

# Color Guard

<b>Steering Committee Nominees</b>	<b>Board of Directors Nominees</b>
Cynthia Bernard	Carol Abohatab
Brian Franco-Winn	Ed Devlin
Tim Mikan	Andria Foerch
Rick Subel	Heather Graham
Andrew Toth	Sergio Marquez-Johnson
Jeff Welsh	Rodney Thomas

# Cynthia Bernard

Primary Affiliation: Third Legend (IO)

Interested in the following Position: Color Guard Steering Committee

## Bio/Introduction:

My name is Cynthia Bernard. As a lifelong member of the color guard community, I'm deeply invested in the idea that our activity is not just a performance. I've spent my life in color guard because I believe in the power of this community where creativity, collaboration, and personal growth come together on the floor. At the heart of my work is a deep love for the fact that our activity is an art that is judged. I've dedicated my career to helping performers, staffs, and directors better understand the adjudication system and use it as a tool for clarity, growth, and competitive success.

With over 25 years of experience as a performer, instructor, designer, and director, I now consult with teams across North America especially those who don't always feel seen. I want to represent the majority: smaller programs, international groups, and organizations with limited resources. My goal is to help make WGI even more accessible, supportive, and aligned with the diverse realities of its participants.

In hopes to have the honor to be of service by your sides.

## Other Affiliations:

- Third Legend (IO)
- Sonnor (IA)
- Les Éclipses (IO)

# **Brian Franco-Winn**

Primary Affiliation: Etude (IW)

Interested in the following Position: Color Guard Steering Committee

## Bio/Introduction:

Brian Franco-Winn is a designer, choreographer, and educator in the marching arts and dance fields. He holds an MFA in Choreography from the University of North Carolina Greensboro and a BA in Dance Education from Winthrop University. He spent 12 years teaching dance in public schools in the Carolinas before moving into higher education. He is the director at Étude Winter Guard, show designer at Tampa Independent Open, and a choreographer at Carolina Crown, among other local groups in the Carolinas. Outside of the marching arts, Brian is an Assistant Professor of Dance at Winthrop University where he teaches a variety of courses including contemporary, jazz, dance history, dance education, and improvisation. He chairs and sits on committees at Winthrop that focus on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, a subject that also informs much of his research.

## Other Affiliations:

- Wando HS (SA)
- East Lincoln HS (SA)
- Tampa Independent Open (IO)

# Tim Mikan

Primary Affiliation: Fantasia (IW)

Interested in the following Position: Color Guard Steering Committee

## Bio/Introduction:

I am the director of Fantasia Winter Guard and have also been affiliated with the organization as a member, instructor, and designer for 23 years. I was privileged to serve on WGI's Board of Directors for 6 years and have sat on our local circuit (WCWG) board for 10 years. I've dedicated my life to color guard and other pageantry design for the last 25 years. I'm deeply interested in our activity on all levels and wish to further my commitment to our community and WGI as a whole. If there is any way to use my garnered experience and knowledge to assist in the development of our community, I'm all in!

## Other Affiliations:

- Palm Desert Charter Middle School (SO)
- John F. Kennedy High School (SA)

# **Rick Subel**

Primary Affiliation: Paramount (IW)

Interested in the following Position: Color Guard Steering Committee

## Bio/Introduction:

Hi, I'm Rick Subel, and I am excited to apply again for the WGI Colorguard Steering Committee. I have served before on the committee and feel that I have the knowledge and experience to continue to make a positive impact in this role. Being an instructor and designer for the past 30 years and at all levels of competition--from Novice to World classes, both Scholastic and Independent--I feel I have a strong awareness of the ongoing needs and issues that we face trying to build, develop, and sustain competitive organizations in our activity. In addition to being a designer, I am also a unit director, and I feel that I am in touch with needs and concerns organizations face beyond the competitive aspects of our experience. I feel that I am personable and approachable to listen, assist, and convey concerns to others, to help address concerns as they arise, and I make myself fully available to meet the duties and expectations the role of a Steering Committee member requires.

I live in Atlanta, GA, where I co-direct Paramount Winterguard with my wife, Andria Foerch. I am honored to have worked with many prestigious groups in the fall, winter, and summer seasons, including: Paramount, USF Winterguard, Tarpon Springs Winterguard, Lexis Winterguard, Blessed Sacrament Winterguard, Juxtaposition Winterguard, Emerald Marquis Winterguard, The Cavaliers, Carolina Crown, the Santa Clara Vanguard, the Cadets, the Bluecoats, the Crossmen, Magic of Orlando, and numerous college and high school programs such as Georgia State University, Kennesaw

Mountain High School, Kell High School, Westfield High School, Harrison High School, and Lassiter High School.

