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## School of Music Alum Honored for Service in Music Education

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## School of Music Alum Honored for Service in Music Education

Oct. 16, 2013

BLOOMINGTON, Ill.— A young boy from Pekin, Ill. who used to watch in awe as his local Jr. High School band marched down the street has seen his dreams of being a musician come true. Illinois Wesleyan School of Music graduate, George Jones, Class of 1977, has been an active music educator in the Garland, Texas school district (GISD) for the past 35 years. His dedication to the district has earned him the title Texas' Music Administrator of the Year in 2012, and awarded the district Best Community for Music Education under his direction four years running.

After graduating from IWU, Jones went on to earn a master's degree in music from Southern Methodist University. He began his teaching career at GISD in 1979, and has served as the district's director of fine arts for the past 15 years, where he manages the instrument, choir, art, theater, dance and debate programs. Jones has directed bands at a total of four schools in the district, becoming the first-ever director at Rowlett High School.



George Jones '77

The veteran educator, who played the trombone and euphonium while attending school, believes in cultivating relationships of encouragement with his students, and was quoted by Garland ISD Communications saying, "I'm most proud of the contact that I have with former students. Some have found me on Facebook and told me I changed their lives. How many people have that opportunity with their job?"

In addition to his work with GISD, Jones has directed the Richardson Community Band for almost as long as he's worked for the school district. With this band, he started a tradition in 2009 to end each concert with a John Phillip Sousa march. So far, he has conducted 126 of Sousa's 134 available marches.

The musician told Garland ISD Communications, "My goal is to provide free or low-cost entertainment that everyone can enjoy. People don't realize how much work it takes, but seeing a happy audience and the band members' faces beam when they perform a good show, makes it all worth it."

Based on an article powered by the *Dallas Morning News*, April 25, 2013.

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