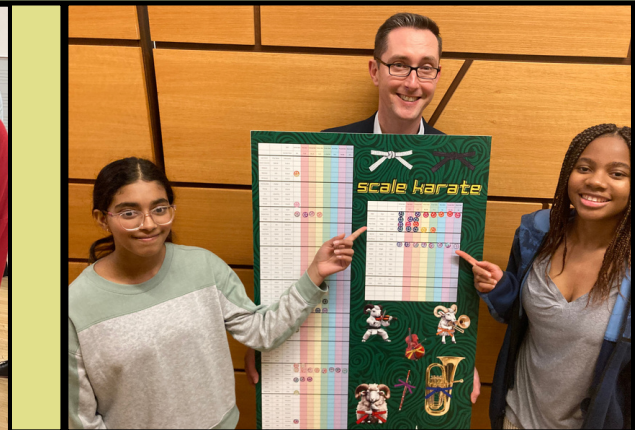




# THE VAULT

The official newsletter of CSU's  
*Middle School Outreach Ensembles (MSOE)*



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## “Feedback at All Levels”

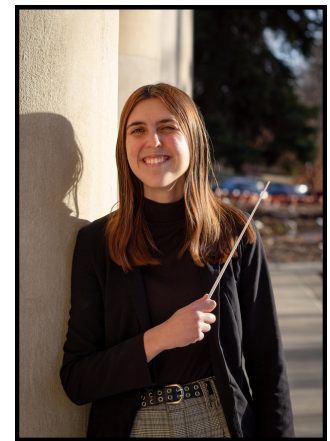
Lucy McCrossan

*Conductor, Feedback System Coordinator, Concert Planning UPD*

Receiving feedback, whether this be advice from a peer or a formal rubric evaluation by a professor, is crucial to our growth as music educators and is an important element of our MSOE program. This year I serve as the Feedback System Coordinator for MSOE, in which I oversee and facilitate the implementation of the feedback system that is used for our Teaching Artists at MSOE. Every week, all of the Teaching Artists receive feedback on their lesson plans and teaching videos from one of their peers who serves as a Feedback Leader. This system allows for Teaching Artists to gain valuable insights from their peers and reflect on their growth throughout the MSOE season.

With the Feedback System, Teaching Artists submit weekly lesson plans and complete a reflection form on their teaching segments. As the Feedback System Coordinator, it was my job, along with the help of the Feedback Leaders, to create the rubrics that would be used to evaluate the lesson plans and teaching videos along with creating a meaningful reflection form for Teaching Artists to fill out after watching their teaching video. Each Teaching Artist is assigned a Feedback Leader who then provides them with completed rubrics and comments on both their lesson plans and teaching videos. As pre-service music educators, it is crucial that we are reflecting on our own teaching in addition to receiving feedback from our peers and fellow educators, and my goal for the feedback system has been to provide Teaching Artists with meaningful and quality feedback.

To help guide the feedback that Teaching Artists receive and to ensure that Teaching Artists receive varying feedback, the MSOE season is split into three trimesters, each consisting of three weeks. As the Feedback System Coordinator, I determined three focus points for Teaching Artists to consider during each trimester and assigned Teaching Artists to new Feedback Leaders for each trimester. With the help of the Feedback Leader Team, we created rubrics and teaching reflection forms that aligned with each trimester’s focus. The first trimester was centered around the teaching persona and self stage of teaching. When reflecting on their teaching during this trimester, Teaching Artists were asked to consider how they presented themselves, how they used both verbal and non-verbal communication, and how they engaged with their students. Feedback Leaders then used these key points to give comments and assess Teaching Artists when providing feedback on their teaching videos. Music educators need to be knowledgeable of how they are presenting themselves to their students, and this first trimester allowed Teaching Artists to focus on this component of their teaching.



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*Recruitment UPD and Carnival Coordinator Ben Landfair leads the band in the reading of Song of Hope by James Swearingen.*

Moving into the second trimester, the focus shifted to teaching behaviors. This includes the instructional planning, instructional execution, and the feedback and forms of assessment being used throughout the teaching segment. After giving Teaching Artists time to reflect on their teaching personas and how they present themselves, I felt that it was important for Teaching Artists to focus on the actual teaching behaviors and techniques that they use in the classroom. For the teaching video reflection form during this trimester, Teaching Artists were asked to rate the logical sequence of their lesson, pacing, and their use of specific feedback. Feedback Leaders

then provided Teaching Artists with specific feedback in relation to their use of teaching behaviors. Learning new teaching techniques and implementing these in lessons is an important part of growing as a music educator, and my goal with the second trimester was for Teaching Artists to grow in this area.

