

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS OF MUSIC  
Annual Meeting 2009

Report of the President

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My friends, I am in a mood to celebrate, even though, by the end of this fiscal year, my campus will see its state support decrease from 8% of our total budget to 4%, and our music program will be submitting a cut for next year of 3% to 10%, a range that won't be clearly defined until March or even later; even though we can't predict right now whether we'll be forced to lay off staff and faculty, lower or raise enrollments, cut across the board or engage in programmatic cuts, "narrow and deep" as campus leaders are fond of saying, or cut even deeper than the budget shortfall in order to "reinvest;" even though major portions of my University's strategic plan will be delayed, facilities plans put on hold or tabled altogether; and even though I may seem to be in denial on a scale that reminds you of a certain Emperor Nero doing you know what, with Rome going up in you know what, even though many of you are experiencing these same sorts of financial challenges and burdens, I invite you to celebrate right along with me. Here's what, and why:

First, I celebrate our Association's 85th anniversary. As I look around this ballroom, filled with our 625 plus members, and our many guests, I see the accumulated accomplishments of our institutions over these past 85 years: I see hundreds of millions of dollars worth of facilities built, core programs protected from external interference, re-imagined and evolved over time, on our own terms; I see hundreds of new curricula and programs added, and ever larger cohorts of students given the opportunity to follow their bliss as they pursue a degree in music; I see an ever broadening diversity of our programs, our program purposes, and I see the growing diversity of our institutional representatives, with regard to points of view, strategic approaches, and cultural identity and ethnicity. And I hear it too, the stunning majesty of our magnificent voices ringing out in unity and harmony, as we sing in praise of our country and in thanksgiving, a unity that symbolizes our focused purpose and our undaunted aspirations for our students and for the rightful place of our music in American society. I also hear myself actually beginning to get the tenor line of that 3<sup>rd</sup> verse right!



The early history of music in higher education, and the founding of NASM is a colorful one, and I thought you'd enjoy learning just a few highlights from it. In 1876, the first Bachelor of Music degree was granted in America by Boston University. By 1924, the degree was in growing demand, and independent conservatories of music, many of them for profit, had been springing up everywhere.

A small group of pioneer administrators convened in June of that year.

Kenneth Bradley, Director  
*Bush Conservatory of Chicago*  
John J Hattstaedt, Director  
*The American Conservatory of Chicago*  
Arthur Mason  
*The Louisville Conservatory*  
Edwin J. Stringham, Director  
*The Walcott Conservatory of Denver*  
Charles N. Boyd, Director  
*The Pittsburgh Musical Institute*  
Bertha Bauer, Director  
*The Cincinnati Conservatory*  
Burnet Tuthill, Manager  
*The Cincinnati Conservatory*

They understood that as the demand for a music degree had grown, so had the problems. At that time, there was no way to assess the transcripts students were submitting from one Conservatory to transfer to another; in fact, most registrars from the established, more traditional colleges with music departments wouldn't even look at them. Student mobility was thus severely inhibited. Furthermore, some private conservatories were competing for independent applied teachers based on the number of students those teachers could bring with them; the competition was fierce.

"Fifty years ago there were some really fine schools of music in the United States. Some were unattached conservatories and some were college departments. In both groups there were schools about which there is little to recall with pride. There were many commercial ventures called music schools which were really teachers' rooming houses. The purpose of these institutions was to attract private teachers, regardless of their merits, to teach in the conservatory and be listed as faculty members. Teachers paid for this accommodation by giving a commission to the school for each lesson. Teachers set their own rates. Rivalry was intense and not always ethical. Rates were generally higher than students could pay. This led to a racket called "partial scholarships."

*Kenneth Bradley, first President of NASM; Quoted in Earl V. Moore, "The History and Rationale of Music Accreditation in the United States," Bulletin of the National Association of Schools of Music 51 (February 1963): 17.*

