



# NSSBE

National Society of Steel Band Educators

## CONFERENCE PROGRAM

February 27-28, 2026

Northern Kentucky University

Highland Heights, KY

# President's Welcome

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## Welcome to the NSSBE 2026 Professional Conference



Once again we find ourselves in Highland Heights, Kentucky for the NSSBE annual Professional Conference! Our 2025 meeting here was a success, and we are excited for this new year, and our slate of sessions that are sure to inspire and motivate us. My deepest thanks to Stan Ginn, who graciously agreed to host our conference once again at Northern Kentucky University.

This year, our presenters will cover a wide range of topics, and so there is something for everyone. We will hear about steel band arranging, improvisation strategies, how to build a program from the ground up, and what to expect from your pan tuner. Each of these topics is germane to the steel band director, and we look forward to hearing from our clinicians, who are coming to us from Florida, Michigan, Texas and Wisconsin. In keeping with our commitment to honor the cultural heritage and traditions of the steelband art form, we will hear from Dr. Janine Tiffe (Kent State University) on the life and accomplishments of Mark Loquan, an important figure in the story of pan.

Let's not forget our performances! Friday night will feature an ad hoc ensemble of local steelband directors, presenting an opening concert of original music for pan. Then on Saturday, our headliners, TNTeague, will present a concert that is sure to impress. Liam Teague and Jaden Teague-Nuñez are highly accomplished artists who have been touring the country for a couple years. You can read their bios in our digital program. While many of us are familiar with the prowess of Liam Teague, as he has been a central figure in our pan community for decades, watch out for Jaden...he is an emerging talent that is on a strong trajectory. Liam and Jaden will also present a clinic focused on how they are working to promote new works for steelpan.

I am grateful to my colleagues on our Conference Committee, who have worked hard since March 2025 to plan this year's event: Stan Ginn, Nathaniel O'Neal, Obe Quarless, Abby Rehard and Tyler Swick. These volunteers have put in many hours to ensure that our event is top-notch, and I'm sure you'll join me in thanking them for a job well done.

Finally, as always I thank each of you for taking time from your busy schedules to attend our 2026 conference. I recognize that we all have limited resources of time and treasure, and so your commitment to be here and create community with us is much appreciated. I hope you will have ample opportunity to connect with old friends, and to make new ones. In addition to attending sessions, learning new information and improving our skill sets, we grow by simply being with each other, and celebrating the joy of making music.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Chris Tanner".

Chris Tanner  
President, NSSBE

## Special Thanks

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*NSSBE would like to thank our Sponsors:*

**Kareem Forbes**

**Ryan Roberts**

**Mike Wendeln**

**Alan Coyle**

**Chanler Bailey**

**Eugene Novotney**

**Pan Ramajay**

**Rick Kurasz**

*NSSBE would like to thank our Vendors:*



# Schedule

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## FRIDAY, February 27

5:00 P.M.

### What Should I Expect From My Pan Tuner?

Presenter: Alan Coyle

Working with a pan tuner is something that all steel band directors or band leaders must do, and yet many directors have only a superficial understanding of the tuning process. As such, it is understandable that directors and tuners may have differing thoughts on what should be — or can be — accomplished in a tuning session. In some cases, directors may not hold tuners to a high standard due to their relative unfamiliarity with the tuning process, while in other cases they may have unreasonable expectations, given common constraints such as time or budget.

While steelpan tuning is complex, it actually breaks down into a few basic concepts. The goal of this session is to reveal these fundamental concepts, in order to increase participants' understanding of the process so that they are able to make informed judgments with respect to tuners and their work. All parties will benefit from a shared understanding of what is relatively easy to achieve, and what takes more time, effort and expertise to achieve when tuning individual steelpan instruments, and in blending together the various instruments in a steel band.

6:45 P.M.

### Cincinnati Area Pan Educators Steelband

The Cincinnati Area Pan Educators Ensemble comprises local steel band directors who have come together for the 2026 NSSBE Conference. Members include:

Stan Ginn, percussion (Northern Kentucky University)  
Ed LeBorgne, double tenor pan (Walnut Hills HS; Cincinnati)  
Mike Marston, double second pan (Talawanda HS; Oxford, OH)  
Jeff Martin, lead pan (Clark Montessori HS, Cincinnati)  
Mark Simmons, triple guitar pan (Richmond HS; Richmond, IN)  
Chris Tanner, lead pan (Miami University)  
Jordan Terbruggen, triple guitar pan (Madison HS; Middletown, OH)  
Mike Wendeln, drumset (Cincy Steel)  
Dr. Aaron Ziegler, double second pan (Elder HS; Cincinnati)

With special guest, Bill Jackson, electric bass

# Schedule

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## SATURDAY, February 28

7:30 A.M.

**Check-In/Registration**

8:15 A.M.

**Welcome: Dr. Chris Tanner, NSSBE President**

8:30 A.M.

**From Jazz Ensemble To Steelband: Techniques For Effective Arranging**

**Presenter: Jonah Payne**

This presentation will focus on the use of jazz ensemble arranging techniques within the steel band idiom. Designed for both new and experienced arrangers, it will equip attendees with practical skills and deepen their understanding of arranging and composing.

