



INSPIRING A PASSION FOR EXCELLENCE

## Open Letter to School Administrators and Parent Booster Organizations

*This document has been prepared to inform school administrators and booster organizations of the benefits associated with ensembles participating in The Disney Honors.*

**The Disney Honors** provides directors with a truly once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to inspire their students to achieve excellence. This unique, non-competitive music festival experience is designed for Middle & High School Choirs, Concert Bands and Orchestras that want to take their performances to the next level through educationally-meaningful evaluation and a post-performance clinic with a distinguished music educator. This unique festival at the Walt Disney World Resort in Florida also includes engaging conversations with the evaluators, presentations by guest speakers, a director's roundtable discussion and magical evening events that only Disney can produce.

For over 80 years, The Walt Disney Company has enjoyed a long heritage of outstanding musical achievements. Walt Disney also believed in education through entertainment.

*"Throughout our career in motion pictures classical music has played a very important part. Early in the beginning we created a cartoon series called 'Silly Symphonies'...simple short subjects that relied heavily on the works of classical composers. The popularity of the 'Silly Symphonies' led us to undertake a major effort, 'Fantasia,' which featured the music of Bach, Dukas, Tchaikovsky, Stravinsky, Mussorgsky, Beethoven and Schubert." — Walt Disney*

**The Disney Honors** has hosted ensembles from Japan and from across the United States. We invite ensembles to stretch their musical abilities and experience an educational and immersive experience like no other. With world-class Disney service, excellent performance venues and unparalleled educational offerings, the difference is distinctly Disney.

**Due to the festival's focus on music education, MENC: The National Association for Music Education officially endorses *The Disney Honors*.**

In order to ensure the best performance experience, **Ludwig/Musser Percussion** and **Glaesel String Instruments** from Conn-Selmer, Inc. are the Official Instruments of *The Disney Honors*.

For additional information you may contact us at 888-833-4735, visit our website at [www.TheDisneyHonors.com](http://www.TheDisneyHonors.com) or email us at [WDWDisneyHonors@Disney.com](mailto:WDWDisneyHonors@Disney.com)

We look forward to the opportunity of hosting your school's ensemble at ***The Disney Honors!***



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## Listing of past Disney Honors Evaluators

**The Disney Honors** has an established tradition of hosting some of the most distinguished music educators to serve as evaluators for the festival and to provide meaningful and positive written and recorded feedback. In addition, one evaluator will also conduct a 30-minute post-performance clinic for each ensemble.

**Below is a list of the past Disney Honors Evaluators:**

### **INSTRUMENTAL EVALUATORS**

Dr. Louis Bergonzi -- The Eastman School of Music (2005)  
Mr. Eugene Corporon -- University of North Texas (2005)  
Prof. Paula Crider -- University of Texas (2006, 2007)  
Mr. Richard Floyd -- University of Texas (2005, 2006, 2007, 2011)  
Col. Arnald D. Gabriel -- United States Air Force retired (2005, 2009)  
Dr. Robert Gillespie -- The Ohio State University (2007, 2009)  
Mr. Gary Green -- The University of Miami (2005)  
Mr. Jung - Ho Pak -- San Diego Chamber Orchestra/Interlochen Center for the Arts (2006, 2007, 2011)  
Dr. David Littrell -- Kansas State University (2007)  
Mr. Larry Livingston -- University of Southern California (2011)  
Dr. Sarah McKoin -- Texas Tech University (2007)  
Mr. Allan McMurray -- University of Colorado (2005, 2008)  
Dr. Linda Moorhouse -- University of Illinois (2011)  
Mr. H. Robert Reynolds -- University of Southern California (2005, 2009)  
Dr. Mark Scatterday -- Eastman School of Music (2009)  
Dr. Frank Ticheli -- University of Southern California (2007)  
Dr. Larry D Wyatt -- University of South Carolina (2005)

### **CHORAL EVALUATORS**

Dr. Jerry Blackstone -- University of Michigan (2005, 2011)  
Dr. Lynn Brinckmeyer -- Texas State University (2011)  
Dr. Rodney Eichenberger -- Florida State University (2007)  
Dr. Eph Ely -- University Of Missouri-Kansas City (2007)  
Dr. Joseph Flummerfelt -- Westminster Choir College (2007)  
Dr. Craig Jessop -- Mormon Tabernacle Choir/Utah State University (2007, 2009, 2011)  
Dr. James Litton -- American Boy Choir (2009)  
Mr. Richard Nace -- University of Puget Sound (2009)  
Dr. Weston Noble -- Luther College (2005, 2006, 2007)  
Dr. Sharon Paul -- University of Oregon (2009)  
Dr. William C. Powell -- Auburn University (2007, 2011)  
Dr. John Sinclair -- Rollins College (2005)  
Dr. Charles Smith -- Michigan State University (2005)  
Prof. Jing Ling-Tam -- University of Texas-Arlington (2006, 2007)



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## Testimonials from Participating Directors and Evaluators

