

# UNIVERSITY BANDS UPCOMING EVENTS

## APRIL 2026

### Viennese Ball

Apr. 10-11 | 7pm | Davies Center

### Varsity Band

Apr. 16 | 7:30pm | Gantner Hall

### EAU CLAIRE JAZZ FESTIVAL

### Downtown Jazz Crawl

Apr. 17 | 5pm- 2am | Downtown

### Headliner Concerts

Apr. 17, 18 | 7:30pm | RCU Theatre

Feat. Jazz Ensembles I and II,  
and Byron Stripling & Wycliffe Gordon

### Jazz Ensembles 3 & 4

Apr. 21 | 7:30pm | Gantner Hall

### University Band

Apr. 28 | 7:30pm | Gantner Hall  
*UWEC-BC Communiversy Band*

### Symphony Band

Apr. 29 | 7:30pm | RCU Theatre

Feat. Student Concerto and  
Conductor Winners  
*Osseo-Fairchild High School*

## MAY 2026

### Wind Symphony

May 2 | 7:30pm | RCU Theatre

Feat. Student Concerto and  
Conductor Winners  
*River Falls High School*



# CONCERT BAND SHOWCASE CONCERT

Symphony Band

Dr. Phillip Ostrander, conductor

Wind Symphony

Dr. John R. Stewart, conductor

University Band

Dr. Kara Metzger, conductor

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**Tuesday, April 7th, 2026**

**7:30pm | RCU Theatre**

**Pablo Center at the Confluence**

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## **-PROGRAM-**

### **UNIVERSITY BAND**

Dr. Kara Metzger, conductor

Orion.....**Jan Vander Roost (b. 1956)**

Sheltering Sky.....**John Mackey (b. 1973)**

Choral & Shaker Dance II.....**John Zdechlik (1937-2020)**

### **SYMPHONY BAND**

Dr. Phillip Ostrander, conductor

Fanfare Forza.....**Brian Balmages (b. 1975)**

Over the Blue and Green.....**Clare Howard (b. 2001)**

English Dances.....**Malcolm Arnold (1921-2006)**

- I. Andantino
- II. Vivace
- III. Mesto
- IV. Allegro risoluto

### **WIND SYMPHONY**

Dr. John R. Stewart, conductor

Riders Ready?.....**Adam Wojtasiak (b. 2004)**  
*Student Composition*

Bravado.....**Gala Flagello (b.1994)**

March from Symphonic Metamorphosis.....**Paul Hindemith  
(1895-1963)**  
**arr. Paul Wilson (1916-2013)**

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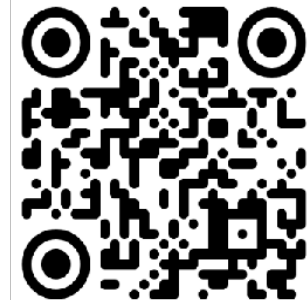
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# EDUCATIONAL MUSIC FESTIVALS AT UW-EAU CLAIRE

UW-Eau Claire is host to a variety of music festivals for band, choir, and orchestra students. Each year we connect outstanding musicians of all ages across the region to experience immersive educational experiences with faculty and critically acclaimed guest artists. Save the dates below for our 2026-27 annual festival style events and find out how you or your school ensemble can get involved!

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## 2026-27 UWEC MUSIC FESTIVALS

September 19, 2026 | Honors Orchestra

October 17, 2026 | Clearwater Choral Festival

October 25, 2026 | OctOBOE & Bassoon  
Spooktacular

October 31, 2026 | Double Bass Day

November 7, 2026 | HS Honor Band Op. 60

January 14, 2027 | MS Honor Choir

January 22, 2027 | MS Honor Band Op. 10

February 14, 2027 | Woodwind Day

February 11, 2027 | Tenor-Bass Festival

March 2, 2027 | Treble Choir Festival

April 6, 2027 | Concert Band Festival

April 16-17, 2027 | Eau Claire Jazz Festival

April 24-25, 2027 | Alumni Band Weekend

## -PROGRAM NOTES- UNIVERSITY BAND

### Orion - Jan Vander Roost

There are all sorts of marches: fast and slow, solemn and energetic, military and civil, procession and funeral. **Orion** is a so-called 'slow march'. However, the moderate tempo does not make a passive or heavy impression. On the contrary, this march contains natural optimism and spontaneity. The persistent 'pulse' gives this majestic march a noble character.

