

Women Band Directors International



Summa Cum Laude Award

An International Award Recognizing Band Programs of Outstanding Musical Excellence
from Small Schools

Administered by WBDI

Sponsored by Gladys S. Wright

Purpose

The Purpose of this award shall be to identify, recognize, and honor high school band programs from schools with an enrollment of 650 or less, that have demonstrated particularly significant high standards of excellence in concert activities over a period of several years. Selected middle school students may perform as members of the high school band.

How to Apply

The director nominating their band for the award will be asked to submit materials for evaluation purposes. These should include:

1. Concert programs from a minimum of the previous three years.
2. Three copies of digital recordings of state sanctioned concert band festival or contest performances or a professional recording of a concert from the previous two years. Recordings should include a standard march and two contrasting concert selections at grade 3 or higher.
3. Evidence of student participation in Solo and Ensemble festivals.
4. Evidence of student participation in All-District/All-State/other such honor band events.
5. Photographs of the director and concert band.
6. Press clippings or copies of press clippings.
7. Written recommendations of three or more conductors of recognized reputation who have heard the band perform recently.
8. Copies of adjudication forms from state sanctioned concert band festivals/contests.
9. All materials should be submitted online or in a portfolio not more than 1 inch thick.
10. Application deadline is October 1st.

Submit portfolio online or mail to:

Fran Shelton
445 Primrose Lane
Hendersonville, NC 28739

The Award

Bands receiving the Summa Cum Laude Award will receive:

1. The Summa Cum Laude plaque for the director.
2. A distinctive plaque for the school.
3. Certificate for student members of the performing group.



Award Presentation

The award will be presented at the annual luncheon at the Midwest Clinic. If a WBDI member is near enough to the winning school, it may be arranged with the director of the school for a presentation to be made at a concert after the Midwest presentation.

Procedure

Nominations will be received from any source and at any time by Women Band Directors International. The nominations will be evaluated by the selection committee established by WBDI. The selection committee will be composed of successful public school and university band directors who are experienced music educators.

There is no specific number of schools honored each year. Bands that are approved to receive this award will be notified by the selection committee.

Selection Criteria

- The band must have achieved and maintained a high standard in the concert band area over a period of five years.
- The band must have been evaluated by qualified persons and should have received ratings of Superior at state or regional levels of festival or competitive performances.
- The director must have been incumbent in his/her position for at least five years, including the current year.
- A number of students should have participated in all-county/district/state honor bands and similar all area groups, and solo/ensemble events.
- The total program must exemplify what is considered a sound, viable music educational program for the level of endeavor.

Selection Committee

Marilyn Bennett, Olney, TX
Debbie Bradley, Valdeosta, GA
Marilyn Renner, West Lafayette, IN

Tom Reynolds, Mass IT, Boston, MA
Val Sherman, Red Deer, Canada
Fran Shelton, Hendersonville, NC, *chair*
Linda Thompson, San Diego, CA

Members At Large:
Kathy Cox, Blackshear, GA
Karen Williams, Waynesville, NC

Award Sponsor: Gladys Stone Wright



Gladys Stone Wright, founding president of WBDI in 1967, was born in Wasco, Oregon. She graduated from Lebanon High School in Lebanon, Oregon before attending the University of Oregon where she received both her bachelor's and master's degrees. In 1953, she was married to Dr. Al G. Wright.

She has 36 years of teaching experience at the high school level: Elmira High School (enrollment 200) in Elmira, Oregon (1948-1953), Otterbein High School (enrollment 97) in Otterbein, Indiana (1954-1961), Klondike High School (enrollment 300) in West Lafayette, Indiana (1963-1970), and William Henry Harrison High School in West Lafayette, Indiana (1970-1984). Her bands performed in several music education conferences including the Midwest Clinic in 1960. Her bands were known for their traveling tours throughout the United States, Mexico, Canada and Europe. In 1975 her Harrison Band won the Gold Medal at the World Music Contest in Kerkrade, Holland.

Mrs. Wright has received numerous awards and honors throughout her career. In 1959, she was the third woman to be elected to the ASBDA. In 1971 she was awarded the Tau Beta Sigma National Service to Music Award, and in 1973 she was the first woman to receive National Honorary Membership in Phi Beta Mu. In 1984 she was the first woman elected to the ABA. She received the Sudler Gold Medal from the Sousa Foundation, on which she still serves. In 1990, she received the International Golden Rose Award from WBDI. In 1995 she was the first living woman to be inducted into the WBDI Hall of Fame for Distinguished Women Conductors. In 1999, she became the first woman inducted into the National Band Association Hall of Fame. In 1984, she founded *The Woman Conductor* for WBDI and served as executive secretary of WBDI for many years. She served as President of the International Band Tours, and with her husband, Al, she conducted 31 consecutive tours of Europe and England. Included in these tours were two performances at WASBE in Belgium and England. For 13 years she also conducted tours of Central America, during which time she received the Key to the City of Taxco, Mexico. Al and Gladys received the Midwest Medal of Honor. Her philosophy is: *It's not where you are that counts, but what you do while you are there.*

Gladys and Al were awarded the Phi Beta Mu International Award for Service to Music. In 2000 she was inducted into the Honorary Northwest Band Directors Association. In 2001 she was selected as one of the top University of Oregon representatives in 125 years to have a major impact throughout the world. Al and Gladys Wright were honored with the Midwest Lifetime Achievement Award in 2016.



*Honor Roll of
Summa Cum Laude Award Recipients*

2001 – Hendersonville High School – Hendersonville – Director Fran Shelton

2013 – Swain County High School – Bryson City – Director Karen Williams

2018 – Avery County High School – Newland – Director Dee Raby