Topics to be addressed include jazz theory, melodic paraphrasing, harmonizing melodies, chord voicings (ranging from 3 to 8 notes), chordal approach techniques, drop voicings, reharmonization, and more. These techniques will be discussed theoretically, but they will also be applied to musical examples from luminary steel pan arrangers such as Andy Narell, Len "Boogsie" Sharpe, Ray Holman, and others. This session will incorporate a PowerPoint presentation, containing both aural and visual examples of the arranging techniques as well as excerpts from real arrangements.

Developing steel band arranging skills is crucial for the modern steel band director. It can save money on programming costs, expand the steel band repertoire, support student arranging efforts, and encourage more original and creative arrangements rather than transcriptions; it can also assist with score analysis for rehearsal.

# Schedule

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9:45 A.M.

## **Pan Improvisation Workshop**

**Presenter: Patrick Fitzgibbon**

This workshop will provide Pan educators with a framework for how they can include improvisation training as part of their Steel Band curriculum. Participants will engage with the material presented, trying out exercises and creating a Steel Band rehearsal environment.

### Learning Objectives

- 1.) Identify the benefits of studying improvisation
- 2.) Understand the role improvisation has played in the development of Steel Pan
- 3.) Experiment with improvisation exercises
- 4.) Understand the presented teaching method

### Musical Materials Covered

- 3-note improv exercises
- Calypso rhythmic language
- Pentatonic scales
- Steel Band vamps ideal for beginning improvisors
- Common calypso chord changes

11:00 A.M.

## **Concept to Culture: Building a Distinctive Steelband Program**

**Presenter: Quinten Petersen**

This clinic examines the development of a steelband program that has grown from one idea into a schoolwide institution. I will outline three of the defining features that make this program unique: a model that is entirely outside of the school day, a band where students need to read music ahead of time, and our unique musical repertoire.

Repertoire selection is one of the most important skills a steelband director possesses and time will be spent addressing how choices are made to support ensemble identity, musical growth, and audience connection. Particular attention will be given to the adoption of punk rock and modern pop music within the band—why it was chosen, how it complements the steelband’s voice, and what it offers in terms of artistic merit.

The session will also consider the balance between being recognized for being a unique ensemble and being an excellent one. Topics include rehearsal strategies, maintaining quality rather than just novelty, and honoring the culture and history of steelband while encouraging stylistic innovation.

# Schedule

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**12:00 P.M.**  
**Lunch/Vendor Time**

**1:30 P.M.**  
**Literature Reading Session**  
**Presenter: Conference Committee**

In this session participants will have the opportunity to read through several entry-level repertoire selections, curated by the Conference Committee. The committee endeavored to select repertoire representing a diverse set of composers, and musical styles. Pieces featured will include:

**Peachy** by Madeline Marston  
**Cruise the Erie Canal** by Jordan Morrison  
**Port of Spain** by Nathaniel O'Neal  
**Frangipani** by Emily Lemmerman  
**Take It Easy** by John Willmarth  
**Squirrels** by Liam Teague

**2:45 P.M.**  
**Mark Loquan: His Life and Works**  
**Presenter: Janine Tiffe**

Mark Loquan passed away on 6 April 2025 from brain cancer. He was a Trinidadian composer, songwriter, and documentarian of Chinese descent. Unfortunately, the greater U.S. pan community seems largely unaware of Mark despite his robust career in pan and soca. According to Marina Salandy-Brown, "Mark Loquan was a rare human being – an exceptional person, yet grounded, kind and generous. He made being gifted and good seem ordinary." I enthusiastically second these sentiments.

Loquan composed for Panorama and soca for 25 years, co-founded pan publishing house and library Pannotation, and recently put together a series of documentaries with Maria Nunes to help archive and honor histories of pan in Trinidad and Tobago. As president of the National Gas Company of Trinidad and Tobago Limited, he effectively leveraged his position to support Trinbagonian arts, including spearheading and leading the steelpan-centered Ministry of Trade and Industry Steering Committee in his final years.

# Schedule

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4:00 P.M.

**Baby Steps to Giant Steps: Fostering New Music for Steelpan**

**Presenter: TNTeague**

This interactive workshop aims to help teachers unfamiliar with Caribbean rhythm to develop a more natural, authentic “feel” for steelband music, focusing on rhythmic relaxation and tension, stylistic distinctions like rubato vs. marcato, and capturing accurate dialect in teaching. Participants will learn by playing specific parts by rote across tenor, double seconds, guitar, and bass pans.

5:00 P.M.

**Dinner/Vendor Time**

6:00 P.M.

**Final Concert**

**TNTeague**

TNTeague is dedicated to highlighting the many possibilities of the steelpan and we hope that our eclectic repertoire this evening will be successful in doing so.

## Board of Directors

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**Chris Tanner** (D.M.A., West Virginia University, 2000) is Chair of the Department of Music at Miami University and the founder and director of the Miami University Steel Band. He first became interested in world music as an undergraduate student at West Virginia University, where he studied African percussion with Phil Faini, and had the opportunity to work closely with Trinidadian native Ellie Mannette, one of the pioneers of the steel pan art form.