*-Program Note from publisher*

### Sheltering Sky - John Mackey

The wind band medium has, in the twenty-first century, a host of disparate styles that dominate its texture. At the core of its contemporary development exists a group of composers who dazzle with scintillating and frightening virtuosity. As such, at first listening one might experience John Mackey's **Sheltering Sky** as a striking departure. Its serene and simple presentation is a throwback of sorts -- a nostalgic portrait of time suspended.

The work itself has a folksong-like quality -- intended by the composer -- and through this an immediate sense of familiarity emerges. Certainly the repertoire has a long and proud tradition of weaving folksongs into its identity, from the days of Holst and Vaughan Williams to modern treatments by such figures as Donald Grantham and Frank Ticheli. Whereas these composers incorporated extant melodies into their works, however, Mackey takes a play from Percy Grainger. Grainger's *Colonial Song* seemingly sets a beautiful folksong melody in an enchanting way (so enchanting, in fact, that he reworked the tune into two other pieces: *Australian Up-Country Tune* and *The Gum-Suckers March*). In reality, however, Grainger's melody was entirely original -- his own concoction to express how he felt about his native Australia. Likewise, although the melodies of *Sheltering Sky* have a recognizable quality (hints of the contours and colors of *Danny Boy* and *Shenandoah* are perceptible), the tunes themselves are original to the work, imparting a sense of hazy distance as though they were from a half-remembered dream.

The work unfolds in a sweeping arch structure, with cascading phrases that elide effortlessly. The introduction presents softly articulated harmonies stacking through a surrounding placidity. From there emerge statements of each of the two folksong-like melodies -- the call as a sighing descent in solo oboe, and its

answer as a hopeful rising line in trumpet. Though the composer's trademark virtuosity is absent, his harmonic language remains. Mackey avoids traditional triadic sonorities almost exclusively, instead choosing more indistinct chords with diatonic extensions (particularly seventh and ninth chords) that facilitate the hazy sonic world that the piece inhabits. Near cadences, chromatic dissonances fill the narrow spaces in these harmonies, creating an even greater pull toward wistful nostalgia. Each new phrase begins over the resolution of the previous one, creating a sense of motion that never completely stops. The melodies themselves unfold and eventually dissipate until at last the serene introductory material returns -- the opening chords finally coming to rest.

*-Program Note from publisher*

### **Chorale and Shaker Dance 2 - John Zdechlik**

**Chorale and Shaker Dance II** is made up of two main ideas. The first is the simple melody found in the opening Chorale. The second melodic idea is the melody from the well-known Shaker hymn, *The Gift to Be Simple*. The first John Zdechlik Chorale and Shaker Dance, composed in 1971, became a staple of the Grade 4 concert band repertoire. In 1989, Zdechlik decided to create a slightly more modest version of the piece, accessible to high school bands as well as more advanced junior high bands. Since its publication, *Chorale and Shaker Dance II* has become a favorite with young bands and their directors. This "big" work for young band is a theme and variations, actually based on two themes. The first theme is a simple, original tune used in the opening chorale. Almost immediately, Zdechlik introduces the next theme, the Shaker dance melody *Simple Gifts*. Low winds hint at the Shaker melody, then high woodwinds and orchestral bells give way to large brass blocks alternating with high woodwinds.

Following the chorale section, the tempo revs up with a timpani roll and solo alto sax. Zdechlik creates a tour-de-force, full of imaginative variants in melody, harmony, and rhythm. Soloists and small groups play fragments, melodies are interspersed and augmented, then diminished again, and energy builds as bursts of percussion and brass cut through long, linear phrases. The Shaker melody is traded between various instrument groupings. A cut-time section develops into a more tranquil feel, which leads into "the slow part," which is not exactly tranquil, but perhaps a bit foreboding. Fresh harmonies abound behind the fragmented Shaker melody. Brass introduces an ascending minor third interval, along with eighth-note triplets. The triplet rhythm continues, intervals getting larger, until finally concluded with the trumpets playing the last questioning triplets, and we are led

Southeast Asia. Dr. Stewart maintains an active schedule as a guest conductor and clinician across the United States. He completed his Doctor of Philosophy in Music Education (2013) at the University of Minnesota while studying conducting with Craig Kirchhoff. Dr. Stewart earned his Master of Arts in Music Education from the University of South Florida (2009) and a Bachelor of Music Education from the University of Central Florida (1996). Prior to his appointment at UWEC, Dr. Stewart was Interim Conductor of the St. Cloud State University Wind Ensemble (Minnesota). Dr. Stewart served as Director of Bands at Saint Cloud High School (Florida) from 1996-2010 where he directed the Wind Ensemble, Symphonic Band, Jazz Ensemble, Chamber Winds, Percussion Ensemble and Marching Band. In 2006, he earned his National Board for Professional Teaching Standards and in 2008 was named the St. Cloud High School "Teacher of the Year."

