A History of the University of North Texas Marching Band from 1911-2021

Compiled and Authored by: Amrutha V. Murthy

University of North Texas College of Music

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University of North Texas Green Brigade Marching Band Timeline

1911: First North Texas State Normal College Band organized as a 15-person pep band

1921: "Glory to the Green" established as the North Texas Alma Mater, written by Julia Smith

1922: "Glory to the Green" performed for the first time at a football game by the pep band

1927: Floyd' Fesser Graham, Director of Bands, started the first jazz band: Aces of Collegeland

1934: Dr. Robert Lincoln Marquis Jr. was hired to direct the marching band at the North Texas State Teachers College, officially started the position in 1936

1938: North Texas State Teachers College began a Bachelor of Science in Music Education degree

1939: NTSTC appointed its first woman drum major – Mrs. Arlo Tatum

1939: 'Fessor Graham held a composition competition for the new Fight Song – Francis Stroup won that competition and the Fight Song was performed after the first field goal of the 1940 football season

1941: Harry Parshall, Assistant Band Director recognized an All-Girl band until 1945

1945: Maurice McAdow became the Director of Bands, including the marching band at the renamed North Texas State College

1947: North Texas began the nation's first jazz education program

1961: The University was renamed to North Texas State University, prompting a change in uniforms

1972: The NTSU band was the inaugural band for the opening of the Dallas-Fort Worth Airport

1982: Professor Dennis Fisher was appointed Associate Director of Bands and Director of the Marching Band

1983: The NTSU Marching Band adopted the moniker "Green Brigade" and the song "You'll Never Walk Alone" from Carousel as the song of identity.

1986: NTSU Drumline entered the spotlight as a 3-time consecutive Percussive Arts Society International Competition champion

1988: NTSU was renamed to the University of North Texas

2003: Dr. Nicholas Williams was appointed the Director of Athletic Bands position

2008: Green Brigade performed at the Texas State UIL Marching Contest as an exhibition band

2012: Green Brigade performed at Bands of America Dallas-Fort Worth as an exhibition band

2019: Dr. Daniel Cook was appointed as the Director of Athletic Bands

2021: Green Brigade performed at Bands of America Dallas-Fort Worth, Texas State UIL 4A Marching Contest as an exhibition band, and will be performing in the St. Patrick's Day parade in Dublin Ireland in March 2022.
The Foundations (1911-1934)

The University of North Texas Green Brigade Marching Band began in 1911 as a 15-person pep band, organized by James Willis (J.W.) Smith, a mathematics professor, and amateur musician. Professor Smith led a student-run extracurricular organization that performed at sporting events, on-campus student functions and gave students extracurricular activity credit. The North Texas State Normal College (NTSNC) band served as an institution primarily to prepare pre-service teachers who aspired to be public school educators. Without a Bachelor of Music degree at the Normal College, students were heavily encouraged to participate in extracurricular activities and organizations to complement their academic endeavors. Students were allowed to form their own organizations, sponsored by a faculty member, which marked the start of the Band Club that continued through the 1920's.

By 1920, the overwhelming presence of extracurricular activities on campus prompted the Normal College president to limit the band personnel number to 15 members. Students were only allowed to participate in a maximum of five activities, and a point system was instituted to limit student participation. The Band Club continued to perform at all university and athletic events. Student leaders of the band were self-appointed and elected – the band leader taught marching fundamentals acquired from the campus ROTC to the group. Although marching fundamentals were learned by the Band Club, performances at events were restricted to jazz and pop tunes without a marching component.

As the Normal College grew in population and the Athletics scene continued to develop, the school saw a need for a song of identity – an Alma Mater. The band leader in 1920, Julia Smith, composed a tune and collaborated with another student, Charles Langford, who wrote the words to what would then be adopted as the college's official Alma Mater. Julia Smith, daughter of the Band Club supervisor J.W. Smith, was an English major at the NTSNC, who maintained her passion for music by performing with the Band Club and studying piano lessons. Smith titled her composition "Glory to the Green," and sought the help of Langford, a football and baseball star sidelined by an injury, to incorporate one of his chants as a Yell Leader into the tune. The band performed it at a football game for the first time in 1921, and the Normal College officially adopted "Glory to the Green" as its Alma Mater in 1922. To present day, "Glory to the Green" remains as the university Alma Mater, as Smith continued her connections with the college as a composer and concert pianist, and offered to re-write the tune with in 1988 with the adoption of the name University of North Texas for the institution.