In the steel band idiom, Tanner is active as a performer, educator, and composer/arranger. In October 2011 he released his recording *First Impression*, featuring original music for steel band and jazz soloists. He has served as a guest clinician or performing artist at numerous festivals, workshops, high schools and universities. He is a frequently commissioned composer/arranger, and his works are published through Pan Ramajay Productions, Engine Room Publishing, and Panyard, Inc. In December 2006, Rowman & Littlefield Education published his book *The Steel Band Game Plan: Strategies for Starting, Building and Maintaining Your Pan Program*, a comprehensive resource covering all fundamental topics relating to the development of a steel band program.

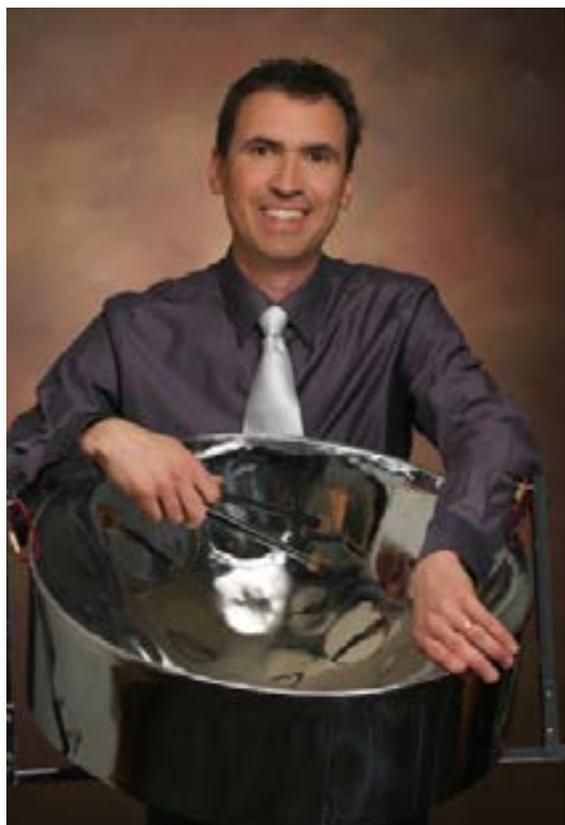
**Dr. Brandon Haskett** is a Professor of Music Education at Saginaw Valley State University and teaches music education courses, general education courses, Percussion Ensemble, and Valley Steel. He graduated from Arizona State University with a Doctor of Musical Arts in Music Education and a Masters of Music in Percussion Performance.

Haskett previously taught at North Georgia College and State University as the Coordinator of Music Education. Previously, he taught band, orchestra, jazz band, and steel band at Kenilworth School (K-8) in Phoenix, Arizona. Haskett's main research focus includes the study of world music ensembles in the public schools and adult/community music education. His work has been published in the *International Journal of Community Music*, *Update: Applications of Research in Music Education*, and *Percussive Notes*. He is a frequent presenter of academic



## Board of Directors

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**Tom Miller's** vast experience as a performing percussionist, steel drummer, composer, arranger and educator has made him one of the most respected and sought after soloists and clinicians today. Tom has performed worldwide with his own popular group Pan Ramajay as well as with other notable pan artists, Andy Narell, Ray Holman, Len "Boogsie" Sharpe, and Othello Molineaux and has also been a featured guest performer at Trinidad and Tobago's annual "Pan and Jazz Festival," on several occasions. Other collaborations have produced work with Calypso vocal artist, David Rudder; jazz drummer, Peter Erskine; percussionist, Luis Conte; composer, Vince Mendoza; bassist Michael Manring; Germany's famed WDR Big Band and the Berkeley Symphony under the direction of Kent Nagano. He has added his unique style of percussive touch to numerous recordings covering a variety of musical styles with artists such as Grammy award winners, Allison Krause and the late John Denver, and Venezuelan songstress, Maria Marquez. Tom's playing has also been featured on film scores for the movies, *Commando*, *Nina Takes a Lover*, and *The Mystic Masseur*, as well as ads for Minute Maid, Sony, the SIMs computer games and many others.

Tom is equally as comfortable in the studio as a producer having produced and mixed several critically acclaimed steel band recordings for his own group, Pan Ramajay, as well as master pannist, Ray Holman, The Chabot Panhandlers Steel Orchestra, the Miami University Steel Band and the Lamont Steel Drum Ensemble. He is the founder of the chamber steel drum ensemble, Pan Nation, a steel drum octet performing original compositions composed by the group's members and recently releasing their debut EP recording, "Altered Perception."

Tom's composing talents have earned him grants from the prestigious Meet the Composer Foundation on five occasions, fostering the creation, performance and education of audiences through his compositions featuring steel drums and percussion. This dedication to musical education has won Tom many invitations as an artist in residence at numerous universities and colleges throughout the U.S. He currently serves as adjunct faculty at the University of Denver, Lamont School of Music where he is the director of Steel Drum Ensembles and the World Percussion Studio as well as instructor of several music business academic classes. He has also served on the faculty of the JAZZ School in Berkeley, CA, the Mannette Steel Drum Workshop in Morgantown, WV, the Fairbanks Summer Arts Festival, the Lamont Summer Academy, and the University of Delaware Summer Steel Drum Workshop. Tom is the founder and director of the Pan Ramajay Summer Steel Drum Festival, in Denver, CO.