Dr. Stewart contributed to *Teaching Music through Performance in Band: Solos with Wind Band Accompaniment* published by GIA Publications, Inc., has published articles in *Contributions to Music Education*, the *Minnesota Music Educators Association Journal*, the *NBA Journal*, and presented sessions at the Society for Music Teacher Educators bi-annual conference, the Wisconsin Music Educators Association State Conference, the National Band Association – Wisconsin Chapter State Conference, the MMEA Mid-Winter Clinic, the Florida Music Educators Association Convention, the Colorado Music Educators Association Convention, and the World Association of Symphonic Bands and Wind Ensembles Conference in Prague, CZ.. His current research interests include Comprehensive Musicianship through Performance (CMP) and repertoire.

Dr. Stewart presently serves as a member of the board for the Wisconsin Concert Band Association and is the state chair for the National Band Association. His professional affiliations include College Band Directors National Association, National Association for Music Education, Wisconsin Music Educators Association, the National Band Association, the World Association for Symphonic Bands and Wind Ensembles, and Pi Kappa Lambda.

## WIND SYMPHONY

### FLUTE

^Devan Schrader  
Grace Neuenfeldt  
Taylor Vega  
Caitlyn Geiss  
Julia Palaia

### OBOE

^Berit Fitzsimonds  
Connor Janowiec

### ENGLISH HORN

Tyler Cullen

### CLARINET

^Micaela Huesemann  
Niamh Troupe (Eb)  
Mya Lydeen  
Michael Walbran  
Hailey Fenner  
Nathan Phillips  
Maria Carson  
Abi Underwood  
Kaitlynn Moore  
Maisy Youngbauer

### BASS CLARINET

Wyatt Spier

### BASSOON

^Elise Liske  
Michael Richter

### ALTO SAXOPHONE

Zach Heder  
Caroline Gates  
Lily Cooper

### TENOR SAXOPHONE

Dan Kalish

### BARI SAXOPHONE

Emily Toews

### TRUMPET

^Dylan Butler  
Adeline Goettel  
Jonathan Schache  
Josh Krause  
Cedric Brown

### FRENCH HORN

Sierra Link  
Matthen Hahn  
Simeon Doyen  
Mateo Etherton  
Anaka Velie  
Carly Hetrick

### PIANO

Lyzetta Bartman

### TROMBONE

Jacob Miller  
Calder Smith  
Anton Granatella  
Sam Clark  
Ava Hurst

### BASS TROMBONE

Matt Fitzgerald

### EUPHONIUM

Drew Fleming  
Donovan Brown

### TUBA

^Miles Gleason  
Lauren Finn

### PERCUSSION

^Adam Wojtasiak  
Fletcher Myhre  
Emily Jacobs  
Jaime Leonetti  
Gabe Fittante  
Amelia Milton

### DOUBLE BASS

Esme Olstadt

into a recap of the fast section of the piece. Again, a timpani roll announces the brisk tempo, and the familiar alto sax, flute, and clarinet fragments make their reappearance. This section builds quickly with recognizable patterns and sequences, but this time, with new developments in the harmonic and melodic workings of the main themes. A feeling of anticipation is created as energy builds with each new addition and familiar refrain. Finally, in a flurry of rapid trills and powerful statements of the Shaker tune, fragmented as they are, we come to the conclusion of this wonderful piece of concert band music. A timpani solo grows ever slower and slower, until the final chord rings, held out for as long as the band can continue to make a beautiful sound.

*-Program Note by composer & Nancy Moser for the Joaquin Miller Middle School Advanced Band concert program, 21 February 2015*

## SYMPHONY BAND

### Fanfare Forza – Brian Balmages

Written to celebrate the opening of the new Performing Arts Center at Brainerd High School in Minnesota, this powerful fanfare symbolically brings all of the students together. Prior to the PAC being built, music students would have to walk off campus to another location. Originally titled Warriors in Unison, this piece signifies the first time all students (the Brainerd Warriors) were able to come together on campus and perform in a brand new space. The music is powerful, highly rhythmic, and is constantly driving forward. Despite being just 3 minutes in length, the music has a clear and substantial thematic, rhythmic and harmonic development. Fanfare Forza was commissioned by the Brainerd High School Bands (Christopher Fogderud and Kelsi Olson, Conductors) in honor of their new Performing Arts Center.