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1 North Texas State Normal College Yucca, 1911
2 North Texas State Normal College Yucca, 1921
3 Buehner, Feustle, 2016
1925 marked a significant change for the Normal College music program and the Band Club with the hiring of Floyd ('Fessor) Graham as the Director of Bands. 'Fessor Graham was the band director at the local Denton High School where he directed the concert band and jazz band. In 1925, the president of the renamed North Texas State Teachers College, Robert Lincoln Marquis, hired him to direct and oversee all musical aspects of the bands at the college. His primary assignment was to direct the marching band, and began conducting the concert band Stage Band in 1927. At the time Graham was hired, the college was facing major merger threats, had poor legislative support from the board, and had low student morale. NTSTC was a commuter college, and President Marquis prioritized student morale as his top initiative, which led to the formation of the Stage Band and pit orchestra to perform at campus dances and silent movie nights. The pit orchestra started as a student employment opportunity by 'Fessor Graham to complement the silent films initiative started by President Marquis. Every Saturday, members of the orchestra would provide music to the silent films that were being shown, and many of the personnel participated in the concert/marching bands as well. The Stage Band was renamed the "Aces of Collegeland" in 1927, and 'Fessor Graham greatly improved campus and community public relations by having the Aces perform at High Schools and the marching and concert bands at state fairs and community events in the Denton area. The frequent community presence of all the musical groups under 'Fessor Graham's direction saved the college from extinction, and as the decade developed, NTSTC ensembles flourished to include an orchestra, Salon Orchestra, Radio Ensemble, and the combined marching and concert bands to form the Eagle Band.

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4 Stroup, n.d
5 Robert Lincoln Marquis Jr Collection, 1945
Marquis Years (1936-1945)

As 'Fessor Graham took several leaves of absence between 1930 and 1934 due to illness, one of his Aces members started directing rehearsals and acting as a stand-in director for Aces and the Eagle band. Dr. Robert Lincoln Marquis Jr. was a jazz student of Graham's who was hired in 1934 as the Assistant Director of Bands to direct the Eagle concert and marching bands. Graham's Aces rose to fame during the late 1920's and early 1930's, and the group was getting invited to tour and perform outside the Denton community. Graham's affinity towards fostering the stage band genre as a respectable one led him to delegate the concert and marching bands to Dr. Marquis. For the first time in the young marching band's history, Dr. Marquis established the marching band as a course credit in 1936, making it the first official directed marching band at North Texas.

Dr. Marquis oversaw a major growth in the band, as in 1938, the college added a Bachelor of Science in Music Education and a Bachelor of Music Education degree and marching band became a curricular component of the degree plan. The marching band under Dr. Marquis's direction turned into an instructional environment where pre-service music educators learned marching fundamentals and had a laboratory ensemble to practice and develop their teaching pedagogy. The band still performed at football games and school events, adopting Bigelow's "Our Director March" as the school fight song and adapting the words to claim identification to the college. Athletic events, especially football games, started to become the primary performance venue for the marching band, and daily rehearsals were spent with the selected student leadership teaching the 40-person band tunes from a formation.

In 1939, 'Fessor Graham envisioned North Texas having its own fight song and rebranding the identity of the bands as they grew in size and public presence. During the early 1930's, it was common practice for smaller colleges to adopt a familiar tune as the fight song, which was "Our
Director March" for North Texas. However, Graham wanted a unique identifier for North Texas, so he commissioned a composition contest for the new North Texas fight song. The contest entailed writing lyrics to match a melodic fragment that Graham had written a few years prior, and extending it to create a "marching song."

The Aces read through submitted arrangements, and the ultimate winner was the tune composed by Francis Stroup. Stroup graduated from North Texas with a Health, Physical Education, and Recreation degree in 1929 and was a teacher in the Denton area. Since graduating college, he had been writing songs, and brainstormed a tune he thought fit in line with the structure of many college songs. Drawing inspiration from the "Washington and Lee Swing," and Oscar Hammerstein's "Stouthearted Men," he submitted his lyrics and tune to Graham. Graham read Stroup's submission, arranged for band by one of Graham's students, Gene Hall. Graham's exact words to the arrangement were "Can't you just imagine the band marching down the field playing that?"

