

To: The National Executive Board of the National Association for Music Education

From: The Society for Music Education Executive Committee

Date: October 1, 2015

RE: Report of the 2015 Greensboro Symposium on Music Teacher Education: *Toward a Stronger, Richer Community*

The Society for Music Teacher Education appreciates the support of the NEB, which sponsored our symposium keynote speaker, Gloria Ladson-Billings. As you are already aware, Dr. Ladson-Billings is author of the critically acclaimed books, *The Dreamkeepers: Successful Teachers of African American Children* and *Crossing over to Canaan: The Journey of New Teachers in Diverse Classrooms*. She was the 2015 recipient of the American Educational Research Association Social Justice in Education Award. In previous symposium surveys, Dr. Ladson-Billings has been the most frequently requested speaker, and the SMTE Executive Committee was thrilled to finally present her keynote address.

The total attendance at our symposium was a record 317. Each biennium, symposium attendance has increased due to the distributed leadership model of SMTE and the dedication of the University of North Carolina Greensboro administration, faculty, staff, and students. UNCG has ideal facilities for hosting a conference such as our in its Music Building and Elliott University Center meeting rooms and auditorium. SMTE is grateful to UNCG for the warm hospitality we receive. More importantly, we must acknowledge that the growth of SMTE, and the professional growth of our members, would be impossible without UNCG's remarkable support.

There were 296 NAFME members in attendance and 21 others attending. Those who were not NAFME members mainly were Canadian participants and a delegation of Japanese guests (who have indicated their intention to return in 2017) SMTE clearly is meeting its charge of ensuring organizational vitality. There were 120 institutions with collegiate NAFME chapters represented at the symposium. An Excel file of those institutions is attached to this report.

The post-symposium survey was open for one week following the symposium, and we received a 40% response rate (an all-time high response for SMTE). Items of note are as follows:

A majority of registrants were present for the entire symposium, from the Thursday evening keynote through the Saturday dinner reception. Seventy-nine percent of the respondents indicated that they attended because they had a presentation or poster accepted, but 21% indicated that they attended for professional development and networking opportunities. A majority identified themselves as music teacher educators, music researchers, and student teaching supervisors, although for the first time, about 10% of attendees identified themselves as elementary, middle, and high school music teachers or school district music supervisors. The SMTE Executive Committee is pleased to see the growth in attendance of music educators and music supervisors, and intends to follow up on this growth for the 2017 symposium.

We asked respondents to rank how five features of the symposium contributed to their professional growth: the keynote speaker, the primary presentations, the poster sessions, the ASPA collaborations, and the division meetings. There were no statistical differences in participants' ratings of the keynote speaker, the primary presentations, and the ASPA collaborations, and division meetings and poster sessions were rated only slightly less valuable. Clearly, we have developed a conference format to which music teacher educators and researchers respond—and a format that keeps them engaged.

Those who submitted a proposal were *very satisfied* with the online submission system, including its ease of use, prompt response, and lack of technical difficulties. The proposal submission system and blind review have been refined over several years, with much of the credit due to David Rickels, and the SMTE Executive Committee was happy to receive such positive feedback.

Back in 2004, when the SMTE Executive Committee began planning for this symposium, we were committed to engaging graduate students in the conference and providing mentorship for them into the music education profession. In 2007 there were 8 graduate students, representing 4 institutions, involved in the graduate student poster session and luncheon with the JMTE editorial board. In 2013, there were 24 graduate students representing 10 institutions engaged in that session. At the 2015 symposium, there were 50 graduate students representing 22 institutions. This is a remarkable growth over merely two years, and it should give all of us hope for our profession. The graduate student respondents reported being *very satisfied* with the graduate poster session and the feedback they received from the JMTE editorial board.

In 2005, SMTE developed 12 Areas of Strategic Planning and Action (ASPAs). These are meant to be spaces in which the membership can collaborate meaningfully in scholarship and practical actions to advance our profession. Since 2005, the ASPAs have produced hundreds of collaborative articles, several books, as well as practical “tool kits” and sessions for state MEA conferences. This year, many conference attendees participated in the Cultural Diversity and Social Justice ASPA, followed closely by Critical Examination of the Curriculum, Music Teacher Socialization, and Teacher Evaluation. Part of our ASPA activity at the 2015 Symposium was to identify areas of inequity and exclusion in music teacher education, licensure, and professional development. The ASPAs were able to identify many concrete goals that will lead to greater diversity and equity in music education. Respondents reported being *very likely* to continue collaborating with whichever ASPA they chose at the Symposium. Not surprisingly, they enjoyed the “ASPA Sampler,” provided at the beginning of the symposium, as an opportunity to decide where their interests were best served.

