



RANDOLPH-MACON ACADEMY

44th Annual Military School Band Festival Clinicians

Festival Concert Band Conductor

Lieutenant (junior grade) Joel Thiesfeldt, USN

A native of Wisconsin, LTjg Joel Thiesfeldt attended the University of Washington, holds a Bachelor of Arts in music from Thomas Edison State University. He enlisted in the United States Navy as a trumpet instrumentalist in 2003. After tours of duty with Navy Band Southwest and Navy Band Northwest, he attended the Unit Leader Course at the Navy School of Music in Little Creek, Virginia. Following his training, he reported to Navy Band Great Lakes and served as leading petty officer, ceremonial band unit leader and operations coordinator. In 2014, he returned to the School of Music and attended the Senior Musician Course, after which he was selected to join the faculty as an arranging instructor.

Thiesfeldt received his commission as a naval officer in 2017. After attending the Limited Duty Officer/Chief Warrant Officer Academy in Newport, Rhode Island, he reported to the United States Navy Band where he serves as the concert/ceremonial department head, safety officer and supply officer.



Festival Drum Major Clinician

Senior Chief Musician Mike Bayes USN

Senior Chief Musician Mike Bayes is the drum major for the United States Navy Band. A native of Bowie, Maryland, Bayes began his musical career as a saxophone instrumentalist. He attended Ohio Wesleyan University and later completed a Bachelor of Music in music education at West Virginia University. His teachers include Nancy Gamso, David Hastings, Curtis Johnson, Jay Marcum and Timothy Roberts. While at WVU, he received the Theodore Presser Award and was a member of Phi Kappa Phi, the Gold Key Honor Society, and Mu Phi Epsilon. He also won the West Virginia Young Artist Award in 1995 as a member of Prism Saxophone Quartet.

In 1996, Bayes auditioned and won a position in the U.S. Navy Band. He performed with the Concert and Ceremonial Bands on local concerts and national tours, as well as many ceremonial engagements from full honors funerals to international tattoos. In addition to his performing duties, he has served as the Navy Band head archivist, concert/ceremonial saxophone



section leader, and coordinator of the Navy Band's International Saxophone Symposium. He has served as adjunct professor of saxophone at Towson University.

While still performing as an instrumentalist, Bayes assumed the assistant drum major position in 2001 where he led the band during high-level military and government ceremonies including parades, wreath laying ceremonies at the Tomb of the Unknowns at Arlington National Cemetery, and full honors arrival ceremonies at the Pentagon and White House. Bayes assumed the responsibilities as the Navy's premier drum major in 2014.

Bayes has received the Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal, Navy Marine Corps Achievement Medal, National Defense Medal, Good Conduct Medal, and Global War on Terror Service Medal. His hobbies include working in the garden, studying history, cooking, juggling, and spending time with family. He recently completed a Master of Education in teaching and learning history at Liberty University.

Festival Choir Conductor ***Master Sergeant Kerry Wilkerson, USA (retired)***

Kerry Wilkerson made his Carnegie Hall debut in June 2017 to rave reviews as baritone soloist in the Vaughan Williams Sancta Civitas. His solo career has taken him up and down the east coast performing renowned oratorios and exciting recitals. A resonant singer with unique evenness in register, the Washington Post has described him as an 'exuberant' performer having the 'amber tone of a lyric baritone with the imposing weight demanded by Handel's low-lying writing'. He recently retired from an esteemed career with the United States Army Chorus; singing and conducting for world leaders, Supreme Court Justices, politicians and dignitaries of many nations during official ceremony and protocol events.

In addition, Kerry has sung professionally with the United States Air Force Singing Sergeants and the critically acclaimed Robert Shaw Festival Singers in many of the most prestigious concert halls throughout the United States and Canada. Kerry is well known to Washington, DC audiences through his solo recitals and regular guest appearances with choruses and orchestras such as the Handel Choir of Baltimore, the National Philharmonic Chorale and Orchestra, City Choir of Washington, Choralis, and the Oratorio Society of Virginia. Recent performances as featured soloist include Dvorak's Stabat Mater with the North Carolina Master Chorale and Vaughan Williams' Dona Nobis Pacem with the Air Force Symphony Orchestra at the acclaimed Kennedy Center. The 2018/19 season highlights include appearances as bass soloist in Messiah with the La Jolla Symphony, Bach's B minor mass with City Choir of Washington and Elijah with Choralis at the National Presbyterian Church in Washington DC.

Kerry is a graduate of the University of North Carolina at Greensboro (B.M.) and George Mason University (M.A).