Other Affiliations:

- Tarpon Springs (SW)
- Cedar Ridge HS (SO)
- Bridgeland HS (SO)
- Georgia State University (IO)
- Kennesaw Mountain HS (SA)
- Norcross High School Marching Band (Other)
- River Ridge High School Marching Band (Other)
- Veterans Memorial High School Marching Band (Other)

# Andrew Toth

Primary Affiliation: Pride of Cincinnati (IW)

Interested in the following Position: Color Guard Steering Committee

## Bio/Introduction:

Hello! My name is Andy Toth, and I am interested in running for the WGI color guard steering committee. 2025 marks my tenth year on the current committee, and it would be an honor and a privilege to serve again for another term.

## Other Affiliations:

- Allegiance (IO)

# Jeff Welsh

Primary Affiliation: Noblesville HS (IW)

Interested in the following Position: Color Guard Steering Committee

## Bio/Introduction:

Jeff Welsh began his career in pageantry after playing saxophone in the marching band from middle through high school. He then became a marching member of the University of Florida colorguard's rifle line. While serving as drum major of the UF Gator Band he marched with the Cavaliers Drum and Bugle Corps. Colorguard and wrote drill for the UF Band and South Fork HS. After graduation he became the colorguard director and designer for the Florida Visual Ensemble and XPOZ-A winterguard. Since that time he has written marching band drill for such band programs as Buchholz HS, Lakeland HS, and Haines City HS. After relocating with his family to the Florida panhandle he began writing marching band drill for Crestview HS, Tate HS, and Choctawhatchee HS. He was the resident director/designer of the Tate HS Chaparrals from 1995-2001, the Crestview Winterguard from 1998-2011 and the Colorguard Director at Choctawhatchee HS until 2012. In 2016 he took over as director at Sebastian River HS in South Florida. In 2019 Jeff moved to Indiana to be the director at Noblesville HS where he currently teaches. Jeff has designed for all three WGI scholastic classes and the Independent A and Open classes and his units have been WGI finalists 25 times since 1992. Mr. Welsh began judging in the Florida Federation of Colorguards in 1988 and then began serving as a WGI national level adjudicator from 1990 -2001. Jeff took a few years off to enjoy teaching his units and watching his son, Jarrod, march for four years with the Choctawhatchee drum line and four more to cheer on his daughter, Carli, as she marched four years as a sabre for the Choctaw



World guard, in 2010 with CrownGUARD and was a sabre with the 2011 Santa Clara Vanguard World Champion Winterguard. He returned to the WGI judging roster in 2008 for a few years.

Other Affiliations:

- N/A

# **Carol Abohatab**

Primary Affiliation: Fantasia (IW)

Interested in the following Position: Color Guard Board of Directors

Bio/Introduction: Carol Abohatab, MFA, BS, RYT

Carol Abohatab brings over four decades of performing, teaching, and choreographing to the Color Guard arena, training and choreographing for the Santa Clara Vanguard Winter Guard for its 11-year tenure, as well as Bluecoats Indoor, San Jose Raiders World Guard, Emerald Marquis, and State Street Review. She's also had the privilege to work with many other color guards, some of which include Northview, Arcadia, Mission Viejo, Chino, Leigh, and Miamisburg High Schools, and, since 2017, with Fantasia.

Carol was thrilled to serve on the Steering committee of WGI from 2009 - 2023; it is here that she found her passion for connecting all factions of the activity to help create better communications, by participating in judge trainings and working with concerns of the instructors to help all voices be heard.

On the administrative side of things, since 2019 Carol has been on the executive board of the American Federation of Teachers Union local AFT6157, for San José Evergreen College district, serving as Faculty Representative, Grievance Officer, and Membership Coordinator. Her work advocating for Associate faculty healthcare legislation and bargaining from 2022-2024 earned her an Associate Faculty Member award. She is attending Organizing seminars with California Federation of Teachers this summer to help faculty moving forward.

She is also a founding member and Board Member of RISE - Resources for Instruction, Safety and Education - created in September of 2024, which partnered with UDB to create its first summit in February of 2025.

While understanding the inherent role of the board of directors from structural, legal, and fiduciary standpoints, Carol strives to work toward the essential needs of each board of which she is a member.

She currently teaches Modern, Jazz, Hip-Hop, Choreography, Improvisation, Repertory, Dance Appreciation and Yoga at San José City College, as well as running the Dance Team. She is a RYT200 Certified Yoga Instructor, currently working toward 500 hours.

Other Affiliations:

- N/A

# Ed Devlin

Primary Affiliation: Blessed Sacrament (IW)

Interested in the following Position: Color Guard Board of Directors

## Bio/Introduction:

I have been with the Blessed Sacrament Color Guard since the fall of 1983. I became the director of the organization in September of 1994 and have had many roles with the guard over time. I have worked to develop an organization that welcomes all and creates an environment for the guard to be successful each year. The guard has a high expectation level to meet each year. I have been instrumental in developing the culture to meet the expectations.

I have been on the WGI board for many years. I have been on the Executive Committee since 2000, serving as the secretary, Vice President, and currently President.

I currently work in all parts of the marching arts. The summer season, I am the Program Director of the Crossmen Drum & Bugle Corps. I work with many marching bands, percussion ensembles and winter guards during the fall and winter.

