

I remember well my first experience with the Pennsbury Instrumental Music Program. It was the first summer rehearsal of the 2008 marching band season, and I was the most naïve freshman you can imagine. I fancied myself good at French horn because I could (sometimes) squeak out a G above the staff, and I was confident that my sight-reading skills, honed by years of not practicing for lessons, would see me through with ease. What followed was a predictably rude awakening: I had my butt kicked by the music and crashed into an upperclassman during my first shift block. Now, as a senior looking back, I can see that Pennsbury music has been instrumental in transforming that cocky eighth grader into the musician, and the person, who I am today.

Thanks to the Pennsbury Music Program, I have grown tremendously as a musician. Here, students are presented with the highest standards and expected to rise to the occasion and meet their potential. For instance, in my freshman year I was given a transposed version of Stravinsky's Firebird solo to play at the winter concert. Mr. Mazzeo heard me play what was on paper once and then said he wanted it up an octave. This was at the top of my range at the time, so I struggled with it. Others might have just relented and told me to play the part as written. Mr. Mazzeo did not. I practiced that solo as I had never done before, and right before I went on, he called me into his office and told me that it really didn't matter how the solo went that night. The important thing was that by playing it I had become a better musician. In the end, the solo went fine. The Pennsbury Music Program has taught me that only through hard work and constant effort is it possible to improve my skills and deliver a top-notch product.

The lessons I have learned in band apply outside of the band room as well. Pennsbury didn't just teach me to work hard at music- it taught me to work hard at life. Whether in horn playing or history class, I have found that focus and effort are always necessary to produce superior results. Additionally, the Pennsbury Music Program gave me the tools I needed to succeed—especially in the area of

leadership. Learning to manage the Mellophone Section in marching band was certainly a challenge. But over the course of two years, I've learned that a combination of carefully cajoling and diligently leading by example will get the job done. And I've learned that if you can lead the mellies, you can lead *anyone*. Carrying over my marching band experience as a leader has made me a more effective leader in general. For instance, as president of the Programming Club, I was able to make a cohesive team out of many divergent personalities and, again, deliver a quality product. I don't believe this would have been possible if not for my experience with Pennsbury bands.

Yet as important as it is to grow as a musician and leader, I consider the people that I have met in Pennsbury bands to be equally important. Pennsbury music has brought me together with some of the most wonderful people I could ever care to meet. I am proud to call them my friends, but it would be more accurate to call them my family. The opportunity to get to know them, and to find my niche among them, is every bit as valuable to me as any of the other benefits I have received from the Pennsbury Music Program.

As I near my graduation from high school, I look back and realize that the Pennsbury Music Program has been one of the primary forces shaping my character. Over the course of four years, I have become a better musician, leader, and friend than my eighth-grade self would have thought possible. Although I must soon close this chapter in my life as I look ahead to college, the lessons I have learned and the friends I have made as a part of the Pennsbury Instrumental Music Program will remain with me forever and remain a key part of my life in the years to come.

Ian N Sibner

352 Tall Meadow Ln
Yardley, Pa 19067
2154933515
sibnerian@gmail.com

Music/Artistic Achievement

Pennsylvania Music Educator's Association Festivals

I successfully auditioned for District Band, Regional Band, and finally All-State Concert Band. I will begin the process anew in December.

2008 – Present

Pennsbury Marching Band

One of the premiere high school marching bands in the country, our band regularly tours in foreign countries, including trips to London (2010) and Argentina (2012). I was both Mellophone Section Leader and a featured soloist in 11th and 12th grades.

2008 – Present

Youth Orchestra of Bucks County

YOBC is an audition-only youth orchestra for the Bucks County region. I was principal French horn in the Advanced Division Symphony Orchestra, Concert Band, and Horn Duo for four years.

2008 – Present

Pennsbury Pit Orchestra

Students are selected from the audition-only Symphonic Winds program to provide music for the school play. I participated every year except 10th grade, when the music arrived a week before the show and professionals were called in instead.

2011 – Present

Pennsbury Community Band

The Community Band was formed in 2010 to give adults in the community an opportunity to

perform. The group currently includes many professional musicians. Members of the Symphonic Winds group, myself included were selectively recruited to participate as well.

2009–Present

Pennsbury Symphonic Winds

The audition-only flagship ensemble of Pennsbury High School's instrumental music program. I was first French horn in 10th grade and second in 11th and 12th.

Volunteer Service

2011 – Present

Brass Teacher

Trenton, New Jersey

Salvation Army

The Salvation Army offers music lessons to disadvantaged youths, providing them with a constructive activity and a good meal. I taught several students the basics of playing the cornet. In addition, I recruited teachers and solicited instrument donations for the program.

2008 – Present

Pennsbury Volunteer Music Groups

Fairless Hills, PA

Pennsbury's music program gives back to the community by sending ensembles to community events, including the Holly Nights celebration at Pennsbury Manor, the Little League season opener, and the Morrisville tree-lighting ceremony.

Awards/Certificates

Pennsbury High School Instrumental Music Award

Given to the two most outstanding Pennsbury instrumental students per grade each year. I earned this award twice, in 9th and 11th grades.