parkland, Florida, before joining the staff at Cario Middle School in Mt. Pleasant, South Carolina.

Mr. Gordon earned his degree as a Woodruff Scholar at Columbus State University's Schwob School of Music, where he studied

trumpet with Dr. Robert Murray and conducting with Dr. Jamie Nix. During his time there, he held principal trumpet positions in both the Wind Ensemble and Philharmonic Orchestra, served as lead trumpet in the Jazz Ensemble, and was a national finalist, placing among the top six at the National Trumpet Competition.

Mr. Gordon's mission is to create a music education experience that is fun, challenging, and transformative. He attributes his students' success to a structured pass-off system built around three key principles: Autonomy, Mastery, and Purpose, all viewed through the lens of a Growth Mindset. Programs under his leadership have consistently achieved remarkable growth, earning recognition at the district, regional, and state levels across Southeast.

In addition to his work in the classroom, Mr. Gordon is an active presenter, having led sessions at the Georgia Music Educators Association Conference, the Florida Music Educators Association Conference, the Florida Bandmasters Association Conference, and the National Association for Music Education Conference. He is also a sought-after clinician and advisor throughout the southeastern United States.

Christian Gordon is a proud graduate of Stratford High School in Goose Creek, South Carolina. He is married to fellow music educator Kalyn Todd. Together, they are committed to serving students and enriching their music education experience in South Carolina.



## CARIO ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF BANDS



### Kalyn Todd, Assistant Director of Bands

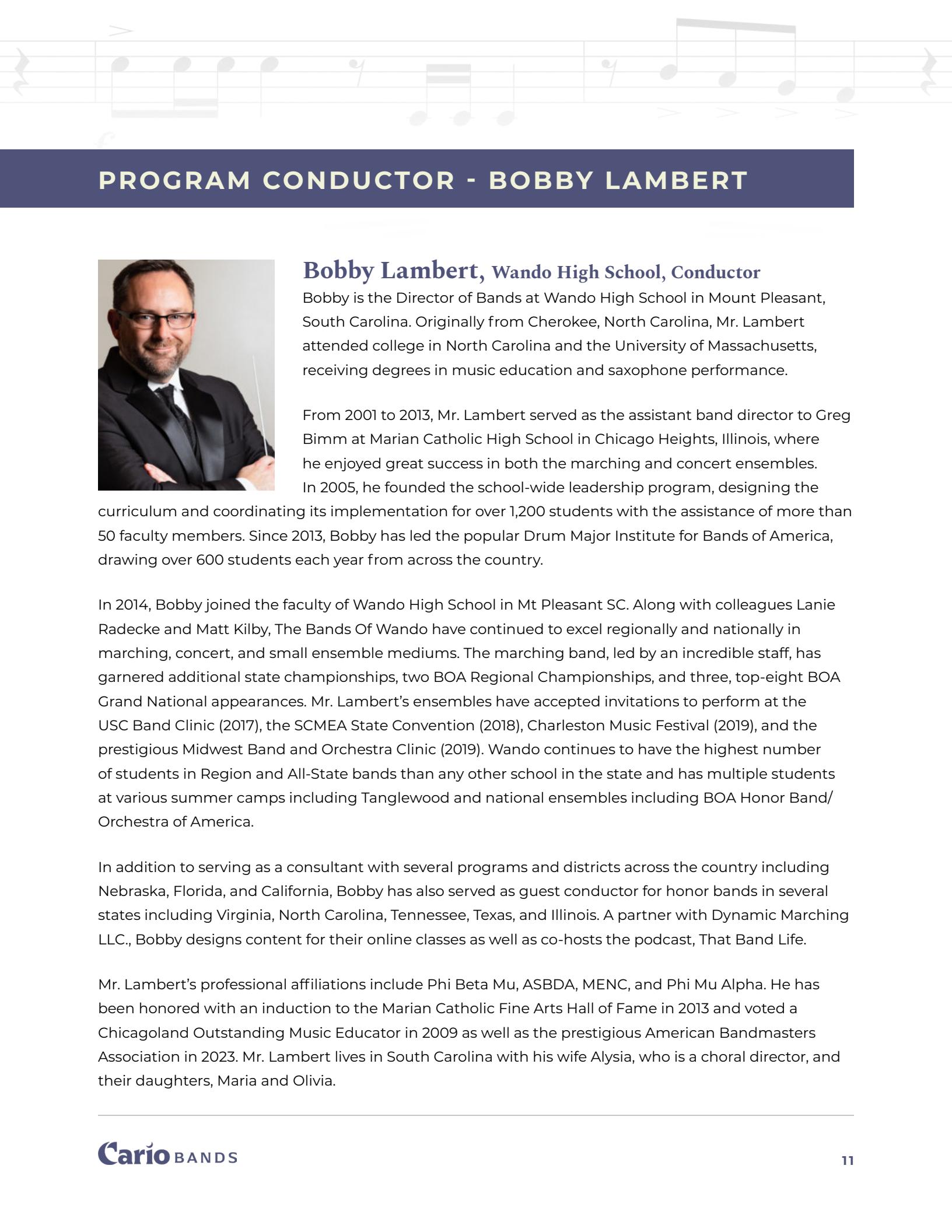
[assistantdirector@cariobands.org](mailto:assistantdirector@cariobands.org)