## FIRST NASM ATTENDEES OCTOBER, 1924

Mr. William MacPhail, MacPhail School of Music, Minneapolis, Minn.  
 Mr. H. L. Butler, Syracuse University, Syracuse, N.Y.  
 Mr. G. C. Williams, Ithaca Conservatory, Ithaca, N.Y.  
 Miss Louise Westervelt, Columbia School of Music, Chicago, Ill.  
 Mr. William Boeppler, Wisconsin Conservatory of Music, Milwaukee, Wis.  
 Mr. Harold Randolph, Peabody Conservatory, Baltimore, Md.  
 Mr. G. R. Combs, Combs Broad Street Conservatory, Philadelphia, Pa.  
 Mr. P. C. Lutkin, Northwestern University, Evanston, Ill.  
 Mr. Arthur W. Mason, Louisville Conservatory of Music, Louisville, Ky.  
 Mr. Howard Hanson, Eastman School of Music, Rochester, N.Y.  
 Mr. K. Bradley, Bush Conservatory of Music, Chicago, Ill.  
 Mr. Earl V. Moore, University School of Music, Ann Arbor, Mich.  
 Mr. Francis L. York, Detroit Conservatory of Music, Detroit, Mich.  
 Mr. John J. Hattstaedt, American Conservatory of Music, Chicago, Ill.  
 Mr. Burnet C. Tuthill, Cincinnati Conservatory of Music, Cincinnati, O.  
 Mr. C. N. Boyd, Pittsburgh Musical Institute, Pittsburgh, Pa.  
 Mr. W. H. Oetting, Pittsburgh Musical Institute, Pittsburgh, Pa.

As NASM's authorized 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary History put it, "there were concerns about low standards, unethical practices, and blatant commercialism." So, for the sake of student mobility, for the sake of arriving at a common terminology and standard for the Bachelor of Music Degree, for the sake of recognition by American colleges, and also for the sake of establishing appropriate business ethics for these entrepreneurial conservatories, the group agreed that an organization of music schools should be considered.

An organizational meeting was set for the fall, and in October of 1924, 16 institutional representatives arrived in Pittsburgh--the first meeting of the National Association of Schools of Music (Tuthill, pp.1-2)<sup>1</sup>. It was agreed, at the conclusion of that meeting, that the National Association of Schools of Music would be brought into existence. Here is the list of current Charter Members.<sup>2</sup>

As you look at the list of NASM's Charter Members, you might be struck, as I am, by the diversity of the size and scope of the schools represented. It includes small private liberal arts colleges, such as Converse, and Oberlin, as well as large private ones, such as Yale and Eastman, comprehensive flagship state institutions, like the Universities of Kansas, Iowa, and Oregon, and independent, private conservatories: the Cleveland Institute of Music and the New England Conservatory. It is thanks to this diversity of our Charter membership that we embrace and celebrate the value of a diversity of size, scope, and the individuality of our approaches to education, especially as we have continued to welcome over 600 more to membership since that inaugural year. Another point struck me about our Charter members: one of them was represented by a woman. Today we have over 150 women serving as leaders and institutional members. We have a ways to go in terms of cultural and

## Current Charter Members

Chicago Musical College of Roosevelt University, Chicago, IL  
 Cleveland Institute of Music, Cleveland, OH  
 Converse College, Spartanburg, SC  
 Eastman School of Music, Rochester, NY  
 New England Conservatory of Music, Boston, MA  
 Northwestern University, Evanston, IL  
 Oberlin College, Oberlin, OH  
 Syracuse University, Syracuse, NY  
 University of Cincinnati, Cincinnati, OH  
 University of Iowa, Iowa City, IA  
 University of Kansas, Lawrence, KS  
 University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI  
 University of Nebraska, Lincoln, NE  
 University of Oregon, Eugene, OR  
 University of the Pacific, Stockton, CA  
 University of Southern California, Los Angeles, CA  
 Wisconsin Conservatory of Music, Inc., Milwaukee, WI  
 Yale University, New Haven, CT

gender diversity, but we can celebrate the distance we have traveled.

In addition to the authorized 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary History of NASM I referenced a moment ago, there is also an earlier one, a charming and at times amusing monograph by Burnet Tuthill, who served as Secretary to the Association from its inception in 1924 until his retirement in 1959. The following excerpts speak for themselves. For example,

“...from Chicago was that good sport, Louise St. John Westervelt of the Columbia School of Music, who accepted the smoky atmosphere of the meetings in spite of the fact that she did not use tobacco herself.”

On faculty recruitment ethics, he writes, “There was also the matter of what might be called business ethics centering primarily in Chicago with its conservatories engaging in a cut-throat type of competition.”

