



2023 Outstanding Young Alumni Award Mr. Brandon Sanders '10

The Outstanding Young Alumni Award recognizes a Winthrop alumna/us age 35 or younger whose service to Winthrop, service to the community and professional achievements have reflected positively on all alumni and the university.

Mr. Brandon Sanders '10 is being honored with the 2023 Outstanding Young Alumni Award for his accomplishments in teacher leadership, band, and supporting arts education programs.

He obtained a Bachelor of Music Education degree from Winthrop University in 2010, a Master of Music Education degree from Kent State University in 2016, a Gifted & Talented Teaching Endorsement from Converse College in 2020, and a Master of School Administration degree from Gardner-Webb University in 2022.

Mr. Sanders' career in education began at Chesterfield-Ruby Middle School in Chesterfield, where he was named Teacher of the Year and a District Teacher of the Year finalist in 2014. He moved to Springfield Middle School in Fort Mill and was recognized as a Teacher of the Year finalist in 2017. He then served as inaugural band director at Pleasant Knoll Middle School in Fort Mill where he was named Teacher of the Year and District Teacher of the Year in 2019. As a middle school educator, Mr. Sanders developed band programs with nearly 275 students that successfully performed grade 4 music literature.

Under Mr. Sanders' guidance, numerous students annually earned seats in various honor bands and achieved top ratings at Solo and Ensemble festivals. His bands received consistent Superior concert adjudication ratings while earning the SC Band Director's Association's Outstanding Performance Award from 2012-19. Mr. Sanders also founded jazz ensembles, student mentoring programs, and chartered a junior Tri-M Music Honor Society chapter that won National Chapter of the Year in its inaugural year in 2014. The chapter's accomplishments prompted articles in Teaching Music Magazine in 2014 and 2016.

Mr. Sanders also served as an assistant marching band director for Chesterfield, Nation Ford, and Fort Mill High Schools. He aided these programs to win State Championships in 2015 and 2016, Bands of America Regional Championships in 2016 and 2017, and Grand National performances in 2014, 2016, 2017, and 2018.

Mr. Sanders became Northwestern High School's associate director of bands in 2023.

On many occasions, Mr. Sanders has been as an honor band clinician, workshop host, concert assessment consultant, and strategic arts planning committee member. In 2016, he received the Outstanding Young Music Educator Award from the SC Music Educators Association.

Active with many professional associations, Mr. Sanders has held memberships with the National Association for Music Education (NAfME), SC Band Director's Association (SCBDA), SC Music Education Association, SC Association of School Administrators, Center for Educator Recruitment, Retention, & Advancement state teacher forum, and the Palmetto State Teachers



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Association. He has served on numerous school committees/councils, aided SCBDA concert assessment committees, and was a board member for several chapters of honor societies and fraternities.

His educational leadership also includes being a teacher evaluator and mentor, related arts department chair, teacher forum president, arts program coordinator/manager, professional learning community leader, committee chair, and assistant principal.

Mr. Sanders has remained engaged with his alma mater, serving as a Music Education Internship Mentor Teacher in 2016, a judge for the "Leading the Way" Mentor Teacher award in 2020, and a "Rex Hour" presenter for interns in 2021. He contributed to Winthrop's music department as a NAFME collegiate chapter conference presenter in 2018, music education program advisory committee member in 2016 and 2017, and coordinated his school's participation in the Winthrop Special Talents in the Arts program from 2015-20.

Mr. Sanders and his wife, Adrienne, are passionate about Christ, service, education, music, and their growing family.