Kalyn Todd began her teaching career in 2013 after graduating *summa cum laude* from Columbus State University. From 2013–2018, she taught middle school band in Leesburg, Georgia, focusing on increasing student engagement and musical growth.

In 2018, Mrs. Todd relocated to Parkland, Florida, where she served as an Assistant Band Director and Orchestra Director at Westglades Middle School. In 2023, she joined the faculty at Cario Middle School as Assistant Director of Bands, where she continues to emphasize student-centered instruction and long-term musical development.

Mrs. Todd is passionate about increasing student success, ownership, and purpose in music programs. She has presented at the National Association for Music Education (NAfME) Conference, the Florida Music Education Association (FMEA) Conference, and the Florida Bandmasters Association (FBA) Conference, sharing strategies centered on student motivation, mastery-based learning, and fostering positive, student-focused music classrooms.

Mrs. Todd is married to fellow music educator Christian Gordon. Together, they are dedicated to teaching and contributing to vibrant music programs while living and working in South Carolina.



## PROGRAM CONDUCTOR - BOBBY LAMBERT



### **Bobby Lambert, Wando High School, Conductor**

Bobby is the Director of Bands at Wando High School in Mount Pleasant, South Carolina. Originally from Cherokee, North Carolina, Mr. Lambert attended college in North Carolina and the University of Massachusetts, receiving degrees in music education and saxophone performance.