*-Program Note by composer*

### Over the Blue and Green – Clare Howard

One very hot summer, I accompanied a group visiting the Kennedy Space Center in Florida. During this time, we sat down with two retired astronauts who told us about their experiences in space. One astronaut, when asked how his perspective on life has changed since being in space, recalled seeing the Earth as an inherently peaceful place, like this beautiful blue and green thing, which he now felt a stronger duty to protect. When asked to share her favorite memory during a mission, the other astronaut detailed a story about being ahead of schedule during a mission, and in the free time she was allowed, watching Earth from the windows



**Dr. John R. Stewart** is Professor of Music and Director of Concert Bands at the University of Wisconsin – Eau Claire where he conducts the Wind Symphony, teaches courses in conducting and repertoire, supervises student teachers, coordinates the concert band program, and serves as the Wind and Percussion Area Coordinator. Under his leadership, the Wind Symphony performed at the International Tuba Euphonium Conference, the CBDNA/NBA North Central Division Regional Conference, the Minnesota Music Educators Association Mid-Winter Clinic, and his ensembles have performed across Europe and

of the spaceship. She recalled stretching out her arms, feeling like she was an angel watching over Earth. I've been imagining myself in these astronauts' places, wondering what the world would be like if we all saw ourselves as guardians of Earth in this way. This piece explores the feeling of watching over our planet, cherishing its beauty—flying over the blue and green.

*-Program Note by composer*

### **English Dances – Malcolm Arnold**

Malcolm Arnold's publisher, Bernard de Nevers, suggested that a suite of dances be composed to provide an English counterpart to Antonin Dvorak's Slavonic Dances or Bartok's Romanian Folk Dances. Arnold developed eight original melodies that seemed firmly rooted in traditional English dance and song. The melodies were divided into two sets of four. Written in 1950, English Dances was dedicated to de Nevers. The first movement, Andantino, opens quietly to 4-part chords played by the French horns and a melody introduced by the oboe. The melody is reminiscent of the gentle movement of a country breeze or the slowly flowing streams, sometimes becoming agitated when encountering obstacles. Both the obvious and haunting bell tones heard in this movement and the others have been suggested as the source for the English nature of the dances. The church bells in the towns and cities of England are often tuned to the notes of the diatonic scale (i.e., the notes of the white keys of a piano). This scale is used extensively by Arnold, who believed in its "eternal value." The second movement, Vivace, begins with bell tones that seem to signal the start of festivities in a village town. Mesto, the third movement, translates as sad or melancholy. The final movement, Allegro risoluto, is characterized by a driving and determined rhythm in the brass with ornamentation from the woodwinds.

*-Program Note by Roy Stehle*

## **WIND SYMPHONY**

### **Riders Ready? – Adam Wojtasiak**

"Okay riders, random start. Riders ready, watch the gate..." When I was 8, my dad introduced me to his favorite sport from his childhood: BMX Racing. I instantly fell in love with the thrill and challenge the sport offered. Through BMX Racing, I learned perseverance, grit, courage, and a drive for self-improvement—all of which have proved extremely useful throughout life. **Riders Ready?** is a celebration of everything I learned from BMX, as well as the nostalgic memories I have of racing with my dad.



**Dr. Phil Ostrander** is Professor of Trombone and Bands at the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire where he conducts the Symphony Band, teaches private trombone, and trombone ensemble. Dr. Ostrander completed his doctoral studies at the Eastman School of Music. Dr. Ostrander received master's degrees in both trombone and wind conducting from the New England Conservatory, as well as a bachelor's and Performer's Certificate from Eastman. Prior to working at UW Eau Claire, he taught at SUNY Geneseo and Bethany College in Kansas.

He has performed with the Minnesota Orchestra, the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra, the Boston Pops Esplanade Orchestra, the Rochester Philharmonic, the Kansas City Symphony, the Buffalo Philharmonic, and the popular chamber groups Rhythm and Brass and the Burning River Brass Ensemble. Currently, he is Principal Trombone of the Minnesota Opera Orchestra. He performs on Broadway shows in Minneapolis - Hennepin Avenue Theatre District, recently on *Wicked* and *Some Like It Hot*. An accomplished jazz trombonist, Dr. Ostrander has collaborated with jazz artists Maria Schneider, Jim McNeely, Jimmy Heath, Claudio Roditi and Rich Beirach. He teaches jazz and created the Trombone Workshop at the Shell Lake Arts Camp in northern Wisconsin. He has recorded on Sony Classical with the Eastman Wind Ensemble and Naxos with the IRIS Orchestra. Dr. Ostrander is a clinician for the Conn-Selmer Musical Instrument Company.