Stroup received a letter from Dr. Marquis later that year that his song had been chosen as the official North Texas song, and the Aces and the marching band started "plugging" the song. Graham and the Aces performed it every Saturday night at their show, and the marching band played the tune after every touchdown and timeout to help thousands of students, visitors, and alumni recognize and sing the new fight song. The official induction of the fight song happened at the 1939 Homecoming game – a new song and a Homecoming win brought a renewed sense of pride for the school, and the marching band gained immense recognition. It is important to note that the marching band had only consisted of male members. The Eagle band, a 90 member ensemble, split personnel between the concert and marching band and women were only permitted to participate in the concert band until 1939, when the marching band selected its first female drum major, Arlo Tatum. Women were only allowed to audition for Majorette/Drum Major positions until the United States entered World War II in 1941 and a significant portion of the male members were drafted into the military. Dr. Marquis also left the Teachers College to serve as

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7 Montgomery, 2016
8 "University of North Texas North Texan Online Winter 2001: Eagle Tale" 2001
an Air Force Pilot during the war, and the assistant director Harry Parshall oversaw the band department until 1945\textsuperscript{5}. Due to small ensemble sizes, Parshall combined the marching and concert band together to perform at all home football games and pep rallies, and perform three concerts a year to balance out the ensemble roles. Members of the Eagle band were still split into different ensembles when the marching season ended, however, a new type of ensemble was introduced – the instrumental techniques ensemble. Students auditioned to be a part of the concert band, and those who wanted to develop their pedagogical skills on their instrument were placed into the instrumental techniques ensemble where teaching methods were practiced in a concert band lab environment, similar to the marching band structure\textsuperscript{5}. Between 1941 and 1945, major activity ceased within the marching band and the school as a whole with the ongoing war, and the next major event that changed the course of the marching band would happen in 1945 with Maurice McAdow taking over the position of Director of Bands\textsuperscript{9}.

(1940 NTSTC Band)

**McAdow Years (1945-1974)**

Maurice McAdow was appointed the Director of Bands of the renamed North Texas State College in 1945, and he held that position until 1975\textsuperscript{10}. Dr. Marquis had returned from World War II but joined the music education faculty instead, as the music college was facing a sharp incline in enrollment numbers\textsuperscript{5}. The post-war renewed interest in school band elevated the growth of the NTSC music college, with the introduction of many new programs including the nation's first jazz education program in 1947. Professor McAdow auditioned and selected a 124-member ensemble every year to perform in the marching band, with every member being a music major wanting to participate in the concert ensembles when the marching season concluded\textsuperscript{11}. His phrase "No walk, no sit" characterized the personnel of the group for three decades – those who desired to audition and participate in the

\textsuperscript{9} North Texas State Teachers College, 1941

\textsuperscript{10} North Texas State Teachers College, 1945

\textsuperscript{11} Schaeffer, 2021
concert ensembles had to perform with the marching band for a well-rounded education, while also receiving physical education credit

McAdow's programming for the marching band mirrored the Big 12 bands of the north such as the University of Illinois and Northwestern University, as the shows consisted of "picture sets" and step-two drill formations. The group learned a new show every week, with the themes geared towards crowd-pleaser motifs such as Disney, the Typewriter show, and other concepts that excited the crowd. McAdow's experience with traveling circus bands influenced his piece selections for the marching band pre-game shows; he traveled with the Peggy Norman Players, a tent show group, in his early 20's and continued to perform with other circus groups until his tenure at North Texas began. The pre-game music was selected from McAdow's favorite circus band tunes and rotated between Robinson's Grand Entrée March, Big Cage, and Barnum and Bailey's Favorite, and the group also performed the visiting team's fight song as a show of band camaraderie. The expectation of musical excellence was prevalent throughout McAdow's tenure, and there were no complaints from members or need for discipline because "you don't dare goof off around McAdow."

(1961 McAdow Band)

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12 Paul, 1982
13 McAdow, North Texas State University Eagle Band Football Favorites
In addition to performances at football games, the marching band also performed in one concert in November as part of an event titled "Marching Band in Concert." Since the personnel of both bands were the same, the marching band performed symphonic repertoire as a semester preview concert as the marching season was dwindling down in activity. The concert band also had a uniform – it was the same as the marching uniform, but with the top breastplate removed. When North Texas was renamed North Texas State University in 1961, the band purchased new uniforms that would last for the rest of McAdow's tenure, but the style was kept consistent with the new addition of a cape. This tradition mirrored many other schools in the country who had the same personnel for the marching and concert bands.
The members of the band also developed a closer relationship with McAdow over the years, as McAdow acted "like a second dad" to many of the students\textsuperscript{11}. He was known for financially supporting those who could not afford to participate in the band by giving them odd jobs, encouraging them to perform in the pit orchestra, and employing them on equipment, stage, and operations crews. The equipment crew affectionately named themselves "The Boys" and would often be the most dedicated members of the band in assisting McAdow with bringing all the instruments to and from rehearsals and performances using an airplane tug\textsuperscript{11}. The camaraderie that was fostered among members year after year yielded a successful student leadership team. McAdow was the first band director to have a graduate assistant acting as an assistant band director, a lead and assistant drum major, section, and squad leaders. Each tier of the leadership team was empowered to oversee different instructional tasks of the band – section leaders managed attendance, music sectionals, and logistical tasks for each section, squad leaders were responsible to divide their section evenly and teach their squad the drill charts for that week\textsuperscript{11}.