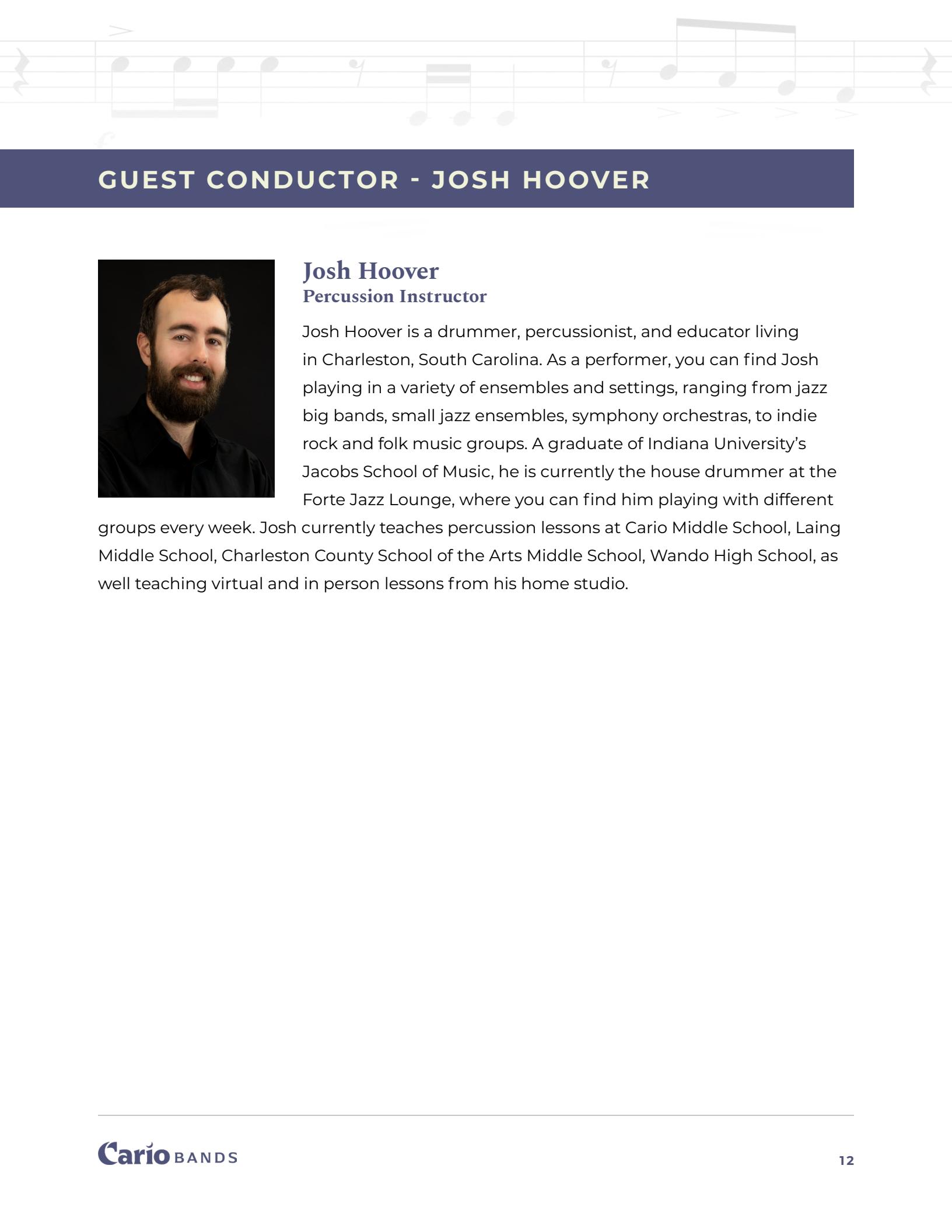
From 2001 to 2013, Mr. Lambert served as the assistant band director to Greg Bimm at Marian Catholic High School in Chicago Heights, Illinois, where he enjoyed great success in both the marching and concert ensembles.

In 2005, he founded the school-wide leadership program, designing the curriculum and coordinating its implementation for over 1,200 students with the assistance of more than 50 faculty members. Since 2013, Bobby has led the popular Drum Major Institute for Bands of America, drawing over 600 students each year from across the country.

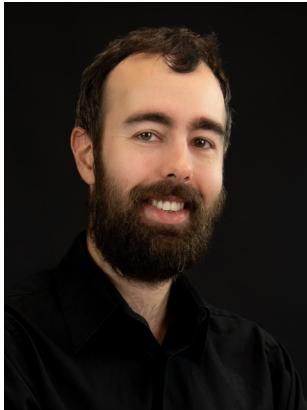
In 2014, Bobby joined the faculty of Wando High School in Mt Pleasant SC. Along with colleagues Lanie Radecke and Matt Kilby, The Bands Of Wando have continued to excel regionally and nationally in marching, concert, and small ensemble mediums. The marching band, led by an incredible staff, has garnered additional state championships, two BOA Regional Championships, and three, top-eight BOA Grand National appearances. Mr. Lambert's ensembles have accepted invitations to perform at the USC Band Clinic (2017), the SCMEA State Convention (2018), Charleston Music Festival (2019), and the prestigious Midwest Band and Orchestra Clinic (2019). Wando continues to have the highest number of students in Region and All-State bands than any other school in the state and has multiple students at various summer camps including Tanglewood and national ensembles including BOA Honor Band/Orchestra of America.

In addition to serving as a consultant with several programs and districts across the country including Nebraska, Florida, and California, Bobby has also served as guest conductor for honor bands in several states including Virginia, North Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, and Illinois. A partner with Dynamic Marching LLC., Bobby designs content for their online classes as well as co-hosts the podcast, That Band Life.

