



**National Association  
for Music Education**

**For Immediate Release**

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**NAfME Member Emily McNeil Named  
2017 National Band Director of the Year**

RESTON, VA (February 13, 2017)—2017 marked the tenth anniversary of the U.S. Army All-American Marching Band (USAAAMB), which performed at halftime during the All-American Bowl in San Antonio, Texas, on January 7, 2017. The 125 students who were selected to the 2017 USAAAMB spent the week rehearsing for the show, learning from one another, and being inspired by this year's USAAAMB Director Dr. Kenneth G. Bodiford has served as the Director of Bands and Assistant Professor of Music at Jacksonville State University in Jacksonville, Alabama.

One student, Katie Howard, a trumpet player at East Rowan High School in Salisbury, North Carolina, enjoyed an additional special moment: East Rowan High School's Director of Bands Emily McNeil was named the 2017 NafME Band Director of the Year.

"The East Rowan High School band is a small, but mighty program, with about 30 students. This is the third year Emily has had a student participate in the USAAAMB program," said National Association for Music Education (NAfME) President Denese Odegaard. "She loves working with students and helping them find that moment in music when it all comes together. She has a true passion for music, and her goal as an educator is to make sure the students keep music in their lives beyond high school."

Emily McNeil has been the Director of Bands at East Rowan High School in Salisbury, NC, for eight years where she directs the wind ensemble, jazz band, and marching band. She earned a Bachelor's Degree in Instrumental Music Performance and Education in 2004 from the University of Idaho. Emily earned a Master of Music degree in Flute Performance from Ithaca College in 2008.

She enjoys working at summer music camps including the Lionel Hampton Youth Music School at the University of Idaho, Flathead Lake Music Camp in Rollins, Montana, and the UNC-Greensboro Summer Music Camp in Greensboro, NC, where she has worked for the past 11 summers. She has attended the Carolina Conductors Conference as well as the National Flute Association Convention and North Carolina State Music Educator's Conference in Winston-Salem, NC.

Emily is the piccolo player in the Piedmont Wind Symphony and plays in the Winston-Salem based flute choir, Flutes on Fourth. She has also played with the Washington-Idaho Symphony, UNC-Greensboro Wind Ensemble and University Band as well as many other community bands and college ensembles. She enjoys attending baseball games with her husband, John who is a baseball coach and teacher at East Rowan High School.

Nominations and applications for the 2018 U.S. Army All-American Marching Band are being accepted through May 1, 2017: [nafme.org/usaaamb](http://nafme.org/usaaamb).

The National Band Director of the Year Award honors the band director who has been an inspiration to students and music educators, and who by his or her actions, embodies the U.S. Army's core values.

The award, now in its seventh year, was added to the U.S. Army All-American Marching Band program as part of its efforts to acknowledge the contribution of music education to the development of America's youth.

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National Association for Music Education, among the world's largest arts education organizations, is the only association that addresses all aspects of music education. NAFME advocates at the local, state, and national levels; provides resources for teachers, parents, and administrators; hosts professional development events; and offers a variety of opportunities for students and teachers. The Association orchestrates success for millions of students nationwide and has supported music educators at all teaching levels for more than a century. With more than 60,000 members, the organization is the national voice of music education in the United States.

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