## SYMPHONY BAND

### FLUTE

^Ava Mattson  
Ann McCarthy  
Anneliese Jensen  
Chloe Horrell  
Anna Motzko  
Marie Dums  
Katie Johnson

### OBOE

^Ava Renner  
Moiria Leuwerke

### CLARINET

^Amaria Kejo  
Isabelle Wilhelmi  
Maxwell Rogers  
Cece Maroszek  
Charlotte Hawley  
Brian Richter  
Abbey Sargent  
Chambriel Ridings  
Carson Kwong  
Audrey McNamara

### BASS CLARINET

Hazen Stangl  
Rory Anderson

### BASSOON

Kai Fenner

### SAXOPHONE

^Caleb Songer  
David Varga  
Kietra Malone  
Leah Kincaid  
Devin Flood  
Matthew Walbran  
Landen Lee

### TRUMPET

^Sean Litterer  
Otto Gustafson  
Ethan Lundy  
Katie Arvidson  
Onni Kisner  
Colin Besel

### FRENCH HORN

^Elliott Voigt  
Ava John  
Jermaine RunningBear  
Calder Smith

### TROMBONE

^Owen Ruck  
Keegan Xiong  
Kaitlin Vanderloop  
Lydia Wipf  
Lauren Droberg  
Joe Callanan  
Jonas Daso

### EUPHONIUM

^Danté Mulkey  
Dominic Lirones  
Max Westom  
Cody Morrow

### TUBA

^Everett Krajicek  
Emma Lehe  
Jacob Rausch  
Matt Wood

### PERCUSSION

^Presley Wolf  
Peter Wise  
Lilian Jaquette  
Katelyn Cuturia  
Genevieve Kerr  
Brody Nielsen  
Ethan Vanden Heuvel

In writing this piece, I was inspired by the types of music that I listened to the most at that point in my life: film music (John Williams' E.T. soundtrack), video game music (Mario Kart) and heavy metal (Metallica, Avenged Sevenfold, Dio). The first sounds you'll hear are a musical quotation of the USABMX start cadence, the beeping noise played before the gate drops in each race. The beginning of the piece captures the thrill and childlike wonder I remember from racing, complete with musical depictions of the "flying" feeling you get when soaring over a ramp. The middle section takes a darker tone, portraying the danger in the sport—picture you're "handlebar to handlebar" with another racer, zipping around turns and flying over ramps. The final portion of the piece intensifies, as you put all your effort into beating your rival. You pedal as hard as you can and the world seems to enter slow motion as you fly across the finish line and take the win!

*-Program Note by composer*

### Bravado – Gala Flagello

**Bravado** (2023) was written for the Tanglewood Music Festival 2023 orchestral readings and explores the many connotations of the word "bravado," a descendant of the old Italian adjective *bravo*, meaning "wild" or "courageous." A person with bravado can be seen as bold or reckless, daring or arrogant, confident or overbearing. The [band] musically embodies this range of traits through the transformation of the piece's primary melody. Huge thanks to Lt. Col. Jason Fettig and "The President's Own" United States Marine Band for commissioning this band version of *Bravado*.

*-Program Note by composer*

### March from Symphonic Metamorphosis – Paul Hindemith arranged Paul Wilson

Hindemith composed this work in 1943 while teaching at Yale University. Believing strongly that the work should be made available in a band version, he asked his Yale colleague Keith Wilson to make a transcription. After permission was finally granted by the publisher in 1960, Wilson worked on this arrangement for 18 months. He regarded it as his largest and most significant transcription. The important two-bar fragment which is stated by the brass at the outset reappears and is developed at different points of punctuation throughout the movement. There is also a more lyrical "trio" theme which is repeated and developed. The form is somewhat different from that of a standard march.

