

NCBA HALL OF FAME AWARD 2016-2017 NOMINEES

Robert Black- *NOMINATED BY: Carrie Lineberger*

Robert Black came to Mount Holly after completing military service in World War II and graduating from Shenandoah Conservatory with a teaching degree in Music. He began teaching band and chorus at Mount Holly High School in 1950. He built the music program into one that was recognized not only in Gaston County, but statewide. The Marching Band received honors through invitations to march in Chicago's Christmas parade in 1953 and in Miami during the Orange Bowl in 1957. At football games in Mount Holly, a new halftime show was produced each and every time. The infamous 'Lights Out' halftime shows were always a crowd favorite with majorettes twirling fire batons and band members with shoulder harnessed flashlights covered in various colors of cellophane. The Concert Band was also exceptional and went to the North Carolina State Band contest where they received four Superior ratings in 1964, 1965, 1967, and 1970.

When Mount Holly High School closed in 1972, he continued at Mount Holly Junior High School and began teaching at the newly formed East Gaston High School. The Senior Band Class of 1976 was his last at East Gaston, but he continued at both Stanley Junior High and Mount Holly Junior High Schools until 1985.

Among his individual honors, Mr. Black was named Mount Holly's 'Man of the Year' in 1962 and later was inducted into the Bandmaster Association in 1976. Being one of 227 nationwide named a 'Distinguished Bandmaster of America' by his peers.

In 1970, Mayor Raymond Moore and the City Council recognized The Mount Holly High School Band for the way it represented the town in such a distinguished and admirable manner. The Mount Holly Schools recognized his 35 years of teaching upon his retirement in 1985. Mayor Charles Black of Mount Holly proclaimed June 12th, 1985 "Robert H. Black Day." The Mayor's proclamation describes his service beautifully:

"His 35 years of service in the Mount Holly School System were marked by outstanding loyalty and devotion to the youth of our community, teaching hundreds of boys and girls, along with being a friend and counselor to them and their parents...his sphere of influence has extended beyond the classroom into the life of our community, enriching and improving life for all of us...throughout his career he has earned the respect and affection of his colleagues, students, and the community."

directors to follow. He has given his students and unbelievable experience and is very deserving of this award.

Craig Everett- *NOMINATED BY: Perry Ditch*

Craig Everett has been a band director at Farmville Central High School and West Carteret High School. While he was at Farmville Central High School he took a very small program in a small school and built it into one of the largest in the Eastern District. Through his leadership the program received many superior ratings and awards.

He later went on to be Director of Bands at West Carteret High School where he took over a great program and made it even stronger. His students and ensembles developed into one the best in the state, receiving many superior ratings and having many students in All-District Band and Honors Band. Craig was known for his excellent musicianship and ability to create a quality program.

Craig was innovative and creative with his marching band shows. Often leading the way into new elements for this performance ensemble. Several directors often looked to him for advice on how to achieve the same performance standards.

Craig Everett also served the district and the state. Listed below are some of the areas he has or is serving in:

Eastern District president 2002-2003

Mentor Representative: 2013 to present

MPA/Festival committee responsible for rewriting the rubric

Eastern District Commissioning committee

ASBDA member, NAFME member

Instrumental in mentoring/developing Marching Bands in Eastern North Carolina

Consulted many band directors on preparing MPA music

Clinician and Auditor in NC, SC, VA

He always found a way to balance the success of the entire band program and support the individual success of his students. Whether they were going on to major in music or engineering or biology or whatever, it didn't matter. He would often take students to college music auditions, would make personal contact with college professors to advocate on their behalf. He would always drive to former students senior recitals. After they graduated, he helped them land a teaching job. After they were hired, he would be in constant communication with them to help mentor and guide them through their first years as a music teacher.

His bands received superior ratings at concert band festival (MPA) for his entire career at West Carteret High School. While at West Carteret he created a program that was comprehensive in scope from marching band to concert band to winter guard to percussion ensemble to jazz ensemble to pit orchestras for musicals to all district band to all state band to all region jazz to all state jazz to east region orchestra, the list goes on and on while maintaining a high level of performance for each endeavor.

He continues to be an ambassador for music education through his church by starting a private lesson music academy that will help area band programs. He also continues with music education by conducting/teaching the Carteret County Community Band.

Craig Everett is very deserving to be in our Hall of Fame. He has helped to move not only his band programs to a high degree of performances, but has been a role model for directors to follow. He has given his students and unbelievable experience and is very deserving of this award.

Jim Hill- *NOMINATED BY: Steven Stevens*

Jim Hill retired from teaching after 45 years as a band director. A native of Greensboro, he received the Bachelor of Arts Degree from Guilford College and the Master of Music Degree from The University of North Carolina at Greensboro. After graduation from Guilford, he became a Graduate Assistant and adjunct professor teaching band and instrumental techniques classes at that school. Upon graduation from UNC-G, he took a position in Union County where he founded the Piedmont High School Band program and taught there for 20 years. During that time he was also band director and instructor at Wingate College. After leaving Piedmont High, he became director of bands at Monroe High School. He completed his teaching tenure at Central Academy for Technology and Arts in Monroe. He still remains active in working with area bands.

His bands were exemplary and were consistently rated Superior at District Festival and at marching contests. Many of his students were selected for membership in All-District Band, All-Region Jazz Band, All-State Band, All-Region Orchestra and All-State Orchestra. Several former students continued study in music and chose it as their major and became professional musicians. He was the regional winner of the "Terry Sanford Award for creativity in Education", and twice received the Time Warner "Star Teacher Award". That award is selected by the valedictorian of the presenting school.