*"The Disney Honors masterfully combines elements of a distinctive multi-faceted music festival with a broad array of matchless educational opportunities that only "Disney Magic" can provide. Guided by the seemingly limitless vision and imagination of Disney and featured nationally recognized conductors and educators as clinicians this event is destined to attract the very finest in high school performing ensembles from across the nation."*

**Richard Floyd, State Director of Music, Interscholastic League, University of Texas**  
(Evaluator at *The Disney Honors* 2005, 2006, 2007, 2011)

*"The Disney Honors is a first-class festival in every way--great performance venue, terrific choirs, and a substantial amount time for each choir to interact with an experienced conductor/adjudicator. Couple this with the excitement that is Disney and you have an educational experience like none other."*

**Jerry Blackstone, Director of Choirs and  
Chair of the Conducting Department at the University of Michigan**  
(Evaluator at *The Disney Honors* 2005, 2011)

*"The combination of clinics, taped comments, and master class lectures by leaders in the profession provides all of the people ingredients to make the event a national treasure."*

**Allan McMurray, Director of Bands at the University of Colorado**  
(Evaluator at *The Disney Honors* 2005, 2008)

*"The Disney Honors has all the ingredients of a special festival. Great attention is given not only to the musical growth of the ensembles, but also the personal growth of the individual musicians. This against the backdrop of Disney World - a unique package."*

**Dr. Weston Noble, Director of Music Activities, Luther College**  
(Evaluator at *The Disney Honors* 2005, 2006, 2007)

*"Usually, the classroom music teacher is the cheerleader, pianist, director, counselor, disciplinarian, reinforcer, advocate, parent, bus driver, drama coach, stage manager, sound technician, arranger and composer. But for one short weekend, I was reminded why I am here and why I do this every day. Thank you for a wonderful experience!"*

**Cindy Hunt, Choral Director, Westchester Academy**

*"It was so refreshing to have education and improvement as the total focus of the evaluators as opposed to trying to put a number on a performance."*

**Darrell Pearman, Band Director from Woodbridge Sr. H.S.**

*"Again, I want to thank you for the opportunity to perform. I have no doubts that my students will remember this event like no other they have experienced during their time with me. I can think of no greater measure of a trips' value."*

**Mark Veenstra, Band Director for Cy-Fair HS Band**



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## Testimonials from Participating Directors and Evaluators

*"I wanted to take a moment to say thanks to you, and to the entire staff, for providing us with such an incredible experience at **The Disney Honors**. Every one of our Salem folks, students, and parents alike, said it was one of the best trips we have ever taken. Everything was simply great from every aspect ...The obvious thought and care that you and your staff put into the creation of this event was evident in so many ways... The musical experience was, in a word, outstanding. The opportunity to sing for, and work with, even one of the clinicians would have been great; having all of them listening and providing comments, critique, and encouragement was simply incredible. Their openness, professionalism, and willingness to share truly inspired my students ...so much so that the effect is still evident more than a month later as we prepare for our final performance of the year. **The Disney Honors** has most definitely 'raised the bar' for festival experiences. I hope we are able to return and participate again VERY soon!"*

**Dr. Don Krudop, Director of Choral Music Education, Salem High School**

*"This was the best trip I have ever taken with my students and they all agreed it was worth every difficult thing we did to get there. I have never been to such a well-organized festival and I've never been to a festival which was so positive to both the students and myself. I felt so affirmed, and in talking with the evaluators (a stellar panel) found myself to be among friends, who are all educators who believe as I do, that it is a calling to be a teacher. It will be difficult to top this experience, both musically and educationally."*

**Martha Springstead, Choral Director, Landstown High School**

*"It was truly about the students, teachers, the music and in making a positive experience for everyone involved. Congratulations on creating an exceptional event for all of us."*

**Dr. Craig Jessop, Music Department Head, Utah State University &  
Former Director, Mormon Tabernacle Choir**  
(Evaluator at *The Disney Honors* 2005, 2006, 2007, 2011)

*"As a conductor who has worked with many different all-state festivals and clinics throughout the country, **The Disney Honors** is one of the most unique and valuable programs a director can consider for their ensembles. In a healthy non-competitive atmosphere, I was able to share my best advice with the groups in a focused and stress-free setting. And since it's over several days at one location, we could sit and talk with the students and directors individually, discussing everything from repertoire and teaching ideas, to trends in our profession. It's a dream program for ensembles ready for an extraordinary experience. There is not another program like this in the world."*

**Jung-Ho Pak, Music Director, New Haven Symphony Orchestra, Music Director,  
San Diego Chamber Orchestra, Music Director,**  
(Evaluator at *The Disney Honors* 2006, 2007, 2011)

*"The entire event was first class in every way, and it was most refreshing to have the opportunity to contribute to taking bands to that elusive 'next musical level' without the burden of ratings or competition."*

**Paula Crider, Professor Emeritus, The University of Texas**  
(Evaluator at *The Disney Honors* 2006, 2007)