Tom is president of one of the foremost steel drum music publishing companies, Pan Ramajay Productions ([www.ramajay.com](http://www.ramajay.com)), which features Tom's own compositions and recordings as well as those of other prominent steel drum composers worldwide.

## Presenters

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**Alan Coyle** is a Master Steel Drum Builder/Tuner who travels North America tuning for artists, universities, and school districts. He regularly services over 1500 instruments each year. When he is not on the road tuning, he is practicing his craft of steel drum making in Pensacola Florida. Alan started his company, Coyle Drums, in 1998 after serving six years as Ellie Mannette's head apprentice for the University Tuning Project and Mannette Steel Drums in Morgantown West Virginia. Alan left his apprenticeship with Mr. Mannette with great skills, a solid foundation, and a passion to innovate. He has continually sought to further his understanding of the complexities of the instruments he tunes and makes himself. Alan brings with him an incredible amount of experience in working with band directors, artists, and individual pan players.



**Jonah Payne** is a steel pan performer, arranger, and educator with over fifteen years of experience. His performance highlights include appearing on legendary steel pannist Jonathan Scales' Mindstate Music album, performing a steel pan concerto with Lincoln's Symphony Orchestra after winning their Young Artist Competition in 2019, and presenting at the National Society of Steel Band Educators Conference with Northern Illinois University's World Steel Band in 2023. More recently, he has been directing the steel bands at the University of North Texas and presenting on steel pan history and composition at several universities. In April 2026, he will serve as the guest clinician for the Central Texas Steel Band Festival.

In addition to steel pan, Jonah is active across a wide range of percussion traditions, including classical, marching, jazz, and a panoply of non-Western styles. Notable performances include Drum Corps International, the College Band Directors National Association Conference, the Cortona Marimba Sessions in Italy, three appearances at the Percussive Arts Society International Convention, the North Garland Percussion Festival, and the Timber Creek Percussion Festival.

Jonah holds degrees from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln (B.M., Percussion Performance) and Northern Illinois University (M.M., Percussion Performance). He is currently pursuing a Doctor of Musical Arts degree in Percussion Performance, with a related field in ethnomusicology, at the University of North Texas.



## Presenters

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**Patrick Fitzgibbon** is a musician based in the Detroit, MI area who has

made his career performing, teaching and composing. Patrick is a professor of music at Oakland University where he teaches courses in world music, aural skills and steel band. Patrick regularly performs with many of Detroit's top musicians as well as his own quintet (Patrick Fitzgibbon Band), and his steel drum ensemble (Steel Sound) and Rela Percussion. Other performance highlights include the Fisher Theater Orchestra, recording sessions at Yessian Music and residencies at Duke University, Bloomberg University and the Toledo Glass Museum. His original compositions can be heard on his albums "The Travelers" and "Just Ahead" and have been published with Tapspace and C. Alan Publications. His compositions have been licensed for use by Ford, Bosch Automotive, and Investigation Discovery Studios. In 2025, Patrick was awarded an "Outstanding Musical Direction" award from the Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival. Patrick earned his bachelor's in music performance from Michigan State University, his master's from Oakland University and has studied traditional music in India, Ghana, Jamaica and Trinidad.



**Quinten Petersen** is the Director of Bands and Fine Arts Department Coordinator at Wisconsin Lutheran High School in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, where he conducts concert bands, marching band, jazz ensemble, woodwind ensemble, percussion ensembles, and multiple steelbands. An active clinician and presenter, he has recently presented at the WLC Music Education Summit and has served as a percussion clinician for WELS Band Festival and the Wisconsin All-State Percussion Ensemble. Quinten continues to advocate for comprehensive, student-centered music education through performance, curriculum design, and professional development.



As a performer, collaborator, and arranger, Petersen has worked with a wide range of ensembles and artists, including Third Coast Percussion, Milwaukee Festival Brass, Cream City Percussion, Pan Masters Steel Orchestra, and the Bel Canto Chorus, and has participated in world premieres and major percussion events throughout the Midwest. Petersen holds a Bachelor of Arts in music and education from Wisconsin Lutheran College and lives in Wauwatosa, Wisconsin, with his wife Megan and their two children.

## Presenters

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**Dr. Janine Tiffe** is Associate Professor of ethnomusicology at the Kent State University Glauser School of Music where she directs the African Ensemble and Steelband, and teaches courses in world, popular, and American musics. Prior to her appointment at KSU, she taught at Oklahoma City University. Her research interests include the African diaspora, particularly the Trinidadian steelband, as well as race & ethnicity, gender, dance, performance, musical migration, transmission, pedagogy, education, and community musicmaking. Dr. Tiffe has authored articles in *Percussive Notes*, the *International Journal of Carnival Arts*, *Interviewing the Caribbean*, *Musicians and Composers of the 20th Century*, *Double*



*Voicing and Multiplex Identities: Unpacking Hegemonic and Subaltern Discourses in the Caribbean*, *Positive Interferences: Unsettling Resonances in the Study of the Languages, Literatures and Cultures of the Greater Caribbean and Beyond*, and *Sweeter Voices Still: An LGBTQ Anthology from Middle America*.