Mr. Lambert's professional affiliations include Phi Beta Mu, ASBDA, MENC, and Phi Mu Alpha. He has been honored with an induction to the Marian Catholic Fine Arts Hall of Fame in 2013 and voted a Chicagoland Outstanding Music Educator in 2009 as well as the prestigious American Bandmasters Association in 2023. Mr. Lambert lives in South Carolina with his wife Alysia, who is a choral director, and their daughters, Maria and Olivia.



## GUEST CONDUCTOR - JOSH HOOVER



**Josh Hoover**  
Percussion Instructor

Josh Hoover is a drummer, percussionist, and educator living in Charleston, South Carolina. As a performer, you can find Josh playing in a variety of ensembles and settings, ranging from jazz big bands, small jazz ensembles, symphony orchestras, to indie rock and folk music groups. A graduate of Indiana University's Jacobs School of Music, he is currently the house drummer at the Forte Jazz Lounge, where you can find him playing with different groups every week. Josh currently teaches percussion lessons at Cario Middle School, Laing Middle School, Charleston County School of the Arts Middle School, Wando High School, as well teaching virtual and in person lessons from his home studio.

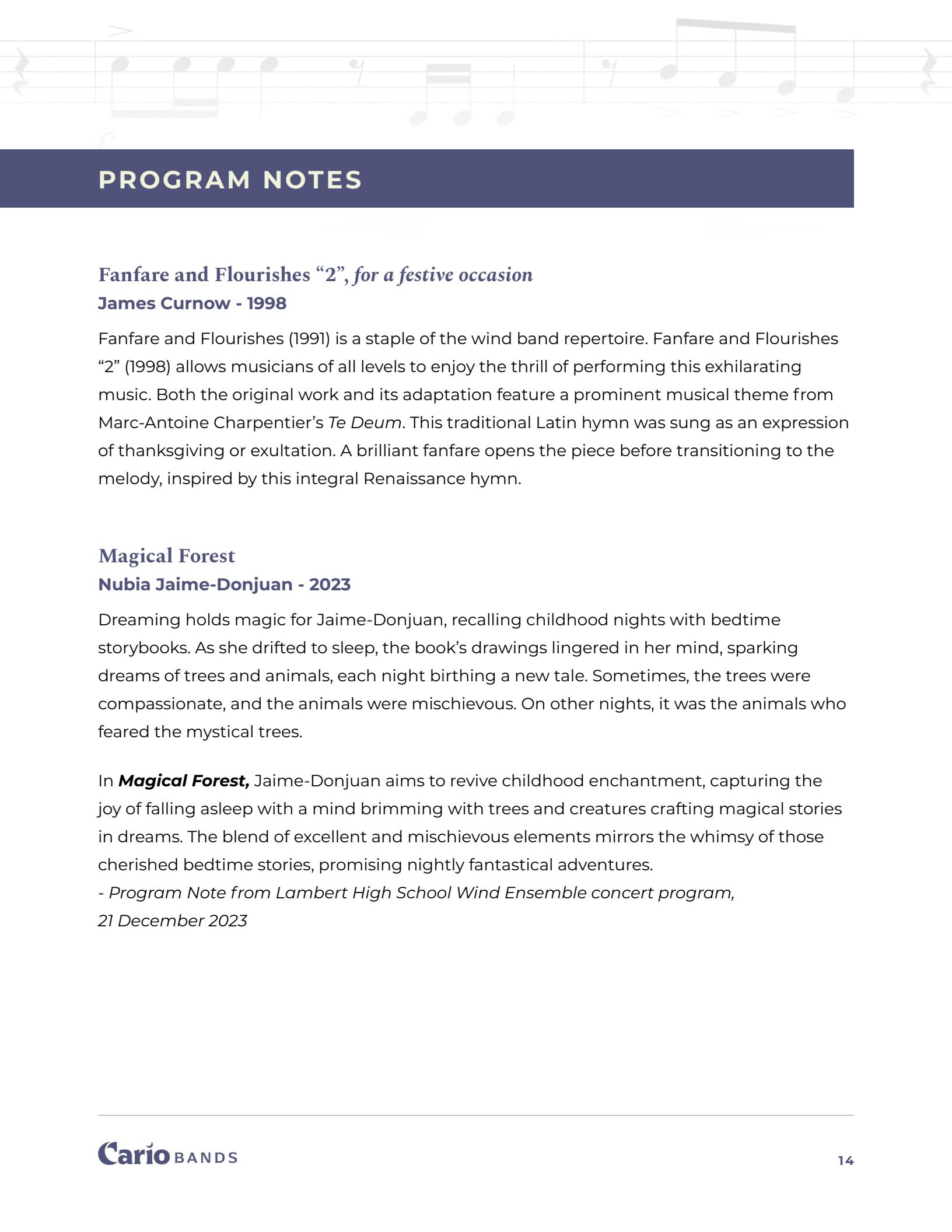
**Cario** BANDS

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## PROGRAM SCHEDULE

TITLE	COMPOSER	CONDUCTOR	TIME
Fanfare & Flourishes "2"	James Curnow	Christian Gordon	2'
Magical Forest	Nubia Jaime-Donjuan	Kalyn Todd	3'
Three Czech Folk Songs	Johnnie Vinson	Christian Gordon	5' 20"
Halley's Comet	Matthew Kilby	Josh Hoover	3'
And With This New Day	Dr. William Owens	Bobby Lambert	4' 30"
Molihua (Jasmine Flower)	Qing Dynasty Folk Song arranged by Jason J. Wu	Kalyn Todd	4'
Through The Labyrinth	Dr. Andrew F. Poor	Christian Gordon	4'



## PROGRAM NOTES

### **Fanfare and Flourishes “2”, for a festive occasion**

#### **James Curnow - 1998**

Fanfare and Flourishes (1991) is a staple of the wind band repertoire. Fanfare and Flourishes “2” (1998) allows musicians of all levels to enjoy the thrill of performing this exhilarating music. Both the original work and its adaptation feature a prominent musical theme from Marc-Antoine Charpentier’s *Te Deum*. This traditional Latin hymn was sung as an expression of thanksgiving or exultation. A brilliant fanfare opens the piece before transitioning to the melody, inspired by this integral Renaissance hymn.