![1973 Homecoming]

McAdow's bands were described and characterized by pride. Members of the band set an expectation of musical excellence every year without question, and the bands' reputation for precision even led them to earn the name "Mean Green Marching Machine\textsuperscript{11}." The caliber set by the group every year did not diminish the fun traditions created within the organization, such as the relationship the band had with the University mascot, Scrappy The Eagle. A live Golden Eagle brought to the North Texas-Oklahoma Tech game in 1950 was named Scrappy was in a contest, and lived in the North Texas Club House until he was moved to the Fort Worth Zoo in 1952\textsuperscript{14}. That same year, a new eagle named Victor was set to debut at the football games, but passed away due to heat exhaustion right before the game. Scrappy made a return to football games after that until his death in 1959, with a new Victor II being appointed in 1960, but the fees charged "for his presence at games were too

\textsuperscript{14} "The Birds who Know No Defeat", 2015
expensive. 1962 was the last year that North Texas attempted to field another live eagle, but sadly this eagle (also named Scrappy) died before his first appearance. McAdow mourned the passing and relocation of several eagles over the past decade, and constructed a papier-mache eagle to pay tribute to the fallen eagles, especially Scrappy II. The band brought the papier-mache eagle, known as the "McAdow Eagle" to every football game with the spirit club, Talons, until 1967. To add to the drama, McAdow also assigned the assistant drum majors between 1963 and 1969 to dress up as an eagle named "Mr. Eagle" and enter the field preceding the band before every pregame performance. Eric Brewster, assistant drum major of the band in 1963, made his flying debut into the stadium with a costume made from leather, plastic, and a chicken wire and papier-mache head, and that tradition continued until 1969 when Talons obtained permission from the marching band to assign a human to dress up as Scrappy the Eagle for football games.

(Scrappy, 1953)

(Mascot at Homecoming Dance, 1960's)

The rest of McAdow's time with the marching band yielded more performance opportunities outside the Denton community and brought further exposure to the Mean Green Marching Machine. The band was invited to be the inaugural band for the opening of the Dallas-Fort Worth Airport in 1972, which marked McAdow's last major event with the marching band before he retired from the school of music. McAdow's concert band had also begun touring in the early 1960's, traveling all over Texas and the Southern United States, performing a series of concerts on tour every year in the spring. With the concert band attracting many students to audition and perform with the ensemble, the number of outside events the marching band participated in declined as the ensemble prepared for the concert band tours.

15 History Behind The Mascot, n.d.
16 North Texas State Recording Archives, 1960-1974
As McAdow started transitioning into retirement, his graduate assistants started leading the marching band. Jim Hansford, McAdow's Graduate Assistant between 1971 and 1972, became the director of the marching band from 1974-1976, and the assistant director John Stansberry took over the position in 1976 to bridge the gap between McAdow's last year, and Dr. Robert Winslow's first year as Director of Bands at North Texas State University\textsuperscript{12}.

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\textbf{Winslow Years}

Dr. Robert Winslow replaced McAdow as the Director of Bands in 1975, and held that position until 1991. Throughout his time at North Texas, he was the director of the marching band until 1982, when Dennis Fisher was hired as an Assistant Band Director to conduct the symphonic band and direct the marching band. Dr. Winslow had an assistant director and a graduate assistant who co-taught rehearsals, organized Gameday procedures, and directed the band in Winslow's absence. The change from McAdow to Winslow after three decades affected the pace and closeness of the ensemble – many members expressed the difference in teaching style between the two directors was not compatible and students a significant amount of time to adjust\textsuperscript{17}.

Dr. Winslow was the Director of Bands at the University of California Los Angeles prior to his appointment at North Texas. He oversaw all aspects of the marching and concert ensembles, which transferred over to his responsibilities at North Texas. Winslow desired to bring a new, "fresh" perspective to the North Texas Marching Band by introducing a new Fight Song, inspired by jazz influences to reflect the growing jazz department and personnel of the marching band. He also brought more new tunes from the west coast to add to the Gameday tunes list, such as "Fly Like an Eagle," a symbolic piece to present day\textsuperscript{11}.