Under her directorship, the KSU African Ensemble has performed at the International Society for Music Education conference in Glasgow, Scotland, and the College Music Society conference in Vancouver, Canada. Dr. Tiffe has performed with Women in Steel, Invaders Steel Orchestra, and Trinidad All Stars Steel Orchestra; as a member of Azaguno, she performed for the 2002 FIFA World Cup ceremonies in Seoul, Korea. She serves as Director of International Chapters for Delta Omicron International Music Fraternity.

Dr. Tiffe holds a Ph.D. in ethnomusicology from Florida State University, and M.A. in ethnomusicology from Kent State University, and a B.S. and B.A. in Zoology with a Music History Minor from Miami University. In the spring of 2024, she completed the Advanced Pan Fellowship Certificate Programme at the University of Trinidad and Tobago where she interned with Pan Trinbago, the Trinidad and Tobago Ministry of Trade and Industry Steering Committee, and Trinidad All Stars Steel Orchestra Academy.

## Featured Artist

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**TNTeague**, the father and son duo of Liam Teague and Jaden Teague-Núñez, offers an exciting, eclectic, and unique blend of music that includes calypso, jazz, classical and ragtime.

The son of Trinidadian and Panamanian parents, **Jaden Teague-Nuñez** moved to the USA in 2011 and began studying steelpan and piano (classical and jazz) at age 8 and 10, respectively.

In 2024, Jaden won the Crain-Maling Foundation Chicago Symphony Orchestra's (CSO) Young Artists Competition, becoming the first steelpan player in history of the event to do so, and he made his CSO debut in spring 2025. He was named by the National Foundation for the Advancement of Artists (aka YoungArts) a 2025 YoungArts Winner with Distinction, and attended the National YoungArts Week in Miami, Florida - an intensive program for award winners with distinction to collaborate with peers across 10 disciplines, develop their craft with internationally recognized leaders in their fields and create lifelong connections.

Among his growing list of accomplishments, Teague-Núñez has been a guest soloist with the Civic Orchestra of Chicago, Fox Valley Orchestra, Kishwaukee Symphony Orchestra, Wheaton Municipal Band and the Illinois Brass Band. Additionally, he has guested with the Northern Illinois University Steelband, Humboldt State University Steelband, Akron University Steelband, Coastal Carolina University Steelband, and at the Inside Out Steelband Festival in Austin, Texas.

**Liam Teague** is Professor of Music and Director of Steelpan Studies at Northern Illinois University (NIU), where he also leads the renowned NIU Steelband. Teague is the recipient of an NIU Board of Trustees Professorship Award (2022) and a Presidential Research, Scholarship and Artistry Professor Award (2018).

## Featured Artist

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Hailed as the “Paganini of the Steelpan”, his commitment to demonstrating the great musical possibilities of the steelpan has taken him throughout the world, and he has received many awards from his homeland of Trinidad and Tobago, including the Hummingbird National Award (Silver) and the Ansa McAl Caribbean Award for Excellence. In 2022, The San Fernando City Council honored Teague with the Keys to the City of San Fernando, his hometown in Trinidad and Tobago.

Teague has presented and performed at several Percussive Arts Society International Conventions (PASIC) and educational institutions across the globe, and has served as an adjudicator for many events including the International Pan Ramajay Competition and Virginia Arts Festival- PANorama Caribbean Music Festival. He is also the author of a steelpan method for beginners published by the Hal Leonard Corporation, the world’s largest publisher of print music.

Many of Teague’s compositions and arrangements are published with MaumauMusic, PanPress, Pan Ramajay Productions, and Wendeln Music Works. He has commissioned outstanding composers to write for the steelpan, including Michael Colgrass, Jan Bach, Libby Larsen, Andy Akiho, Deborah Fisher Teason, Joey Sellers, Ben Wahlund, Erik Ross, Kevin Bobo, David Gordon, Robert Chappell, Geof Bradfield, Casey Cangelosi, Gustavo Leone, Victor Provost, Etienne Charles, James Gourlay, and Reggie Thomas.

Liam Teague has created arrangements for Panorama, the most celebrated steelband competition in the world, for Nutrien Silver Stars Steel Orchestra, Harvard Harps Steel Orchestra, Starlift Steel orchestra, and Skiffle Steel Orchestra. He has many recordings to his credit, including Hands Like Lightning, For Lack of Better Words, Panoramic: Rhythm Through an Unobstructed View, Open Window, and Sorcerer.

## Conference Committee

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**Chris Tanner** (Chair) See bio on p. 15.

**Stan Ginn** is a drummer/percussionist in Cincinnati. He holds a Bachelor of Music degree in percussion performance from the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music. Since college he has studied privately with teachers in New York City, San Francisco, and Havana, Cuba.

