



**THE UNITED STATES
COAST GUARD BAND**
Lieutenant Commander Adam R. Williamson, Director



WINTER 2014
www.uscg.mil/band

SPOTLIGHT

U.S. Coast Guard Band (pb)
U.S. Coast Guard Academy
15 Mohegan Avenue
New London, CT 06320
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ON THE COVER: Lieutenant Commander Adam R. Williamson leads the U.S. Coast Guard Band in rehearsal

Lieutenant Commander Adam R. Williamson, recently appointed as the seventh Director of the United States Coast Guard Band, discusses his journey to the helm of one of our nation's five premier service bands, the official musical representative of the Department of Homeland Security and the United States Coast Guard.



How did you start your musical career?

I got my start in music when I was in 5th grade, when we could join the school band. When selecting my instrument, I couldn't imagine why anyone would want to play anything other than saxophone...saxophone was, after all, the coolest instrument. My parents bought me my first saxophone from a garage sale down the street for \$50. It was not a good instrument, but I stuck with it. I started to get serious about it in 8th grade, and ultimately landed at the Crane School of Music at SUNY Potsdam. There, I studied saxophone with one of the country's top saxophonists, Dr. Timothy McAllister. He gave my dedicated hours of daily practice time a direction that shaped every aspect of my musicianship. After graduating from Potsdam, I attended Indiana University. My time there, though educational and important to my development, was short lived (about 6 weeks) because I won the audition for tenor saxophone with the Coast Guard Band.

What was your path as a conductor?

After being focused on saxophone for most of my life, I became curious about other musical disciplines. I began studying conducting with Glen Adsit at the University of Hartford's Hart School. While there, I conducted the bands and orchestra in lessons. That is one of the difficult aspects of learning to conduct versus learning an instrument: instrumental lessons are typically one on one behind a closed door, but conducting lessons are in front of an ensemble, with your mistakes and your "areas for improvement" out there for everyone to see. It was very humbling and very educational. I also became involved with the Noank-Mystic Community Band. It was a great experience working with them, and I got to experiment with programming and rehearsal techniques. Mostly, though, we had a lot of fun.

How does it feel to make the transition from player/instrumentalist to conductor/leader?

It is a challenging transition. For me, it comes down to this: instrumentalists produce sound, conductors do not. My job was once to produce sound, and to match the many other sounds happening around me. Now my role is to enable and encourage those on stage to produce the best possible sounds. Sometimes that is accomplished through actively leading the group, but often it is simply a matter of getting out of their way. In this regard, it is not too dissimilar from playing in a chamber ensemble.

What does your first season conducting the Band have in store for audience members?

I am very excited about this first season. I have programmed a concerto on every concert, with the intention of showing off the incredible talents of some of our band members. The players in the band are professionals at the top of their field, and these concerti will give our audiences a chance to hear instruments performed at the highest possible level, both lyrically and technically. On most concerts, you will hear a wonderful variety of songs from the band's vocal soloist, MU1 Megan Weikleenget. In fact, my December program is entirely built around her, so she will be on stage singing for most of the concert. Also, our audiences can expect quite a variety of music throughout the season. This season includes music such as Bernstein's *Symphonic Dances from West Side Story*, Stravinsky's *Ebony Concerto*, Gershwin's *Rhapsody in Blue*, music from *The Lord of the Rings*, Sousa marches, and just about everything in between. Each of this year's concerts should be enjoyable for everyone.

School Concerts



The U.S. Coast Guard Band presented its 29th annual School Concert Series in October and November. This year's program, entitled "Creativity: What Inspires You?", was presented in Leamy Concert Hall to over five thousand students from Connecticut and Rhode Island. CWO4 Richard Wyman, Assistant Director of the U.S. Coast Guard Band, presided, guiding students through an exploration of the many sources of musical inspiration for composers and performers. Area high school students also had an opportunity to refine their skills in masterclasses conducted by members of the Band. Over the past 30 years more than 200,000 students have attended the Band's educational concerts at the United States Coast Guard Academy.