\textsuperscript{17} Kleeman, 2021
While activity in the marching band dwindled during this time, many changes were happening at the university level regarding rebranding, and Winslow saw that has his opportunity to add his changes to the bands as well. NTSU in 1973 designed a new logo for the football team with the intention of the art being a "stylized rendition of an eagle." Fusing "1960's psychedelic design with thick, curvilinear shapes" with the traditional eagle symbol, the neon lime green logo was certainly a striking change. University students believed this design resembled a flying worm, so the name stuck until the logo was retired in 1982. The marching band's uniforms reflected the logo change, with many students recounting their favorite highlight of marching band being the “aggressive lime green uniforms” that the band marched onto the field with every game.

Unfortunately, with Winslow trying to impose too many changes on the marching band structure in a short amount of time, the membership struggled with to regain the closeness they had with each other and the director that was prevalent during McAdow’s tenure at the university. Member morale suffered as a result, and Winslow faced pushback from the students and faculty members alike, and students began viewing the marching band as just an ensemble credit that they had to enroll in to satisfy graduation requirements. With the lack of consistency in outside performance venues, student leadership empowerment, and the requirement of participating in the marching band to audition for the concert band removed, the pride in performance that members once had was in danger of being completely lost.

18 “Visual History of the Flying Worm”
Fisher Years

In 1982, Professor Dennis Fisher joined the North Texas faculty as the Assistant Professor of Music, where he directed the marching band until 2003 and conducted the symphonic band until his retirement in 2019. He came to North Texas from Kansas, after teaching in the public schools and collegiate scene since 1971. When Fisher arrived at North Texas, he was faced with a very disorganized marching band that had “no identity, no work ethic, and no morale.” The group was comprised 90% music education majors, and Professor Fisher sought to add a new layer of identity to the group to unite them together past the curricular requirements of the marching band course. Fisher started to rebrand the group by naming the marching band the moniker “Green Brigade” after consulting with his student coordinators on the leadership team. The name “Green Brigade” reflected the collegial atmosphere of the group while displaying Fisher’s goal for the group to be a single unit and a regiment of united members who supported each other.

Fisher also introduced a new tradition that would become one of the most sentimental traditions to the university, and that was the adoption of “You’ll Never Walk Alone” as the group’s song of identity. Professor Fisher got the idea for the selection of this tune after seeing the Rodgers and Hammerstein musical Carousel with his wife and hearing the song, which elicited a meaningful impact for him while watching the scene unfold on stage. After suggesting to the student leadership team and receiving positive feedback, Fisher introduced this song to the Green Brigade as a song of unity, explaining to the members the meaning behind the tune and the spirit it should embody in the members’ hearts when they perform it. The NTSU College of Music began to see a rise in the population of out-of-state students, and these students were often the only ones from their hometown with no preconceived notions of the band. Members cherished this meaningful tradition of supporting each member in the Green Brigade through music and an immediate family of like-minded people. The tradition began by playing the 'Green Brigade Song' at the end of every Friday night rehearsal, and after a few weeks, the band performed it at the end of a football game after the routine Fight Song and Alma Mater. A few football fans stayed for the initial performance, and as the season continued, more students, alumni, fans, and the football team stayed at the end of the game to hear the Green Brigade perform "You'll Never Walk Alone." Even with the same membership clientele, it became a sentimental symbol to connect the university and alumni network, and was the significant push the Green Brigade needed to regain the companionship the members had with each other and instill a sense of pride in performing with the ensemble.

Fisher saw this positive turnaround as an immense victory for the group, and by 1985, the culture of the group had stabilized to one that was healthy and supported the membership clientele. The audition requirement that had characterized decades of the marching band was taken away, as Fisher wanted to encourage more members to join the Green Brigade outside the music education world. The band consisted of 200 members by 1985 and steadily grew year after year. With the university retiring the flying worm logo, the band also received new uniforms in 1986 that were no longer a striking lime green. The Green Brigade began performing again at many notable venues outside the Denton community, as the full band traveled to most of the away football games. The

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19 “Dennis Fisher, Wind Studies”
20 Fisher, 2021
21 Oktay, 2021
band would travel to the location on Friday, perform in the evening at a high school football game, and then spend the night at a hotel in preparation for the college gameday festivities the next day. The group learned 2-3 theme-style shows every season, with dynamic drill that was no longer just picture sets, and performed at venues such as the Old Dallas Cowboys Stadium for a Chrysler commercial, UT Austin, and Texas A&M’s stadium.