He has performed and/or recorded with a wide variety of artists including Louie Bellson, Mary Wilson and the Supremes, Brian Andres and the Afro-Cuban Jazz Cartel, the Kentucky Symphony Orchestra, Pan Ramajay, Dr. Loco's Rockin' Jalapeño Band, Songo, Janet Pressley, Bailando Desnudo, Donna Summer, Monk, Phil Hawkins, the 4Track

All-Stars, and many more. Stan can currently be seen with The Beasts of Joy, Tropicoso, The Foles, and his own groups Pancaribbean and Mambo Diablo.



In addition to his performance career, Stan has also been involved in music education for over 30 years teaching private and group lessons as well as providing educational programs in schools. His current educational show is entitled Chicka Chicka Boom Boom in which he teaches kids to drum on buckets, barrels, and car parts. He also directs Queen City Samba, an amateur batucada group that plays street samba and samba reggae music from Brasil. Stan also holds an adjunct faculty position at Northern Kentucky University where he received the 2017 Part-Time Faculty Excellence in Instruction Award. When not performing or teaching, Stan is usually hanging out with his lovely wife Kerry and their three amazing boys.

**Nathaniel O'Neal** is the World Percussion Director at DuPont Hadley Middle School in Old Hickory, Tennessee. He teaches middle school students the fundamentals of music through the study of African Diasporic music. Students in the World Percussion Program can participate in multiple ensembles, including Steel Band, Brazilian Samba Bateria, Ghanaian Djembe Ensemble, and Puerto Rico Plena Ensemble. The DuPont Hadley Steel Band has performed many concerts for the community, including collaborative concerts with Vanderbilt Steel Band and W.O. Smith Steel Band.



Nathaniel completed his undergraduate degree at the University of Tennessee at Martin, where he studied with Dr. Julie Hill, Dr. Shane Jones, Dr. Josh Smith, and Dr. Dan Piccolo. Nathaniel completed his master's degree in music education from Middle Tennessee State University, where he studied from Dr. Christopher Dye, Dr. Vannetta-Hall, and Dr. Jamila McWhirter.

## Conference Committee

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Nathaniel studied abroad in many countries during his collegiate career. He studied the history and culture of the steel band in Trinidad & Tobago in 2016. He performed and competed in the St. Lucia Panorama, where his band, Laborie Stee Band, placed second out of ten bands. Nathaniel also studied djembe and gyil technique at the Dagara School of Music in Ghana.

Nathaniel is an active member of the Percussive Arts Society and the National Society of Steel Band Educators.

Nathaniel currently resides in Goodlettsville, Tennessee. Nathaniel is a proud endorser of Innovative Percussion sticks and mallets.

**Obe Quarless** is a Trinidadian-American percussionist, performer, and music educator specializing in steel pan. Following a lineage of Trinidadian musicians, Obe promotes his family legacy and cultural heritage by pursuing his musical career in steelpan performance and education. Obe has performed internationally with world-renowned steel bands WITCO Desperadoes (Trinidad), Laborie Steel Pan (St. Lucia), and Pan Evolution Steel Orchestra (USA) and has made several guest appearances with secondary schools and universities around the country as a performer, drill master, and arranger.



Since 2023, Obe has been the steel band director at the nationally recognized Horace Mann School in Bronx, New York. Previous positions in the education sector include university admission counselor, academic advisor, and state program administrator, to name a few. Obe holds a Bachelor of Arts in music from Whitworth University and a Master of Music in steelpan performance from Northern Illinois University.

**Abby Rehard** recently earned her PhD in Musicology from Florida State University. She holds a bachelor's and master's degree in percussion performance from the University of Missouri-Columbia and Northern Illinois University, respectively. Abby has been playing pan since 2012 and directing FSU's Mas 'n' Steel since 2018. Her research centers on Afro-diasporic drumming and dance traditions and issues of gender, race, and social activism. With the support of the Fulbright Student Program and Presser Foundation, she conducted a yearlong research project with Baque de Mina, an all-women's maracatu group based in Belo Horizonte, Minas Gerais, exploring how women's drumming in public spaces reshapes gendered and racialized hierarchies of visibility and power.



## Conference Committee

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**Tyler Swick** is an elementary music teacher in Las Vegas, NV where he runs an award-winning music program of 1,000+ students and manages the YouTube channel, “Swick’s Classroom.” Swick is a member of the inaugural Yamaha 40 Under 40 Music Educator class, a Grammy Music Educator quarter-finalist, and the only elementary music teacher to receive the Heart of Education Award. Swick has presented on technology in music education at NAMM, NAFME, IMES, Ti:ME, NSSBE, and state-level conferences. Outside of teaching, he has performed at the Latin Grammys, Panorama, and was featured in an international LG phone commercial.

## Education Committee

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**Mike Wendeln** (Chair) is a Cincinnati-based steelband educator, performer, and composer who has taught steelband full-time since 2009. He is the founder and director of Cincy Steel, a community band and recently began a steelband program at Aiken New Tech High School. Previously, he taught at Leon High School in Tallahassee, Florida, where he grew “Lion Steel” into one of the nation’s largest and most successful steelband programs.

An active performer, Wendeln has collaborated with many leading pan artists throughout his years, and has traveled to Trinidad, the home of the “steel pan” to immerse himself in the culture. In 2015 and 2016, he competed with birdsong Steel Orchestra in the Trinidad National Panorama competition.