On the first Commission on Curricula meeting, regarding the Graduate programs: “The Commission on Curricula...proceeded to secure from all interested schools the facts on which to base further discussions and decisions.”(p. 3)... “Their first recommendation was the abolishment of the Doctor of Music degree... This degree had been so commercialized and awarded for such meager accomplishment that it had sunk to a position of very low esteem... The recommendation that it be granted only as an honorary degree for outstanding accomplishment was readily accepted. A rule that any school in the Association desiring to award it first seek approval of the Association was passed but seldom observed.” (p. 5).

Of course, I was on the lookout for references to the great depression, since our current economic environment has been compared to it. I found this reference to a moment from 1933: “Suddenly, we found ourselves with a balance of \$8758.33 in the bank in Pittsburgh which we could not touch. Many member schools were similarly situated, and the collection of dues was difficult. Officers of NASM had to advance their own [money], if any, to keep the wheels moving. In the old files was a letter from the secretary to the treasurer pleading for a check in the amount of \$54 because his own bank account was down to \$5.47!” (p. 36).

And here, Tuthill quotes the Treasurer on the subject of dues collection, also from 1933: ‘These western universities are very slow in remitting. They send us warrants, but the warrants cannot be cashed for six months or so, when they are called.’”(p. 37.)

I celebrate our culture of volunteering, and salute the many of you have served on one of the Commissions on Accreditation. Our commissioners determine each institution’s readiness for accreditation, or reaccreditation, through dialogue at multiple layers of the commission process, and with many intense hours of thought, review and re-review of the materials submitted by the institution and by the visiting evaluators. Commissioners study and continuously refer to the Handbook, line-by-line, word-by-word, parsing its meaning and intent with the intensity of Talmudic scholars, but always towards goals of equity, fairness, and above all, to help each institution meet its own individual aspirations, mission, and purpose. I celebrate your willingness to serve as visiting evaluators, and all of you who have served on one of our working groups, on committees, both ad hoc and standing, on the Board of Directors, and the Executive Committee.

To demonstrate the breadth and scope of our volunteer spirit, and to accept our thanks and appreciation (and please hold your applause and would all remain standing), I’d like to recognize: all who serve or have served on the Executive Committee, on the Board of Directors, on any of our Commissions on Accreditation, on a standing Committee, on an ad hoc committee, as a Visiting Evaluator, would all of you who have served in one capacity or another, please stand and be recognized?

I celebrate our incredible staff. From every aspect of my 25 plus year involvement with NASM I can confirm to you that we have a team of dedicated individuals who work well and collaboratively together. And they work hard. We benefit from wise leadership, built on a culture of cooperation, strategic and nuanced thinking, and founded on a dedication to communication both within the staff and out to the membership. In the staff’s work with the Commissions, with visiting evaluators, and with the ever-growing numbers of both stakeholders and wanna-be stakeholders, we have benefited from the very best practice in diplomacy and tact, yet clear and

consistent message and long- and short-term strategic thinking. Service to the membership has remained the guiding principle, and we've all experienced that our staff are available to work personally with each and every one of us. Ladies and gentlemen, this year marks Sam Hope's 35th year as our Executive Director, Karen Moynahan's 29<sup>th</sup> as Associate Director. And now that accreditation, assessment, and accountability are often caught in the riptides of national politics and special interest-driven policy, over the last several years, they have somehow carved out the time to work with other specialized accrediting associations, and because of their wisdom and accumulated experience, the longest currently in the field, they have taken the lead in developing and shaping the complex nuanced communications and advocacy that must be developed with the many entities inside the DC beltway. Few have the experience they have, and most if not all of the accreditation community look to Sam for guidance and leadership as various bills impacting higher education, accreditation, assessment, measurement, and accountability wend their various ways through lobbying groups, NGO's congressional committees, and special interest groups. Sam has remained vigilant and ahead of the curve, advising and collaborating with those in a position to influence and uphold the right values, week in and week out, year after year. It's a huge agenda that remains invisible to most of us, precisely because service to each of our members remains the clear and continuously met objective. So with all this in mind, I ask Sam, Karen, and all the other wonderful and dedicated NASM staff to stand and accept our thanks and appreciation.