### **Magical Forest**

#### **Nubia Jaime-Donjuan - 2023**

Dreaming holds magic for Jaime-Donjuan, recalling childhood nights with bedtime storybooks. As she drifted to sleep, the book’s drawings lingered in her mind, sparking dreams of trees and animals, each night birthing a new tale. Sometimes, the trees were compassionate, and the animals were mischievous. On other nights, it was the animals who feared the mystical trees.

In **Magical Forest**, Jaime-Donjuan aims to revive childhood enchantment, capturing the joy of falling asleep with a mind brimming with trees and creatures crafting magical stories in dreams. The blend of excellent and mischievous elements mirrors the whimsy of those cherished bedtime stories, promising nightly fantastical adventures.

- Program Note from *Lambert High School Wind Ensemble* concert program,  
21 December 2023

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**Cario BANDS**

## **Three Czech Folk Songs**

### **Johnnie Vinson - 2012**

The folk music of Czechoslovakia has often served as a fertile source of material and inspiration for composers and arrangers. This work is a setting of three traditional Czech melodies displaying a wide range of moods and styles. Walking At Night alternates between a beautiful slow melody and a lively dance theme. Meadows Green is an expressive ballad superbly scored for all sections of the band. The suite concludes in grand fashion with a spirited rendition of the familiar Spring, The Madcap.

*-Program Note adapted from publisher*

## **Halley's Comet**

### **Matthew Kilby - 2025**

Halley's Comet (2025) was composed by Matthew Kilby for the Cario Middle School Percussion Ensemble for their featured performance at the 2026 South Carolina Music Educators Association Conference. Inspired by the Cario school mascot, the piece tells the story of the most famous periodic comet visible from Earth and explores themes of motion, time, and return.

Revolving textures, repeating patterns, and mysterious, space-inspired harmony evoke the comet's predictable orbit and rare appearance. Scored for glockenspiel, vibraphone, two players sharing a marimba, auxiliary percussion, and sampled sound effects created from reversed marimba sounds, the work depicts the awe of a celestial event. Written with the specific performers in mind, it also serves as a musical welcome for Cario's 8th-grade percussionists into the Wando High School band family.