Beyond education, Wendeln publishes steelband music through his company, Wendeln Music Works, as well as his method book, *Steelband in the Classroom*. He has also worked as a guest clinician and composer, creating commissioned works for steelbands.

He holds a Bachelor’s in Music Education from Miami University and a Master’s in Percussion Performance from Eastern Kentucky University, where he studied under Dr. Chris Tanner and Dr. Jason Koontz.



## Education Committee

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**Matt Dudack** is currently senior lecturer in percussion at the University of Akron where he is artistic director of the acclaimed University of Akron Steel Drum Band. He received two Emmy nominations for his work with *Hammer on Steel*, a PBS broadcast and DVD which has since aired all over the United States.



Collaborations have included such notable steelpan artists as Boogsie Sharpe, Cliff Alexis, Ray Holman, Tom Miller, Liam Teague, Robert Greenidge, Earl Rodney, Andy Narell, Relator, and David Rudder. Matt is also artistic director of the steelband at the Miller South School for the Visual and Performing Arts in Akron. His arrangements and method books are published by MauMauMusic.

**Audrey Holden** is an accomplished percussionist and highly involved music educator who values creating supportive environments that provide young learners with opportunities to strengthen their relationship with music and their community.



Born and raised in Austin, Texas, Audrey graduated from McCallum High School as a member of the McCallum Fine Arts Academy. There she excelled in a number of percussion ensemble and chamber settings, which is where she was first introduced to steel band. Her exposure to the melodious tone of the steel pan in McCallum's Knights of Steel program launched her love for the instrument, leading her to individually pursue higher levels of involvement in the pan community. In 2017, she traveled to Antigua with mentor Emily Lemmerman to perform with West Side Symphony in their Panorama competition. Later that year, Audrey attended the building workshop at the Festival of Steel in Morgantown, West Virginia, where she built her own historical single second pan. Audrey continued her education at TCU earning a BME with a specialization in percussion instrumental music. While at TCU, she performed with their Percussion Orchestra,

Symphony Orchestra, Wind Symphony, and marching band. Her individual achievements include competing as a finalist in the 2019 TCU Concerto Competition performing double seconds concerto Summer Springs by Louis Raymond-Kolker, launching KitchenSync Percussion, a percussion duo focused on commissioning new percussive repertoire, and being named the most outstanding graduating senior in the TCU school of music.

Wielding creativity and innovation as strong suits, Audrey spent her time in the 2020 quarantine co-creating and producing a virtual early music class with Inside Out Steelband, a non-profit organization based in Austin, Texas. The interactive Zoom program, Inside Out Sprouts! was created for children under the age of 5 to continue their musical development while connecting with a new virtual community from the safety of home. Inside Out Sprouts! has completed five month-long seasons and has featured all manner of guests, including Liam Teague, Daron Roberts, and Cara Wildman. Audrey's easygoing

## Education Committee

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nature and sense of humor makes her time teaching students of all ages both rewarding and entertaining. In addition to her involvement in early music classes, Audrey spent several years as a camp counselor at Heart O' the Hills month long summer camp. There, she was able to broaden her community outreach, teaching and connecting to campers ages 6-16. While she served as assistant program director in 2018, Audrey was the recipient of Kitty's Corner, awarded to the most involved and influential counselor of the summer voted on by the entire staff.

Audrey prides herself in being a source of positivity and finds strength as a leader in her ability to spark inspiration and motivation in the people around her. With a love of all things music, entertainment, and educational development, she seeks to continually develop, create and share her musical artistry with those in her community and beyond. Her position as assistant director at the Rhythm Project in Norfolk, Virginia is a blend of these talents and ambitions, and she is excited to contribute to her new students and wonderful staff at the Virginia Arts Festival.

**Vincent Talbert**, a native from Ninety Six, SC, is a percussionist and highly involved music educator who values relationships, community, and excellence through music. Vincent holds a Bachelor degree in Music Education from the University of South Carolina under the direction of Dr. Scott Herring. He is currently in his ninth year as the steel band director at River Oaks Middle School in North Charleston, SC. As the director of the Bobcat Steel Band, he teaches 6 steel bands daily with over 175 students participating throughout the year.



The Bobcat Steel Band, under his direction, have been featured performers at the North Charleston Arts Festival (2014-16), Coastal Carolina Fair (2019), and Disney Performing Arts Showcase (2015-16). The Bobcat Steel Band have also been consistent participants at the Steel Festival at the SC Day of Percussion and NSSBE SC Festival of Steel earning multiple Superior Ratings in 2018, 2019, and 2020.

## The Steel Times

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**Emily Lemmerman** builds and tunes pans for her company, Barracuda Steel Drums, based in Austin, Texas, and is the only woman working full-time as a professional steelpan craftsman and tuner. She travels to work with bands around the world primarily as a tuner, but also as a clinician, adviser, songwriter and performer. Through her travels, Emily has gained uncommon access to and perspective on the global steelband landscape, and has cultivated relationships with many vibrant and interesting people in our worldwide steelband family.



