



East High School

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To Whom it May Concern:

Allow me to introduce myself: I am the director of orchestras at Duluth East High School in Duluth, Minnesota. I am blessed to work with one of the largest high school orchestra programs in the State of Minnesota with 4 daily orchestras including 110-130 students. I did my undergraduate work at the University of Minnesota and my graduate work at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. I have been named in the Who's Who in American Educators both in 1998 and 2000, and was the MNSOTA Orchestra Teacher of the Year in 1996.

I met Mr. David Barg on an East Symphony Orchestra performance trip to New York during the 1998 school year. I was introduced to Mr. Barg via a violinist in my orchestra who had worked with him during one of his summer music camps. She was aware that I was looking for a clinician to work with the orchestra while in New York. She believed that the orchestra would enjoy working with him. She was absolutely correct.

My students and I arrived in New York 17 hours late due to airline and bus mishaps. We awoke the next morning with only 4 hours of sleep in order to work with Mr. Barg at Carroll's studio. I fully expected the experience to be a horrible one due to our lack of sleep. Nothing could have been further from the truth. We laughed, we cried, and we made incredible music that morning. My students were so inspired by the hour we spent with David, that they went from that rehearsal to give one of the finest performances of our school year. Needless to say, David made an immediate impact upon me.

My next contact with David was to arrange for him to work with all four of my orchestras for two days and present a concert on the evening of the second day. We also provided a conductors' symposium for the area orchestra directors. It is safe to say that my orchestras and my personal teaching style has never been the same since.

The reason for "tooting my own horn" in the first paragraph was to share with you that I'm no "slouch" when it comes to teaching high school orchestra. However, I must also tell you that those two days of David Barg's influence upon my teaching style have changed my way of looking at string education completely. Much of what I learned at both universities was excellent "book knowledge" but little understanding of how to inspire students and encourage them to make really excellent music. This is what David offered to me. He seems to have an innate understanding of how to encourage students to do their absolute best. I watched my students change in the span of just two rehearsals! After this incredible experience, I spent a good deal of time analyzing just what David had taught us. I came up with these simple things:

- a. Always watch; always listen; (both teacher and students!)
- b. Always push yourself past what you think you can do - always take the risk
- c. Always demand the best from yourself and your students.
- d. Ask students. Don't teach them - expect them to respond to you.
- e. Consider your potential as greater than you think. You won't be disappointed.
- f. Never be satisfied, nor let your students be satisfied, with less than excellence.

I have known many outstanding musicians, conductors, and educators. I have found very few who are able to communicate the qualifications of excellence in music (and life!) to students as effectively as David

Perhaps even more important than the above, David knows how to communicate these skills to other educators. Granted, I was able to watch him work with students for many hours, but it became very clear to me that he knows what he is doing and knows how to show others how to have the same effectiveness in rehearsals as he has.

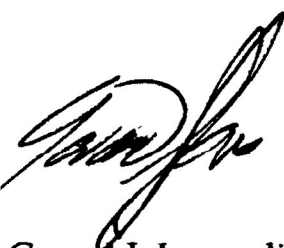
This concept of effectiveness in the musical classroom is an area of incredible need. I believe David has a clear understanding of how to bring music educators into deeper levels of success in their own teaching. I stand as one who has experienced just that. While David was in Duluth, we talked at length about ideas and possibilities for music director/teacher education. We agreed that very little, if anything is available to current music educators in this area. I am thrilled at the idea that David may be released to offer music educators his insights.

In closing, allow me to quote one of my student's answers to this post-Barg evaluation question: What did you enjoy most about working with David Barg?

"His personality - he's so intense, physically, with his eyes and - he's so large! The most interesting thing to me was that he never talked about the sheet music in relation to what we were doing. He talked about the world, and what we can do to help it. He had analogies that really made me think. He made me understand why I need to be alert all of the time. He made me see how I am the only one who can make myself have a worthwhile experience."

While most educators do not have as world-wide of an experience as David, I know it is possible for David to teach educators how to draw students into these types of deep musical experiences. I can't encourage you enough to help David develop these types of much needed teacher education. Thank you for this opportunity to share these thoughts with you.

Very truly yours,



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