AWARDS/PROMOTIONS

Congratulations to **Captain Kenneth W. Megan**, USCG (Ret.), who received the Legion of Merit for nearly four decades of service to our nation. Through his exemplary leadership, important initiatives helped to make the Coast Guard Band a musical institution with a stellar international reputation. He retired as director of the Band on November 1, 2013.

Chief Musician Heather Doughty was awarded the Coast Guard Commendation Medal for her role as the Band's Head Librarian. In addition to this demanding position, she also performed with the Coast Guard Brass Quintet and the Coast Guard Band.

Senior Chief Musician Vince Yanovitch was recognized as the 2012 recipient of the Sam Hasty Award for Service in the Coast Guard Band at an informal ceremony with US Coast Guard Academy Superintendent **Rear Admiral Sandra L. Stosz**. The Sam Hasty Award is presented in memory of former Coast Guard Band trumpeter **Sam Hasty** to the enlisted Band member who has demonstrated outstanding musical contributions in the service of the US Coast Guard Band and promoted growth in the organization by fostering enjoyment, pride, purpose, community, and achievement.

Congratulations to **Chief Musician Chris Howard**, who was promoted on November 1, 2013.

CONNECT WITH THE BAND

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on the web:



www.uscg.mil/band

CONCERT BAND

MOVIE MADNESS: FROM STAGE AND SCREEN

Sunday, January 19, 2014 – 2 PM Leamy Concert Hall, New London, CT

Our annual movie concert branches out to include other theatrically inspired music from opera, stage plays and even the circus. Of course, some great movie scores are still represented, including music from Star Wars and The Lord of the Rings.

Of Song and Love

Sunday, February 9, 2014 – 2 PM Leamy Concert Hall, New London, CT

Get in the mood for Valentine's Day with music dedicated to love. Selections include music from Wagner's Lohengrin, and the classic My Funny Valentine.

NEW YORK CITYSCAPE

Sunday, March 16, 2014 – 2 PM Leamy Concert Hall, New London, CT

The Big Apple takes center stage as CWO4 Richard Wyman leads the band in a concert of music about the famous city.

Shall We Dance?

Sunday, April 6, 2014 – 2 PM Leamy Concert Hall, New London, CT

Your toes will be tapping as the Coast Guard Band offers a concert of dance music. MUC Chris Howard is the clarinet soloist in Stravinsky's Ebony Concerto and Bernstein's Prelude, Fugue and Riffs. Dances from West Side Story round out the program.

CHAMBER ENSEMBLES

CLASSIC NOUVEAU

Wednesday, January 29, 2014 – 7 PM Noank Baptist Church

Friday, January 31, 2014 – 8 PM UMASS Amherst

The U.S. Coast Guard Band Chamber Players hit the road with chamber music of C.P.E. Bach, Paul Hindemith, Wilhelm Berger and Igor Stravinsky. Conducted by Coast Guard Band members and special guest James Patrick Miller, Professor at UMASS Amherst.

LEAMY CONCERT HALL RECITAL SERIES

Sunday, January 26, 2014 – 2 PM

Sunday, March 9, 2014 – 2 PM

The U.S. Coast Guard Band Chamber Players perform music sure to entertain and challenge.

GUARDIANS BIG BAND

Sunday, March 30, 2013 – 2 PM Leamy Concert Hall, New London, CT

Join us for an exciting afternoon of big band jazz both cool and hot.

Leamy Concert Hall
The United States Coast Guard Academy
15 Mohegan Avenue
New London, CT 06320

Noank Baptist Church
18 Cathedral Heights
Groton, CT 06340

Bezanson Recital Hall
Fine Arts Center
University of Massachusetts
Amherst, MA 01002

Unless otherwise noted, all performances are free and open to the public and no tickets are required. For more information about the Coast Guard Band, call our Concert Information Line, 860.701.6826, or visit www.uscg.mil/band.