**Andrew R. Martin, Ph.D.**, is Professor of Music at Inver Hills College (Minnesota State University), St. Paul, Minnesota where he teaches courses in music history, music analysis, percussion, and directs the African music ensemble and steelband. He is a sought-after scholar, performer, and clinician throughout the United States, and has directed ethnomusicological outreach projects for the US State Department's embassies in Trinidad, Antigua, and Jamaica. Dr. Martin's research explores globalization, mobilities, Caribbean music and movements, oral histories, tourism, non-western teaching methodologies, American music, and popular and folk music and musicians during the Cold War. He has published widely on the above topics and presented numerous lectures and conference papers throughout the United States, Canada, Caribbean, Europe, Africa, and China. His research has appeared in several print sources including the journals *American Music*, *Journal of Transnational American Studies*, *C.L.R. James Journal*, *Journal of Festival Culture Inquiry and Analysis*, *Pan Podium: The Journal of the British Steel Band Society*, *The Journal of New York Folklore*, and in reference works such as the *Grove Dictionary of American Music*. He is the author of the books *Steelpan Ambassadors: The US Navy Steel Band 1957-1999* and *Steelpan in Education: A History of the Northern Illinois University Steelband*. Forthcoming books include *North Star, Endless Sun: Caribbean Music in the Upper Midwest* and *Holy Rollers: Traditional Music and Steelpan in Caribbean Churches*. As a journalist, Dr. Martin has written for the *Trinidad Guardian*, *Trinidad Express*, *Trinidad Newsday*, *Caribbean Life News (New York)*, and *The Daily Observer (Antigua)*.



**Casey Vaughn** is an educator, designer, and illustrator from Eureka, California. Casey holds a degree in Art with a focus on graphic design and jewelry/small metals, and he is a faculty member in the Department of Art and in the Department of Journalism at Cal Poly Humboldt in Arcata, California. He also owns his own professional graphic design business, Live Loud Design. When he isn't designing, he is probably hanging out with his wife, Leah, and his sons, Kendrick and Macsen—or listening to records, playing guitar, or watching basketball.



## The Steel Times

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As a percussionist and composer, **Eugene Novotney** has performed and presented lectures and master classes in North America, South America, the Caribbean, Europe, Asia, and Africa. Born in 1960 in Cleveland, Ohio, Eugene Novotney received his Bachelor of Music Degree in Percussion from the Cincinnati Conservatory of Music and his Master of Music Degree & Doctor of Musical Arts Degree from the University of Illinois, with emphasis in Percussion, Composition, and Ethnomusicology. He is recognized internationally as a composer of contemporary percussion music, and his compositions are widely performed as standards of the literature. He serves as the Senior Editor of *The Steel Times*.

He is also well known as a steelpan artist and scholar and has been involved in the steelpan movement in the United States since 1982. In 1985, he founded the first steelband in the California State University System, the Humboldt Calypso Band, which he still leads and directs. He has performed in Trinidad's National Panorama Competition five times (1993, 1994, 2003, 2010, 2020), and he serves regularly as an adjudicator for many organizations, including Pan Trinbago, Pan European, the Virginia Arts Festival, and the Percussive Arts Society. He was a member of the adjudication panel of Trinidad's World Steelband Festivals in 1998, 2000, and 2008 held in Port-of-Spain, Trinidad, and also was an adjudicator for Trinidad's World Steelband Festival 2005 held in Madison Square Garden, New York, NY. In addition, he was a member of the adjudication panel of the 2000 European Steelband Festival held in Paris, France, the adjudication panel for the 2005 Trinidad National Schools Music Festival held in Port-of-Spain, Trinidad, and an adjudicator for the 2010, 2011, and 2019 Virginia Arts festival PANoramas held in Virginia Beach, Virginia.

He is Professor of Music and the Director of Percussion Studies at Cal Poly Humboldt in Arcata, California, and is the founder of the 'Percussion in World Music' program for the California State University Summer Arts Program. In 2006, Dr. Novotney was awarded the Wang Family Excellence Award by the California State University Board of Trustees, an award that recognizes California State faculty who, through extraordinary commitment and dedication, have distinguished themselves through exemplary contributions and achievements in their academic disciplines. In 2014, Dr. Novotney was honored as the recipient of Cal Poly Humboldt's distinguished Outstanding Professor Award, an award reserved for faculty who have made superlative contributions to the university and the community in terms of their service, their professional and creative activities, and their outstanding record of teaching excellence. In 2017, Dr. Novotney was selected as the recipient of the Sunshine Award for Education and the Performing Arts in a ceremony held at the AXA Equitable Theatre in NYC for his lifelong dedication to the promotion of Caribbean culture worldwide. Eugene Novotney currently serves as a member of the Percussive Arts Society World Percussion Committee, and is the Senior Editor of *The Steel Times*, the professional journal of the National Society of Steel Band Educators. His recordings have been released on the Bembe, Delos, SANCH, Pogo, Rituals and Earthbeat (Rhino) labels, and his compositions and arrangements are available through Smith Publications of Sharon, Vermont and Mau Mau Music of Cleveland, Ohio. His professional artists endorsements include Black Swamp Percussion and REMO Incorporated.