The student leadership structure of the band also shifted as the depth of each show’s drill increased. In addition to 2 or 3 drum majors conducting the band, Fisher selected squad leaders for each section with the intent of having one squad leader for every four to eight members to teach the drill formations to. Rehearsal time was split learning the music as a full ensemble, then having the squad leaders teach their squads the goal number of drill pages for that day before assembling it with the full ensemble. There was no specific pregame show to learn, as the group only performed during pregame for special occasions such as homecoming, visits from notable figures, and University days.

During Fisher’s time at the University, the drumline experienced huge success in their own competitive field and brought more attention to North Texas on an international level. The exponentially growing population of the music school meant that the entire drumline had to be split into two different lines. After summer auditions, the named “A-line” would perform with the Green Brigade, and competed in indoor drumline competitions during the marching band off-season. The “B-line” would learn marching pedagogy and practice rudimentary techniques during the marching season, and have the opportunity to perform indoor drumline shows as well. The A-line began competing in the Percussive Arts Society International Competition for the first time in 1984, and emerged as winners every year between 1984 and 1986. The PASIC society voted on a ruling after 1986 that any drumline who won three consecutive competitions had to take a year away from competing, and that rule prevented North Texas from competing at PASIC in 1987. Since 1988, the renamed University of North Texas drumline won every PASIC competition attended, making them the most decorated drumline with 22 PASIC wins to their name. The spotlight placed on the UNT drumline indirectly brought more attention to the Green Brigade as an entity. Prospective music education students saw the Green Brigade as the most accessible representation of the UNT College.

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22 Buyer, 2009
of Music, and as enrollment numbers increased, so did the size, reach, and sound potential of the Green Brigade.

Professor Fisher directed the Green Brigade Marching Band in its entirety until the 1992 school year when he was appointed as the Interim Director of Bands when Dr. Winslow retired suddenly. Fisher conducted the Wind Ensemble until 1994, when Professor Eugene Corporon joined UNT as the Director of Bands. Interim Assistant Director Phil Clements directed the marching band between 1992 and 1994, and the position rotated between several graduate students and assistant directors such as Brad Genevro and Fred Velez until 2003. The Green Brigade increased public venue performances for football games, performing at the inaugural New Orleans Bowl in 2001 and again in 2002. The band continued to participate in many exhibition performances, and the reach that the group had through traveling to football games in conjunction with the international recognition brought by the drumline, continued to bring interest to the Green Brigade and music program at UNT.

Williams Years

Before 2003, UNT did not have a named Director of Athletic Bands position, as the Director of Bands always managed the instructional aspects of the marching band with assistance from graduate students. However, the growing wind studies department and number of ensembles necessary to accommodate all students meant that a third faculty position needed to be created to direct the marching band full-time. Dr. Nicholas Williams was appointed into the position a year before completing his master’s degree in conducting at UNT. Williams received his bachelor’s degree in music education from UNT as well, where he was a member of the Green Brigade under Fisher’s direction. The membership clientele consisted of 180 members, but only 8 trumpet players, a downward shift from a 50 person trumpet section just a few years prior.

The majority of students in the ensemble were still music education majors who had a curricular requirement to participate in the ensemble. The membership kept changing as people dropped out of the music education degree plan and new classes entered, making attrition the highest it had been. However, about 2 years into William’s time at UNT, the students started a petition to remove the marching band requirement from the music education curriculum. The petition was received by the UNT music education department and all the wind studies directors, and after several

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23 Williams, 2021
rounds of debate, the curricular requirement for marching band stayed\textsuperscript{23}. The band faced a few years of large personnel increases without warning; some years the group jumped 50-70 people and the Green Brigade just did not have the instruments needed to accommodate that large of a group. However, even with the increase in numbers, the Green Brigade was still one of the smaller ensembles compared to many other college bands in the state of Texas. Dr. Williams sought to increase the numbers of the Green Brigade to compete with the other state bands, as “size matters in Texas\textsuperscript{23}.”

Williams’s idea to propel interest in the Green Brigade was to recruit as many non-music majors as possible\textsuperscript{23}. He and his student leadership team attended UNT summer orientations, student sessions, initial course selection days, and more events to first understand why students might have been apprehensive about joining the college band\textsuperscript{23}. These orientations enlightened Williams to the fact that many non-music majors just did not know they were allowed to join the marching band. Every year after that, the student enrollment steadily increased largely due to non-music major participation. The band that was once 90\% music majors in the early 1990’s shifted the scale throughout the 2000’s into the 2010’s. The Green Brigade hit 400 members for the first time around the year 2011, just in time for the opening of the new Apogee football stadium on campus. The large increase in numbers, the growing prestige and popularity in the music department as a whole, and the sheer sound produced by the group earned the Green Brigade the title “the best band in the land and the best drumline in college football” by the Bleacher Report\textsuperscript{24}.