The following were listed as professional conferences that respondents attended within the past three years:

American Choral Directors Association (national and regional), American Educational Research Association, American Orff-Schulwerk Association, Association for Popular Music Education, American String Teachers Association, College Band Directors National Association, Church-sponsored music workshops, Committee on Institutional Cooperation, College Music Society, Desert Skies Symposium, Gordon Institute for

Music Learning, Instrumental Music Teacher Educators, International Society for Music Education, International Symposium on Assessment in Music Education, Mayday Colloquia, Midwest Band and Orchestra, Mountain Lake, Music and Lifelong Learning, NAFME research and teacher education, Narrative Matters, National Association of Schools of Music, National Flute Association, New Directions in Music Education, Narrative Inquiry in Music Education, Organization of American Kodaly Educators, Research in Music Education (Exeter), Suncoast Music Education Research Symposium, Greensboro Symposium on Music Teacher Education, Sociology of Music Education, State Music Educators Associations, Texas Bandmasters, Technology Institute for Music Educators.

Importantly, when asked to identify the three conferences that contributed most to their professional development, over 90% of respondents listed the Greensboro Symposium among those three conferences. Here are just a few the participants' comments about why they value the Greensboro Symposium:

*Nowhere else can I engage Music Teacher Education issues with such breadth and depth.*

*This was my first time at the Greensboro Symposium. I am a public school teacher. I found the community to be welcoming. I enjoyed talking with individuals at the poster sessions and presentations about their work and findings. I found the presentations to be useful and thoughtful. The opening and closing keynotes were inspiring and refreshing. I found the conference to be a great way to gain new ideas and perspectives about music education. I am looking forward to my continued work on the Beginning Teacher ASPA. I have already made plans to share this experience with my colleagues this week. Thank you for this opportunity.*

*The SMTE Greensboro Symposium allows us to explore conversations of research and practice "super-charged" into a few days that otherwise would likely not occur to the same degree because of the business of the multiple hats we wear "back home."*

*The social/professional networking of this conference is the best of any music education conference I attend. I have had multiple research collaborations that developed out of the conversations that started in ASPA meetings, division meetings, primary presentations, and poster sessions. The ASPA interaction and post-conference buzz from this symposium is unlike any other event in our profession.*

*The quality of the sessions at SMTE is impressive. Presenters are not just "talking the talk," they are actively making changes to their teaching and music teacher education programs, helping our profession move forward. This year's plenary was particularly moving with the diverse perspectives on music education presented: first-generation American/college student experiences; African-American perspectives; LGBT views.*

*I love that this conference facilitates collaboration between my peers that I would not otherwise have a chance to experience. The ASPA work sessions make the conference more valuable than all other conferences I've attended.*

*This conference strengthened my connections and professional network. The authenticity of the keynotes and presentations was refreshing. I sometimes feel as though I work in a*

*vacuum. The poster sessions, presentations, and discussions beyond the conference hours let me know that effective work is happening.*

*The research and other projects generated by the ASPAs truly have an impact on the profession--practice is affected through the work at this conference. SMTE is also the best venue at which to connect with other colleagues. No other conference can provide the above benefits to the degree that SMTE does.*

*I value collaboration, active work as a community rather than passive digestion of papers, a progressive approach to research. We tackle the current issues in music education and music teacher education, one of the only spaces for professional development for me as a music teacher educator and a MTE researcher.*

*I enjoy the collegiality and the opportunity to hear some wonderful keynote speakers. I really feel that SMTE has the pulse on the profession and is striving to make positive changes.*

*This was the first conference I felt my thoughts and input were truly valued. It is difficult to be a doctoral student and teaching assistant after amassing 24 years of teaching experience in a wide variety of settings. At times, I feel under-valued as a teacher, but SMTE gave me an opportunity to learn and experience a collegial discourse about compelling issues facing music teacher education. SMTE is unlike any music conference I have ever experienced and it was by far my favorite!*

*The 2015 symposium topics were especially powerful and poignant. It's about time that we talked about this at a US music education conference! I have talked to dozens of individuals in attendance who were similarly moved by the experience. I believe that, no matter where we were in our understandings before the conference, we were all challenged and inspired. This is not a common experience at US music ed conferences, and I am recharged with hope for our profession.*

*Best community research effort, genuine caring community, presentations with the most value, excellent hosting amenities.*

*I like the keynote and plenary sessions that bring us all together as a group. I really like the APSA work - we actually have goals and get things done! So many times we just discuss issues but then go home and no action occurs. I don't feel that way about SMTE - actions are actually taken.*

*As a graduate student, the Symposium offers an opportunity for me to stay connected with a research/teacher educator community. It inspires me in my research and teaching goals.*

*The collaborative environment at SMTE is so valuable, particularly as a young researcher. The structure of the conference is inviting to engagement and the development of meaningful connections.*

The Society for Music Teacher Education is grateful for the NEB's financial and practical support; we were thankful to see several of you at the symposium and hope to

see even more of you in 2017. There is important, effective work going on at the Greensboro Symposia, and we urge all of our colleagues to take an active part.