*-Program Note from Program Notes for Band*

## UNIVERSITY BAND

### FLUTE/PICCOLO

Olivia Bartel  
Hannah Bulera  
Grace Cole  
Hanna Cook  
Chloe Duignan  
Amelia Grisby  
Izzy Hannay  
Hallie Hatfield  
Claire McCormick  
Alex Peacock  
Robin Pence  
Shivani Saravanan  
Norah Selby  
Paige Simanski  
Ben Tanner  
Jada Wahl  
Peter Wise

### CLARINET

Cora Adkins  
Nate Andersen  
Ronnie Black  
Lydia Breezee  
Alyssa Buhl  
Hannah Cook  
Memphis Cooper  
Kristen Friesth  
Cassi Garrison  
Reed Graf  
Rylan Halverson  
Rebecca Hunter  
Hannah Parrish  
Joaquin Perez  
Tanaya Pillai  
Veronica Shafer  
Ressa Smrecek  
Ayla Sonnek  
Hannah Stewart  
Jenny Szelagowski  
Rayna Thiel  
Sierra Voss

### BASS CLARINET

Owen Yeager

### OBOE

Bryce Berglund  
Adalia Bock  
Nina May Johnson  
Olivia Turks

### BASSOON

Olivia Crayton  
Clover Jenkins

### ALTO SAXOPHONE

Mackenzie Bubolz  
Mckenna Daye  
Sydney Eakin  
Parker Hutzler  
Josie Krueger  
Ann McCarthy  
Georgia McManus  
Cres Stratton  
Miriam Trotter  
Owen Van Brunt  
Mason Zerwas

### TENOR SAXOPHONE

Brooklynn Lombard  
Scarlette Miller  
Amina Ndiaye  
Kane Towns  
Alanis Viana

### BARI SAXOPHONE

Keegan Cummings

### TRUMPET

Lincoln Ferris  
Lucas Folco  
Sudra Gabrielson  
Landon Hazelton  
Jacob Itzen  
Aidan Joaquin  
Maddie Lindquist  
Alexa Lortiz  
Logan Morrisson  
Timothy Noren  
Burno Orłowski  
Emily Schlemmer  
Bennett Tank  
Troy White  
Arie Wilschut

### FRENCH HORN

Katelyn Arvidson  
Sarah Broeckert  
Asher Garvin  
Maddie Heuss  
Solveig Johnson  
Soph Klemm  
Aiden Lee  
Henry Mota  
Bryn Romeis  
Jermaine Running Bear  
Kimberly Schultz  
William Spencer  
Quinn Stephens

### TROMBONE

Jonas Franklin  
Andy Haralson  
David Lawrence  
Edison Lin  
Lilia Theisen  
Annie Vellishek  
Esther Zabel

### EUPHONIUM

Nigel Burton  
Lily Clason  
Andrew Mattson  
Samantha Prindle  
Maddie Robinson

### TUBA

Leo Dougan  
Donovan Schafroth  
Jacob Rausch  
Markus Van Nurden

### PERCUSSION

Owen Atkins  
Gabriel Flesner  
Clover Jenkins  
Caleb Jewell  
Kara Kimball  
Emmett Strand  
Kayla Telshaw  
Courtney Wolf



**Kara Metzger** is originally from Waukesha, WI and is currently serving as the Director of Athletics Bands at UW-Eau Claire. At UWEC, a pinnacle role within this position is to direct the 400+ member, Blugold Marching Band. She also directs the University Band, Varsity Band, and teaches a course in marching band procedures.

Prior to her time at UWEC, she served as the Director of Bands at Central Methodist University in Fayette, MO, teaching marching, concert, and jazz band as well as applied trombone and courses in music education and conducting. She has earned a bachelor's in music education and a certificate in adaptive music from the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire. Kara earned graduate degrees from the University of Minnesota Duluth (MM-Music Education) and the University of Iowa (DMA-Wind Conducting). Whilst earning her graduate degrees, Kara was a teaching assistant within both schools' band departments. Throughout her time at the University of Iowa, Kara also served as Director of Symphonic Band at Grinnell College in Grinnell, IA. Prior to her graduate work, Kara was the director of bands at Whitman Middle School and associate director of bands at West High School in Wauwatosa, WI.

Since 2016, Kara has been working at the Colt Cadets Drum and Bugle Corps and has served as brass and visual caption head for them since 2017, brass manager in 2024, and drill writer in 2025. She has also served as a baritone technician at the Colts Drum and Bugle Corps since 2020. Kara became the brass arranger for the Minnesota Brass Drum and Bugle Corps in 2025. She has held additional staff positions at the Blue Stars Drum and Bugle corps for the 2018 and 2019 seasons. Kara continues to engage with high schools by being active in writing drill, choreography, arranging, and clinicing for numerous high schools and colleges throughout the country.