Finally, we are just now entering our third trimester, which is focused around the impact stage of teaching. During this stage, Teaching Artists will reflect on whether their teaching is effective and will allow for students to succeed at their upcoming concert. Now that Teaching Artists have taken the time to reflect on their teaching personas and teaching behaviors, it is time to reflect on how these come together to make an impact on the students' experience. I am looking forward to seeing how Teaching Artists continue to grow and reflect upon their own teaching throughout this third and final trimester.

In addition to receiving feedback from peers through our feedback system, Teaching Artists also receive valuable feedback from our MSOE admin and Master Teachers. We invite Master Teachers who have experience teaching in the field to come and observe our full ensemble and sectional rehearsals at MSOE, who then provide all of the Teaching Artists with individualized feedback. In this way, Teaching Artists receive feedback from all levels in the MSOE program. Receiving feedback from peers, MSOE admin, and Master Teachers allows Teaching Artists to gain perspectives from those of different backgrounds and I have found it incredibly valuable to receive these varying forms of feedback in my journey to becoming a music educator.

I have been in MSOE for the past three years and have enjoyed being involved at various levels. I have grown from both receiving feedback and providing my peers with feedback. Throughout my time as the Feedback System Coordinator, I have enjoyed seeing what my peers are incorporating into their lessons, and have been able to apply this to my own teaching. The MSOE program truly allows for us to learn from our peers, reflect on our teaching, and grow as educators, and I am proud to have been the Feedback System Coordinator this year.

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## “Movement in the Classroom”

Hunter Luedtke  
*Teaching Artist*

With the attention span of children so low it is important to do whatever you can to keep them engaged, having fun, and most importantly learning. There are many ways that you can keep students engaged but one very effective way to do this is to incorporate movement into your lessons. As a student who has ADHD I have always found that when movement of any type was incorporated into that day's learning I ended up being more engaged and enjoying what I was learning. Students' attention spans will not last the whole length of the class so giving students time in class that they can give their brains a break from the traditional learning setting of sitting and listening to the teacher talk at the students. Incorporating movement also can increase energy and focus levels in the classroom.



Incorporating movement can be as simple as moving across the room to find a partner to work with or standing and doing a small activity like acting out how the music feels to us. Having students act out how the music makes them feel is a great way not only to incorporate music but also to get them thinking more about the meaning of the music and making a connection to the music. There are many great resources online for finding other activities that you can try in the classroom. Just because the students are not sitting down in their chairs does not mean that they cannot still be learning.

Another great reason for incorporating movement into the classroom is it keeps things fresh. Because there are so many different ways to do it, it allows you to keep trying new things to find what generally works for your students and how they learn. Keep trying to find new ways to connect with all of your students' ways of learning!



## “Come Together”

Gemma Petrucci  
*Teaching Artist*

Going on for years, we as human beings have gotten more and more divided. Be the political climate, new technology and social media, or literal physical distancing brought upon the Covid-19 Pandemic, the way we interact has shifted greatly within the last decade. In my opinion, music is can be an impactful way to combat this isolation.

I have loved music since I first heard “Folsom Prison Blues” on my dad’s iPod, however my first experience formally making music was in my middle school orchestra. It is there I got a taste of what unity could be brought about by making music in a collaborative environment. When I got to high school, I no longer had room in my schedule for a musical outlet, until my sophomore year of high school, which was directly after Covid-19 happened, closing schools across the world. This was my first year ever being in choir.



This was a unique experience for a multitude of reasons. Not only were there four people, all of us singing different parts, but it was also our Choir Director’s first year at our school. There was a lot of trust and vulnerability shared in that very special group, and I realized just how important turning to music can be in times of trouble. Despite feeling the most isolated I have ever felt in my life, I knew that I would go to my second period choir and get to truly, authentically feel everything that was bearing on my soul.

At heart, this is not a truly unique experience. For centuries, music has helped people turn to each other and lift each other up in times of trouble. From jazz during the Great Depression, to protest songs during the Civil Rights Movement and the Vietnam war, music has always been used as an outlet and to unify. It allows every person involved, musician and audience, to express themselves and to come together as a community.

Whether it be oxytocin (which is released when people make music together), or some other, non-scientific form of pure magic, it’s clear that music has the unparalleled power of bringing people together. Art can change the world. Let this be a reminder why we do what we do-- to cultivate a powerful community that serves as a forceful reminder to kids and adults alike that when they feel broken and afraid and tired, they are not alone. They are never alone.

