Dear Colleagues:

Spring greetings from the campus of the University of Massachusetts Amherst! Though as I write this, it’s a bit gloomy outside; rain on the way. I guess it’s to be expected; you know what they say about April Showers. I have no doubt the buds on the trees will open and soon there will be flowers everywhere. There’s just something about spring in New England, isn’t there?

And just as spring is a constant in these parts, so is UMass Band Day! We had a great return to action this past October, after having taken Fall 2020 off due to the Pandemic. We had nearly 1,500 participate in a massed half-time show, featuring Irish favorites, old and new. And now it’s time to look ahead to the 38th Annual UMass Band Day! Band Day began in 1984 with just 3 bands, and now can include over 60, from not just Massachusetts but all over the Northeast. Every inch of the football field (and even in front of the sidelines) is covered with uniformed musicians, color guard, baton twirlers, dancers and more, for a massed halftime show that is always memorable for fans and participants. At its peak, Band Day has included over 3,000 participants. As we all rebuild our programs in the wake of the Pandemic, we hope to grow Band Day back to that total. And we would love to have your students be a part of it!

The 2022 UMass Band Day is scheduled for Saturday, Oct. 8th, and will be held at McGuirk Alumni Stadium, on the UMass Amherst campus. Our UMass football team will be playing the Liberty University Flames, on what should be a stunning autumn day. For those not familiar with the UMass campus, the fall foliage is always awesome right around the Stadium. We will not know kick-off times till late this summer, but please plan on an early morning. As you can appreciate, it takes a few hours to coordinate getting a massed throng of band members on and off the field, not to mention playing the music together! Once kick-off time is determined, an updated schedule will be posted on the band day website.

Typically, we rehearse in McGuirk Stadium for approximately 90 minutes and then break into sectionals, led by UMass music education students, for another hour. Once those activities are done, band students return to their buses, eat lunch, change into their band uniforms, and then return to the stadium to watch the football game. We like to have everyone in the stands in time to watch the UMass Band’s pregame show. All the participating bands sit together in the stands, so there is ample opportunity for your students to meet their counterparts from other schools. We put a priority on the socialization aspect of Band Day; during the halftime show, everyone is grouped by section. All the trumpets are together, the trombones are together, the twirlers together, etc., rather than being grouped by school. There’s just no way your students won’t meet someone new! After halftime, bands go back to their buses, get out of their uniforms, and return for the end of the game. The day
ends with them getting to watch the post-game field show performance of the Minuteman Marching Band. It’s a day I guarantee your students will be talking about for a while!

I would be remiss if I did not mention that, while the majority of Band Day participants are high school bands, that is not exclusive. Junior High School/Middle School bands are equally welcome and have participated in the past. Marching uniforms are also not required; we’ve had groups attired in band polos and jackets, as well as formal uniforms. All sections are welcome; front ensemble percussion, bari sax, dance team, we’ve even had guitars and violins. If they are in your band, we want them at Band Day! And if your entire band cannot make it....NO PROBLEM! We have frequently had partial band/sections. All are welcome!

To participate this Fall, please fill out the enclosed form and return with a check for $120. Checks can be made out to “Minuteman Marching Band.” Forms should be mailed to: Minuteman Marching Band, 110 Grinnell Way, Amherst, MA 01003. The registration form can also be scanned and emailed to ummbandday@gmail.com. Band Day coordinator Alison Martin and her team will be monitoring that account. You will also want to check-out our Band Day website: www.umass.edu/band/bandday. That will include important information for the day, such as campus maps, the schedule and the performance music. If you have any questions or need further information, please do not hesitate to reach out to either Alison or myself.

As of this writing, we do not have a confirmed theme for the Band Day halftime show....more on that to come! We always try to find material that your students will enjoy, and that the audience will as well. The UMass crowd LOVES Band Day. For many season ticket holders, it’s their favorite game of the year, due to the pageantry involved. And as we get closer, there will be information for your band parents and friends to attend the game. There will be individual game tickets available for sale, as well as parking. All that info to come!

Thanks so much for your time; we hope to see you and your students in Amherst this October 8th, for UMass football versus Liberty, and for the 38th edition of UMass Band Day! And please, pass this information along to others. We want UMass Band Day to be as big as possible!

All the best, and, as always,

GO UMASS!

Timothy Todd Anderson, Ed.D.
tanderson@music.umass.edu