## Other Affiliations:

- Blessed Sacrament (IO)
- Chino Hills (SW)

# Andria Foerch

Primary Affiliation: Paramount (IW)

Interested in the following Position: Color Guard Board of Directors

## Bio/Introduction:

Andria Foerch is the co-founder and director of Paramount Winterguard from Decatur, Georgia, and has participated in the pageantry arts for more than 25 years.

Andria has taught various successful programs such as Tarpon Springs High School, Seminole High School, Kiski Area High School, Westfield High School, Harrison High School, Phantom Regiment Winterguard, Georgia State University and Paramount Winterguard, where she currently serves as co-director alongside her husband Rick Subel. She has spent her summers working with programs such as Santa Clara Vanguard, Phantom Regiment, Bluecoats, Crossmen, Carolina Crown, and most recently Cavaliers.

Andria received her Master of Arts in Teaching from Mercer University and her undergraduate from the University of South Florida. She currently works at Children's Healthcare of Atlanta as the Manager of Patient Digital Experience and Community Engagement.

Andria is passionate about developing strong color guard performers and assisting students through the many challenges they face as performers and as young adults. She demonstrates her leadership and organizational skills through mentoring young instructors and guiding instructional teams through the process of developing strong management and planning skills, as well as helping develop effective teaching strategies and communication skills.

Other Affiliations:

- N/A

# Heather Graham

Primary Affiliation: Miamisburg HS (SW)

Interested in the following Position: Color Guard Board of Directors

## Bio/Introduction:

Hello! My name is Heather Graham and I would love to continue my time serving on the WGI Board of Directors. Over the past two years it has been an honor to work with, assist, learn and grow with all of you as we continue to ensure a better future for everyone included in WGI. I am so proud of the things that the board has accomplished and have been grateful to work hand in hand with students, instructors, leaders and mentors within my committee. Color guard and the performing arts are my life, as I am currently lucky enough to be teaching a number of places around the world. I plan to continue my time as an educator for decades to come and would be forever grateful to be a part of the group that makes the WGI magic continue to come true. Thank you for your consideration and looking forward to the future and all the incredible things the Board will continue to provide.

## Other Affiliations:

- Kettering Fairmont HS (SA)
- Phoenix Independent (IO)
- Carmel HS (SW)
- Pride of Cincinnati (IW)
- United Percussion (PIW)

# Sergio Marquez-Johnson

Primary Affiliation: Vox Artium World (IW)

Interested in the following Position: Color Guard Board of Directors

## Bio/Introduction:

With over 21 years of performance experience and 26 years of teaching experience, Sergio Marquez-Johnson has flourished as both a color guard choreographer, director, and designer. He has had the privilege of teaching and performing with many prestigious groups WGI groups such Fantasia Winter Guard, Corona Winter Guard, Esperanza de Luz Winter Guard, Vista Murrieta High School, El Dorado High School, Ayala High School, ORIGINS Open/World, VOX Artium A/World, and Great Oak High School. In the summers- pre-COVID-19 , Sergio was the Color Guard Curriculum Coordinator for Fred J. Miller Summer Clinics Inc. in Miamisburg, Ohio.

In the Spring of 2023, Sergio received his Bachelor of Arts Degree in Early Childhood and Adolescent Studies, from the California State University San Bernardino.

Currently, Sergio serves as the Executive Director of Vox Artium Foundation, Inc and is one of the Co- Artistic Directors of the A and World teams. In his everyday world, Sergio works as a Purchasing Specialist for the Cottonwood School based of El Dorado Hills, California. He also works part-time for Marriott International as a Sales and Marketing Specialist. Sergio resides in Winchester, CA with his husband Pete Marquez-Johnson of 9 years.



Other Affiliations:

- Vox Artium (IA)
- Ayala HS (SW)
- Vista Murrieta HS (SO)
- Great Oak HS (SA)
- Pride of Utah (IO)

# Rodney Thomas

Primary Affiliation: Fusion Winter Guard (IW)

Interested in the following Position: Color Guard Board of Directors

## Bio/Introduction:

Hello, my name is Rodney Thomas. I was born and raised in Mount Vernon, NY, just north of New York City. During the day, I work as an assistant general manager for a dog training school in Bergen County, New Jersey.

My love and passion for our activity started at a very young age. My obsession was to one day be able to perform in WGI finals, and I was able to do so with Alter Ego and The Light Brigade. I've had many opportunities to perform and instruct that have made a profound impact on me, but the one that stands out is my time at Fusion, starting with Fusion drum corps (DCI All Age) in 2016 as a choreographer and later joining the indoor staff in the winter of 2018. I've served in many different capacities within the organization, from equipment technician to program coordinator to being elected as co-director for the 2024 season, a position I continue to hold today.

To be considered for a position on the board of directors would mean I'd be able to give back everything the activity and my current work has given me. It's about creating stability and longevity, providing opportunities for advancement, and offering guidance in complex situations that consider everyone.

## Other Affiliations:

N/A