*-Program Note by Matthew Kilby*

## **And With This New Day...**

**William Owens - 2025**

*“With the new day comes new strength and new thoughts.” - Eleanor Roosevelt*

Eleanor Roosevelt (1884-1962) is rightfully recognized as one of America's most formidable and influential first ladies. Widely regarded as the benchmark for those to follow, Roosevelt mightily used the platform to make better the lives of those less fortunate than herself. From helping immigrants adjust to American life, to championing rights for women and African Americans to lending hands-on support to the American war effort, ER endures as a true beacon of justice and equality for all Americans.

The music of **And With This New Day** is inspired by this simple yet powerful thought, which encourages us to be open to positive change and recognizes that no matter how difficult previous times were, the new day always brings a fresh start.

The introspective opening statement aptly illustrates the day anew, as we contemplate the good things to come. Beginning quite serenely with a clarinet solo and a gentle harmonic complement, the music gradually blossoms into a lush “pastorale” section.

The energetic and brisk statement that follows is a true celebration of life, as the mood becomes lively and jovial. Throughout this sprightly section, an array of colors and textures are heard with strong melodic concentration and a driving rhythmic pulse at its core.

The final statement calls us to reflect on the day's end, as the music concludes serenely and peacefully. *And With This New Day...* comes through the generosity and creativity of the IDEA (Inclusion, Diversity, Equality, Access).

This work is the result of the ABA [American Bandmasters Association] IDEA (Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, Access) Commission Project

*- Program Note by composer*

## **Molihua (Jasmine Flower), *Qing Dynasty Folk Song***

**arr. Jason J. Wu - 2025**

This arrangement of the iconic Chinese folk song Mòlìhuā or Jasmine Flower embodies the spirit of the original tune with a variety of inflections from my own musical experiences as a Chinese-American. The piece opens with a short motif played on the vibraphone, before the main tune is introduced by the woodwinds and passed throughout the band, building in motion and complexity. Which then jumps to a brisk and festive dance in the B section with a repetitive call and response between the upper and lower voices. Before returning to the main theme with some added colors and motion. There are many different stories behind the origins of the tune as well as variations depending on the region of China one hears the piece, but to me the piece captures the rich and diverse landscape of Chinese history and culture. From one generation to another spreading the message of the beauty and fragrance of a jasmine flower which is gently being picked to bring fortune and joy to others.

## **Through the Labyrinth**

**Andrew F. Poor - 2025**

A labyrinth is a complex and intricate structure of interconnected paths or passages, often designed as a maze with a single, winding route leading from the entrance to the center. Unlike a maze, which typically contains multiple routes and dead ends, a classical labyrinth has one clear path, symbolizing a journey or quest for understanding.

When seeking excellence, while there may appear to be many paths and ways to achieve your goals, there is only one path. In this case, the labyrinth is a metaphor for the pursuit of musical excellence—straight and unrelenting. The work was commissioned by the Cario Middle School Band, Mt. Pleasant, South Carolina, and their directors, Christian Gordon and Kalyn Todd, for their performance at the South Carolina Music Educators Association Conference in February 2026.

The composition features Phrygian modes (F and D) and G minor, with rhythmic motifs that suggest mixed meters but are played in 4/4 and 3/4. Asymmetric rhythms add mystery and drive, blending intrigue and energy as the piece progresses. This grade 3 piece features the full ensemble and offers optional parts for range development. It requires at least five percussionists, with most playing multiple instruments.