## Prior 2024 MSOE Master Teachers

### Week #2

Katrina Hedrick - Colorado Music Bridge, Director of Education | Spur Music Lab, Program Director |

Joshua Greiner - Preston Middle School, Orchestra Director | Northern Colorado Youth Orchestra, Co-Director |

Dr. Cody Gifford - Carol Morgan School, Dominican Republic, Director of Instrumental Music | Alexander Technique Specialist

### Week #3

John Hermanson - Fort Collins High School, Orchestra Director | Chair of Colorado ASTA Large Group Orchestra Festival

Alex Koster - Windsor Charter Academy, Band & General Music Teacher

### Week #4

Melissa Claeys - Boltz Middle School, Orchestra Director | Boltz Middle School, Musical Theater Choreographer

### Week #5

Dr. Ingrid Larragoity-Martin - El Sistema, Executive Director | Conservatory Orchestra of Denver Young Artist Orchestra, Conductor

Danielle Johnson - Front Range Youth Symphony, Conductor | Steamboat Symphony Orchestra, Associate Principal

### Week #6

Aaron Herman - Fossil Ridge High School, Band Director

Dr. Seth Pendergast - Colorado State University, Assistant Professor of Music Education



# Meet Our Master Teachers!



**Phuong Nguyen** received his Bachelor of Music Education degree from Colorado State University and learned from such greats as Dr. Charles Lawson, Dr. Gary Moody, and Dr. J. Steven Moore. He also received his Masters of Music in Conducting at Colorado State University, studying with Peter Sommer, Wes Kenney, and Dr. J. Steven Moore. While at CSU, Phuong was awarded the David Paul Knight Scholarship for Jazz, the Award of Highest Distinction at the CSU Research and Creativity Symposium, and was a Senior Honors Recital recipient. Phuong currently plays saxophone and performs with the Fort Collins Wind Symphony, Twelve Cents for Marvin, Choice City Seven, the Fort Collins Jazz Friends as well as a slew of side projects.



With more than 20 years of experience performing in Colorado rock/jazz/ska/reggae bands, he has performed with famous rock bands, Vietnamese pop stars, and has even starred in a few short films! Aside from teaching concert band, jazz band, and guitar at Boltz Middle School (the best middle school in the world!), Mr. Nguyen also mentors CSU students in both practicum and student teaching classes and also teaches private saxophone lessons. With 23 years of teaching experience, Mr. Nguyen has taught music at every level - elementary, secondary, and collegiate - and has been honored to be a guest clinician at honor bands and jazz workshops across the state.

Phuong currently lives in Fort Collins, Colorado, with his beautiful wife Nicole Wilshusen and two lovely daughters, Claire and Ella. He likes to hike, ride motorcycles, snowboard, play basketball, and watch cheesy action movies. Oh, and he's a huge Star Wars nerd.

**Liz Richardson** is in her second year at Greeley Central High School directing orchestras in the Arts Magnet Program. She also teaches piano, digital music, and music history classes. Prior to this, Ms. Richardson taught middle school band, orchestra, and guitar in Cherry Creek. To keep band and orchestra both in her life in Northern Colorado, she has enjoyed teaching woodwinds for the Loveland High School Marching Regiment. Playing music together in ensembles has been a huge part of her whole life and she loves being able to share her love and passion for music with students as they grow. Ms. Richardson graduated from Colorado State University with a Bachelors in Music Education with an instrumental concentration, and loves teaching private viola, flute, and piano lessons along with her GCHS classes. In the Colorado State University Wind Ensemble and Symphony Orchestra, Ms. Richardson performed at state and national conferences. Outside of teaching band and orchestra she has presented at conferences, adjudicated solo and ensemble festivals, and currently performs with the Fort Collins Wind Symphony! In addition to her favorite musical activities, Ms. Richardson loves plants, hiking, and attempting to bake.



**Kathy Van Wert** is the director of bands at Bill Reed Middle School and the assistant director of bands at Mountain View High School, both located in Loveland, CO in the Thompson School District. She teaches two sections of 6th Grade Band, 7th Grade Band, and 8th Grade Band at BRMS. At MVHS, she teaches Concert Band and Intro to Guitar as well as co-teaches Marching Band. Kathy is in her fifth year of teaching at Bill Reed and her second year at Mountain View. Prior to her current position, she taught both band and choir at Bill Reed, and before that, she taught general music at Sunrise Elementary School in the Cherry Creek School District. In addition to her course load at Bill Reed, she also teaches a before-school jazz band, before-school chamber ensembles, and assists in vocal direction for the school musicals. At Mountain View, she is also the technical theatre director for the plays and musicals.

Kathy graduated from Colorado State University in 2018 with a B.M. in Music Education and received her master's degree in Instructional Technology from Fort Hays State University in 2023. Outside of teaching, she enjoys hiking, paddle boarding, baking, and spending time with her husband, Adam, and friends.

