



Corzine's band students experience individual instruction and rapid growth. AMANDA THOMPSON

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Jennifer Corzine, Maclay School music teacher

Gift of music

Maclay teacher keeps the beat for 46 years

Amanda Karioth Thompson Council on Culture & Arts



Jennifer Corzine is the longest-tenured faculty member at Maclay school. AMANDA THOMPSON

"They tell me this is my 46th year," laughed Jennifer Corzine. After such a lengthy career teaching at Maclay School, she can be forgiven for losing count. The longest-tenured faculty member, her initial assignment was as a general music teacher in the lower school. She quickly identified an additional opportunity to expand the creative development of her students.

"There was no band and that was my first love so I said, 'do you mind if I start a few instrumentalists,'" she recalled. Incrementally, she built a program comprised of students who met before and after school. After acquiring and retaining enough interested musicians, she transitioned into Maclay's full time band director and she's been at it ever since.

Corzine now boasts a fifth grade, middle school and a high school band and she enjoys working with emerging musicians at all different levels. "I love the fact that I can keep some students for eight years. It's so rewarding."

Many of her current band students have been with her from their earliest opportunity as fifth graders. This marks eleventh-grader Eric Phipps' seventh year in the band. He currently directs the jazz ensemble and has developed both musicianship and leadership skills.

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"Being student director is really fun because I get a little bit of control over the music we play and how we play it. Jazz is so open ended and it's nice to be able to change things if you want." Eric also plays the trumpet in the concert band and he has no plans to stop, even after high school. "I'd like to find a club to play with wherever I go to college. It's an awesome skill and I think it makes me more interesting as a person."

Corzine works with small groups of students which allows for more individual instruction and rapid growth. "Every single class we have a goal. Sometimes it's quite a struggle but when we get there, we all feel good about ourselves. We get to work on the little things that make it music rather than just reading notes which is very important, adding little nuances. It's great to see that progress from year to year," she shared.

Sixth-grader Jamie Maloy is excited about his own progress. "One of the things that Ms. Corzine told me was that I caught on really quickly with the clarinet," he said. This Jamie's his second year in band and he anticipates that he'll stick with it. "I want to keep going because it's fun, I just love playing the pieces. It's a fun way to express yourself."

Camille Friall agrees and says her two years playing percussion in the band have motivated her to continue studying music. A seventh grader, Camille says she's proud of how far she's come in a short period of time. "It's a lot more than just hitting random notes. Just being able to do the little things like drum rolls, you've got to celebrate the little victories. Even though it's not necessarily the most prominent instrument,



Many of Corzine's band students begin studying with her in the fifth grade. AMANDA THOMPSON

it's like the heartbeat."

"Music makes me feel whole," Camille continued. "Receiving it is a gift but once you learn how to play, you can give that gift to so many others and inspire even more."

Corzine has given the gift of music to thousands of students over her career at Maclay and she hopes to continue doing so. "It's a very rewarding job that's why

I stay on and on. I hope I can stay on several more years because I'm still excited about coming to work every day and I can't wait to get to the next piece and see what my students can do."

Amanda Karioth Thompson is the Assistant Director for the Council on Culture & Arts. COCA is the capital area's umbrella agency for arts and culture (www.tallahasseearts.org).