*-Program Note by composer*



## SYMPHONIC BAND MEMBERS

### FLUTES

Allison Baltazar  
Emilia Blackman  
Maeve Clifford  
Olivia Lambert  
Emma McMahan  
Hannah Peppard  
Georgia Speir

### OBOE

Martha Ward

### BASSOON

Colin Gerlach  
Logan Nimpfie

### CLARINET

Annabelle Atwood  
Sienna Brown  
Bailey DuPont  
Carlyanna Faulk  
Alex Jones  
Cora Richardson

### BASS CLARINET

Macon Strock

### ALTO SAX

Charles Davis  
Silas Dewey  
Nathaniel Hickey  
Campbell Hooks

### TENOR SAX

Samuel Hurman  
McKinley Wilson

### BARI SAX

Aiden Klarmann

### TRUMPET

Joshua Gillespie  
Oliver Herzke  
Emma Jones  
Peyton Martin  
Harrison Miner  
Nicholas Saba  
William Sims  
Niclas Vorlander

### HORN

Alex Letourneau  
Abigail Tetrault

### EUPHONIUM

Addison Bastion  
Layla Cooper  
Nate Hathaway  
Mason Lap  
Jonah Paduani

### TROMBONE

Tyrik George  
Grant Goade  
Ryan Hormaza  
Riley Snyder  
Ava Steele  
Oliver Stenhouse

### TUBA

Cecilia Hess  
Thomas Kistler  
Adalynn Sanders  
Miles Torres

### PERCUSSION

Kyle Dambaugh  
Chapel Hicks  
Emma Kuhn  
Adrian Phan  
Calleigh Sabecky  
Jenna Smith



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

### Cario Band Booster Board

Steve Wiley, President  
Ann Gillespie, Secretary  
Elizabeth Gerlach, Cashier  
Allison Cianci, Treasurer (Payable)  
Katie Dewey, Treasurer (Receivable)

Kat Martin, Uniforms  
Kristy Kuhn, Social Media Chair  
Jen LeTourneau, Webmaster  
Lindsey Brown, Database

### Private Lessons Staff

#### FLUTE

John Samuel Roper CLA  
Regina Helcher-Yost, Sectionals and CLA

#### OBOE

Liz Knott, CLA  
Jessica Miller, Sectionals and CLA

#### BASSOON

Kathy St. John, Sectionals and CLA

#### B-FLAT CLARINET

Sarah Newton, CLA  
Hank Landrum, Sectionals and CLA

#### SAXOPHONE

Jonathan Kammer, CLA  
Richard Cavallo, Sectionals and CLA

#### TRUMPET

Cameron Handel, Sectionals and CLA  
Jack McGirr, Sectionals and CLA  
Justin Henke, CLA

#### HORN

Brent Patteson, CLA  
Debra Sherill-Ward, Sectionals

#### BARITONE/EUPHONIUM

Nina Riley, Sectionals and CLA

#### TROMBONE

Patrick Duncan, CLA  
Carrie Bates, Sectionals and CLA

#### PERCUSSION

Josh Hoover, Sectionals and CLA

# THANK YOU

**Melissa Curtis** for her unending support of Christian as he grew as a musician.

**Norma and Eddie Todd** for their constant encouragement of Kalyn, from supporting piano lessons to becoming dedicated band parents.

**Dan Tetrault** for the time, care, and expertise devoted to designing this beautiful program.

**Bobby Lambert, Lanie Radecke, and Matthew Kilby** for serving as extra ears and steadfast support each year, especially throughout the preparation for this performance.

**Matthew Kilby** for composing *Halley's Comet* and sharing his music with our students.

**Andy Poor** for his mentorship, friendship, and lasting inspiration to music educators everywhere, and for composing *Through the Labyrinth*.

**Scott Rush** for your musical insight and expertise in preparing for this performance.

**Richard Gillespie and Wade Lyon** for all the photos and videos you've taken as a part of this process!

**Joe Mesach** for his weekly visits and devotion to pulling those beginner instrument rentals.

**Neville Curtis** for your friendship and support over the past 3 years.

**Our school administrators** for their continued support of the band program and for creating space for it to thrive.

**Our school staff** for supporting our students as they grow both academically and musically.

**Our Band Booster Board** for countless hours of planning, organizing, fundraising, and behind-the-scenes work that make opportunities like this possible.

**Cario Sectional and Lessons Academy Teachers** for your weekly dedication to teaching music to our kids!

**Our band parents and students** without you, we don't get to do the best job in the world. Thank you for your dedication, trust, and support.

**Michelle Rush, Bill Dickinson, and Sam Mumford** for being wonderful collaborators as students begin to explore music options in Middle School.