For 25 years he hosted the South Central District Middle School Band Contest/Festival. He produced performance recordings for each band and continues recording the event to this day. District High School Contest/Festivals recordings were, also, produced for 37 years. He served for many years on the District Board of Directors. Mr. Hill was recognized by the South Central District

Bandmasters Association with their "Award of Excellence" He is in demand as a clinician and adjudicator throughout North Carolina and South Carolina. He has published several compositions and arrangements for concert band and marching band.

Several Union County bands have named awards in his name. The Porter Ridge Pirate's Cove Classic awards the "H. James Hill, Jr. Award for Musical Excellence" recognizing the top scoring Union County band. Marvin Ridge High School presents all county bands who participate in the Marching Band Preview yet another "H. James Hill, Jr. Award for Musical Excellence". Union Academy has established "The Jim Hill 'IF' Award" to the student who serves the band with excellence and effort and the belief that if everyone was like that student the band and the world would be better. The Union County Bandmasters Association named him "Director Emeritus" for the county.

Professionally, he has performed with the Greensboro Symphony (Receiving that Orchestra's Scholarship), the Winston-Salem Symphony, the Triad Symphony, the Florence Symphony, the North Carolina Symphony and was with the Charlotte Symphony for 15 years. He was on the staff of the Eastern Music Festival where he performed with the Eastern Philharmonic. He has led orchestras for many stage shows, and has performed with many touring shows and musical spectaculars, and was music director for the Union County Little Theater.

Mr. Hill holds membership in the South Central District Bandmasters Association, the North Carolina Music Educators Association, the Music Educators National Conference and the American School Band Directors Association where he is Eastern District Treasurer. He is a former member of the American Federation of Musicians.

Ed Kiefer- NOMINATED BY: Philip Riggs

Ed Kiefer graduated from Wake Forest University with honors in 1976. He received his Masters in Music Education in 1990 from the University of Greensboro. He served as the Director of Bands at East Davidson High School in Thomasville, NC for 28 years and as Director of Instrumental Music at Pfeiffer University for 6 years. His wind ensemble and jazz bands have performed at the state MENC convention numerous times. Ed adjudicates regularly in marching, concert and jazz festivals and has adjudicated festivals all across the country. He has served as clinician for jazz and wind ensembles for many county, district and state events, including North Carolina All-State and clinics in 12 different states.

Kiefer was awarded the Jaycees Young Educator of the Year Award in 1994 and has been recognized by his fellow band directors with the Award of Excellence. Through Carl Fischer and C. Alan Publications, Kiefer has had over 35 commissions for band and for percussion ensemble, all of which have been published and many of which are on state festival (MPA) lists. His publications have been performed world-wide and featured at the Midwest Clinic in Chicago. He works with young directors as part of the NAFME Mentoring program and travels to band rooms to help directors all over North Carolina. Last year he worked as a clinician at over 100 concert band rehearsals.

Ed has served on the Board of Directors for the Central and Northwest District Bandmasters, the Marching Band Committee, headed the Solo and Ensemble Festival for Central and Northwest District for 15 years, and founded and organized the Eastside Jazz Festival in Thomasville which featured premiere jazz talent from all over the country, attracting over 1500 visitors to the area.

Bill Witcher- NOMINATED BY: Ed Whitener and Rodney Workman

Bill Witcher is a native of Virginia. He attended Appalachian State University where he received his Bachelor of Music degree in 1974 and his Master of Music degree in 1987. While receiving his Master's degree, he was a Graduate Assistant in the School of Music working with the Marching Band, Symphonic Band, Wind Ensemble, and teaching brass methods, private trumpet, and music appreciation. His Master's thesis, a correlation study of music instruction and brain development, was nominated for an outstanding thesis award. He has done further post graduate study at Florida State University.

Mr. Witcher was fortunate to do his student teaching with the famed Lenoir High School Band before the closing of that school. He has taught in the public schools of Madison County, VA, Thomasville City, Rowan County, and Iredell County. He retired in 2006 after 32 years as a band director from the Caldwell County Schools. He was the band director at Hibriten High School, which has long been acknowledged for its musical excellence. The Hibriten Band has earned consistent Superior ratings at the North Carolina State Music Festival in Grade VI music since the opening of Hibriten in 1966. The last 9 Superiors occurred during Mr. Witcher's tenure at Hibriten. Mr. Witcher also taught Advanced Placement Music Theory at Hibriten. During Mr. Witcher's time at Hibriten, the Hibriten Band traveled to New York City 3 times, Atlanta, GA, and Toronto, Canada participating in national music festivals, which earned additional Superior ratings from a national slate of adjudicators. In 2000, the Hibriten Band received the honor of being selected to perform for the North Carolina Bandmasters. Additionally, the Hibriten Band received the coveted Ensemble of Excellence while at the 2002 New York Festival as the top overall band of the Festival.

Since retirement, Mr. Witcher has been a member of the adjunct faculty at ASU teaching brass method courses and serving as the Academic Advisor for the School of Music. He has also been on the staff of Cannon Music Camp directing the Symphonic Band and teaching music theory. He is a former President of the Northwest District Bandmasters and has ran the Middle School State Band Festival. He is a member of the Music Educators National Conference, National Band Association, Phi Mu Alpha Sinfonia, Pi Kappa Lambda, and is an elected member of the American School Band Directors Association, serving as the State Chair since 2006. Mr. Witcher is also a National Board Certified Teacher in Early Adolescence/Young Adulthood Music Education. He is much in demand as an adjudicator and clinician.

Mr. Witcher is married to Nancy Phillips Witcher, a retired choral director and has 2 daughters, Erin and Jenna. Erin is the music teacher at Hudson Elementary School in Lenoir and Jenna is a Board Certified Music Therapist, working with Voices Together in Durham, NC.

You may vote for 3

Robert Black

Craig Everett

Ed Kiefer

Jim Hill

Bill Witcher