\textsuperscript{24} Stine, 2011
The student leadership structure also experienced a rehaul during Williams’s years as the Green Brigade director. The squad leader system that had been prevalent throughout Fisher and McAdow’s time was dissolved, and instead, each section had music section leaders and logistical coordinators. Instead of learning drill formations in squads, the length and complexity of shows meant that the group learned drill together, taught by Williams with the assistance of student field technicians to focus on the on-field marching pedagogy and micro details with members. The graduate assistant position was turned into an undergraduate position with fewer tasks and administrative responsibilities, with Williams now doing most of the logistical organization. The band still had 3-4 drum majors any given
year, and with a band as large as the Green Brigade was becoming, the leadership team experienced hands-on teaching that was perfect for the aspiring music educators and non-music major leaders in the ensemble.

The halftime shows produced by the group were single-themed, multi-movement works. Every year, the Green Brigade performed two such productions, modeling a drum-corps style marching and show that would be familiar to the majority of students in the band. The group also brought back pre-game shows, which had faded into non-existence after McAdow’s iconic circus marches. Williams reintroduced the pre-game performance with the Green Brigade marching onto the field performing E. E. Bagley’s “National Emblem March,” and leading into the North Texas Fight Song with a “UNT” formation, cheers for the fans and cheerleading team, National Anthem, and the Alma Mater, before playing the Fight Song one more time to exit the field. The group left the field after pre-game to perform from the stands, and took the field again during halftime for the main exhibition show.

The band was invited to perform at the Texas UIL State Finals in 2008, Bands of America Denton in 2012 and 2014, several bowl games, and community performances. However, after surveying the students, Williams withdrew the group from extra exhibitions outside the community because the students did not believe it created a huge impact and just created extra hassle. Instead of focusing on pushing the group further into the public eye, Williams focused on community outreach within Denton, and staying active with several local events to centralize the target audience for the Green Brigade. Williams was also invited to bring the Green Brigade to the annual Rose Parade several years in a row, but the invitation was denied due to several circumstances, one of which being the immense cost of transporting a 400-person band cross-country.

One of Dr. Williams’s goals beyond the personnel of the Green Brigade was to extend the alumni network and recruit for the future. He focused on building a network of non-music majors who had a better likelihood to stay financially connected with the school after graduation, a possibility that was limited with graduating music education majors. In order to push the band out of the community and into the public spotlight, traveling with a 400+ person band every year was a major consideration for accepting exhibition invitations. By 2019, the Green Brigade was encroaching on 40% of the group being a non-music major, which was a striking improvement from the early 1990’s. The focus of keeping the group community-oriented worked well for some aspects of the group, especially for music education majors seeking teaching experience through Green Brigade being a lab ensemble, but also slowed momentum and initiative among the general membership since there were no major performances outside the town to look forward to. With the majority of members enrolling in band in college to continue the performance experience they had in a competitive high school atmosphere, the slower performance output of the Green Brigade did not renew as much enthusiasm for members as the years went on. However, the skills that students acquired through multiple facets of performance in the Green Brigade still benefited the development and understanding of marching pedagogy.

Dr. Williams accepted a position at the Melbourne Conservatory of Music in 2019; throughout his 16 years as the Director of Athletic Bands, the Green Brigade saw its highest enrollment and non-music major percentage in the ensemble, shifting the group’s music education priority to one that
supported the diverse constituents of the school, and invited a more collegial atmosphere for the Green Brigade.

Present Day

Under the direction of Dr. Daniel Cook, the Green Brigade Marching Band continues to uphold and significantly advance the leadership, musical, and visual opportunities provided through the group. Dr. Cook modified the mission and vision statements to reflect more accurately the now 51% non-music major group. The effort to once again, rebrand, and reintroduce new core values to the organization proved effective over a three year period of massive change so far.

Modifying leadership, outreach, and community roles have effectively provided a well-rounded marching education for music education and non-music education majors alike. In 2009, the Green Brigade comprised 80% music majors and 20% non-music majors, but in 2019, the non-music major percentage increased to 43%. In 2021, the group sits at a 51% non-music major population. The organization is revitalizing focus on the importance of camaraderie and community belonging, mirroring the cycle from 1983 that introduced an identifying name and sentimental song.