In this, my last Report to you as President, I can't resist the opportunity to express some random thoughts, or, if you prefer, some parting shots. I hope you find them helpful, or at least fun. There are eight of them:

1. I think it's time for us to banish the particular phrase from our lexicon that begins, "out in the real world..." We in higher education very much live in the real world, with all the challenges of establishing our program's identity, raising our own resources, building audiences, attracting the best students and recruiting the right faculty and staff, and increasing recognition for our programs. Yes, we have some remaining vestiges of the privilege of ivy-covered walls, but in large measure the most useful mind-set we can adopt is that we live and function in the "real-world," and outreach, communications, marketing, advocacy, entrepreneurship, all of it matters, and all of it is relevant to our educational purpose. We don't do our students any favors when we promote the myth that they live in or can function successfully in a falsely imagined protected environment, because it is not.
2. A theme throughout my term as President has been advocacy and outreach. We will no doubt hear tomorrow from our wise and wonderful keynote speaker Henry Fogel about community engagement. So, just to reinforce the points you have heard and will continue to hear from many different angles at past meetings and this one, there is no wiser strategy nor better goal for us to have in our leadership positions than that of community engagement—on our campuses, with our local communities, with our region and state, and as you find it strategically viable and appropriate to your program, with the world. And that engagement is to be fostered among our students as much as the faculty.
3. Mostly, for our newest members: There are two things you can do, if you haven't already, that will help you more than anything else to maximize the value of NASM, to you. First, get a mentor. Get two, or three, or more. There isn't any sustained formal training for these administrative positions we have, so we have to take our wisdom when we can get it, and this meeting presents a prime opportunity. Two of my mentors happen to be with us today: Lyle Merriman, my predecessor at LSU, a former Chair of the Commission on Accreditation, and Bob Fink, my predecessor at CU-Boulder, also former Chair of the Commission, and with whom I made my very first reaccreditation visit. Would you both please stand?

The second thing you can do is get involved. The minute you do and to the extent that you do, I guarantee that you will rapidly accelerate your own professional development. NASM is a model of best practice in accreditation. So you learn not only what a model for best practice is, but how to achieve it in your institutional setting, how to communicate it, and how to negotiate for it, for yourself and for the benefit of your institution.

4. Edit that saying, "Never let 'em see you sweat" to, "let 'em see you sweat every now and then." Both the leadership above you and the faculty who work with you will appreciate knowing that when the

going gets tough a little empathy, support, and understanding from all those who work with you is needed and gratefully accepted.

5. Never underestimate the extraordinary power of email, twitter, or other social networking technologies. They are powerful, effective tools that are growing in number and influence, and their continuing importance can work both ways. Don't push the send button until you have read your email at least twice. As a rule of thumb, if you're pushing the send button in a knee-jerk, unproof-read response, you will surely offend someone 25% of the time.
6. After two years on the job, feel free to offend someone two percent of the time. But still proofread, and count to 10 before you push the send button.
7. Develop your sense of humor. Get one if you don't have one. Nothing will humanize you more to your faculty and raise your own spirits better. Humor is the lubricant of communication and interpersonal interactions.
8. Remember that no one, as long as you are a department chair, director, or dean, will ever believe you when you utter those infamous two words: "Trust me!" Trust me.

In closing, I thank you for the priceless opportunity to serve this wonderful association in so many ways for so many years. It has been a fulfilling and joyous experience. I depart this podium, confident in the brilliant work that will be accomplished by our colleagues who will be serving on the Executive Committee these next several years, and especially so in my good friend and gifted colleague, Don Gibson, your next President. I wish you God speed in all your endeavors, and a wonderful, safe Holiday Season, and especially, a prosperous New Year.

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Thank you very much. And now, for the lagniappe I've been accustomed to serving up before we recess, or, in this case, perhaps you might call it a palate cleanser after all this talk. This is just a 4 minute excerpt, but by all means feel free to leave if you need this time before our next session; I could have chosen any of hundreds, obviously, but I chose this one because for me it represents hope, aspirations, and yet a kind of assured confidence. It is a chestnut familiar to all of you, I'm sure: please enjoy, if you choose to stay, the Nimrod Variation from Elgar's Enigma Variations.

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<sup>1</sup> Page number references throughout the document denote information taken from *NASM—The First Forty Years* by Burnet Tuthill.

<sup>2</sup> Historical facts to this point are excerpted from the NASM authorized publication *The 75th Anniversary History of NASM*, available from the National Office.