Throughout the 2020 season, the normal operations of the Green Brigade came to a halt due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The band had adapted to safety considerations of proper distancing, acquiring musicians masks, and redefined new procedures still to provide a live and gratifying experience for members. Without being able to produce normal marching shows, the group was restricted to performing in the stands on gamedays and mostly focusing on musical development. In addition to split-band performances in the stands on gamedays, the Green Brigade undertook a unique initiative to produce high-quality recordings that showcased the organization's musical growth.
The Green Brigade also significantly changed the student leadership structure to empower members in developing critical thinking skills and creative leadership fundamentals. The growth in both numbers and uniqueness of the organization seeks to continue providing opportunities for members to experience marching band as a "lab ensemble" to advance marching musicianship, teaching, and refining leadership skills for both music education and non-music majors alike. Identifying with traditions of the historical North Texas Marching Band to inform the present routines, the goal of the Green Brigade to become a national force of uniqueness in musical excellence, leadership empowerment, and cultivating a sense of strong community belonging among a group of 400+ members is fueled by dedicated students, staff, and the greater community who recognize the extraordinary potential that the Green Brigade contains.

The 2021 season brought a fresh new perspective for the whole group. With fewer pandemic restrictions and the hopeful promise of returning to normal band activities, the Green Brigade launched into a season filled with activity, starting with a new halftime show design and theme. Calling it “A Brand New Day,” the show was a modern style design complete with an introduction and three full movements and drum corps-style drill. The music relied on pieces that had titles or moods relating to “green,” or “fresh,” and highlighted the passage of time and building legacy through the pieces “Centuries,” “Hours,” and “Brand New Day.” This show was a celebration of the musical and visual exceptionalism at UNT, cultivated through the commitment to excellence from the members and leadership team. The year of the COVID-19 pandemic strengthened the group’s musical prowess, powered through by dedicated section and squad leaders who prepared lesson plans, learned active musical pedagogy skills, and received feedback to perfect the repertoire presented. “A Brand New
Day” was also marked by a new uniform change from a generous donor gift, appealing to the contemporary model of the year. The change in culture and mission for the group was displayed through the exhibition show, as “Extreme Makeover” characterized that not all change is bad, and has the potential to yield fruitful results.

The 2021 season saw a huge success in internal recruitment as well as external reach outside the Denton community. After 13 years, the group performed at the Texas State UIL 4A preliminary competition as the exhibition band once again, performed at Bands of America DFW, has been invited to perform in the Saint Patrick’s Parade in Dublin, Ireland, and gained immense recognition through large media output. The band also sought out a new leadership structure, splitting the team into instructional and logistical leadership to empower members to advance their skills in areas they are passionate about. From a medical committee, full uniform and equipment crews, all the way to a tiered media team, the Green Brigade committee structure not only enticed the music majors in the ensemble, but largely included the 51% of non-music majors as well. The instructional leadership consisted of drum majors, a selective field technician team, section leaders, and squad leaders similar to the historical squads. Instead of tasking squad leaders to teach visual formations, they focused on building camaraderie and a support system among smaller divisions of the large sections.

Alumni interaction with the group for posterity of the organization also saw immense growth in recent history. The first organized alumni band reunion occurred in 1987, under Professor Fisher’s direction, as he sought to increase connections with a newly rebuilding band. The second and third reunions occurred in 2007 and 2016 respectively with Dr. Williams for similar reasons, and the goal to start building a system of donor gifts within the Green Brigade. In 2020, the attempt to renew the alumni band initiative, but annually, was dismissed due to the pandemic, but finally established the tradition once again in 2021 with the intent of continuing the alumni band every year to reconnect thousands of Green Brigade alumni with the university. The widespread attention on media, renewed interest in the forward momentum of the group, and energizing sentiment from members and dedicated alumni equally propel the initiative forward to sustain a Green Brigade Alumni Network into the future and preserve the meaningful roots of the organization.

The current mission of the Green Brigade marching band is to “serve our diverse constituents through the fostering of the highest level of marching arts performance excellence, the promulgation of sound pedagogical principles, the creation of genuinely positive student experiences, and the perpetuation of the spirit and traditions of the University of North Texas.” Dr. Cook’s vision to cultivate the organization as an organism powered by multiple moving parts, sections, squads, and structures has blossomed, especially with renewed energy and spirit from losing the 2020 season.

History is being written with the North Texas Green Brigade daily. The cultural reset that the global pandemic created will strengthen the group to reassess and regroup more robustly. With new, dynamic ideas for student involvement, drastically increasing performance opportunities, and satiating the mission to solidify a conceptual identity for the band, the rebranding of the Green Brigade Marching Band will be the pioneering effort in utilizing the talents and skills of every member to fuse autonomous leadership with developing strong instructional leaders for the future of marching band.

Ricco, 2021
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