



Marching Arts

EDUCATION SUMMIT

PROGRAM GUIDE

July 20-23, 2026 | West Chester University



WELCOME

Ideas. Evidence. Implementation.

A Summit built for directors, designers, educators, and program leaders who want learning to become action.

The Vivace Marching Arts Education Summit brings nationally recognized clinicians and practicing educators into the same learning community as the INCOMPARABLE Workshop. Attendees encounter powerful ideas, observe those ideas in live teaching, and leave with practical structures for applying them in their own programs.

THE SUMMIT PROMISE

Every attendee should leave with at least one new idea, one observed teaching move, one meaningful professional connection, and one concrete action to implement before the first rehearsal of the fall season.

THE FOUR-DAY ARC

MONDAY	LEADING WITH PURPOSE	How directors inspire, communicate, teach, and turn vision into performance
TUESDAY	BUILDING BELONGING	How authenticity, inclusion, design, and engagement shape the student experience
WEDNESDAY	SHAPING THE FUTURE	How systems, leadership, mentorship, and imagination create what happens next
THURSDAY	BEYOND THE BAND ROOM	How advocacy, trust, copyright, travel, and booster partnerships sustain your program

Throughout the week, featured sessions, open labs, panels, facilitated lunch conversations, and evening field experiences work together to move from inspiration toward implementation.

ATTENDEE FIELD GUIDE

How to Use the Summit

Arrive with a real question. Observe with intention. Leave with a next step.

1

ARRIVE WITH A QUESTION

Name one challenge from your program that you want the day to help you address.

2

LISTEN FOR TRANSFER

Capture practices, phrases, systems, or rehearsal moves that could work in your setting.

3

OBSERVE THE EVIDENCE

In live labs, notice what changes in the task, the language, the environment, and the students.

4

CONNECT WITH PEOPLE

Use facilitated lunches and socials to find colleagues working through similar challenges.

5

COMMIT TO ACTION

Before leaving each day, identify one move you will make within 30 days.

OPEN LAB KEY

OPEN LAB sessions allow Summit attendees to observe live teaching with the INCOMPARABLE camp ensemble. Watch not only what the clinician says, but also what changes in student understanding, behavior, and performance.

SCHEDULE

Summit at a Glance

Current draft schedule. Session locations and social details remain subject to change.

TIME	MONDAY • 7.20	TUESDAY • 7.21	WEDNESDAY • 7.22	THURSDAY • 7.23	BOOSTER SEMINAR
9:00-9:50	Registration / Check-In Welcome @ 9:45 Swope • Ware Recital Hall	OPEN LAB Staging Lab Ian Flint Matlack Field	From Overwhelmed to Organized Greg Drane Ware Recital Hall	Copyright and YOU! Isaac Brooks Swope 310	Seeking Harmony Chris Adams Ware Recital Hall
10:00-10:50	Leading from the Podium Bobby Lambert Ware Recital Hall	Authenticity Is Your Superpower Rachael Urquhart Ware Recital Hall	Inside Look @ Boston Crusaders 2026 Thom Hannum Ware Recital Hall	Eyes On, Hands Off Chris Adams Swope 310	Travel-Savvy Boosters Charlie DiCarne Ware Recital Hall
11:00-11:50	Get Moving! Susie Harloff Ware Recital Hall	Small Band, Big Sound 2.0 Chris DeVona Ware Recital Hall	Focusing Student Leadership Micki + Greg Ware Recital Hall	COMBINED PANEL Booster Club Q&A Ware Recital Hall	COMBINED PANEL Booster Club Q&A Ware Recital Hall
12:00	LUNCH (On Your Own) Conversation + Reflection	LUNCH (On Your Own) Conversation + Reflection	LUNCH (On Your Own) Conversation + Reflection	LUNCH (On Your Own) Conversation + Reflection	
2:00-2:50	OPEN LAB Get Moving: LIVE! Susie Harloff Swope Lawn	No Bench in Band Micki Ferguson Ware Recital Hall	Women in the Marching Arts WBDI Roundtable Ware Recital Hall	DEMO PERFORMANCE 1:00 PM • Matlack Field	
3:00-3:50	Sound Design 2.0 Mike Bishop • Swope 310 Dressed to Perform Vaughan Sawdon • Ware Recital Hall	Frame the Field Carol Bieler • Ware Recital Hall Director's Guide to Front Ensemble Sean Rode • Swope 310	OPEN LAB ENS Music Rehearsal Lab SMB Lawn Year One, Every Year Brooke Johnson Ware Recital Hall		
4:00-4:50	Pulling Performance Out of Performers Susie Harloff Ware Recital Hall	Beyond the Field Micki + Greg Ware Recital Hall	DREAM BIG! Todd Marcocci Ware Recital Hall		
5:00	DINNER	DINNER	DINNER		
7:00-8:30	OPEN LAB Simple Systems Matlack Field	OPEN LAB Building the Ensemble Matlack Field	OPEN LAB Cleaning the Production Matlack Field		
9:00	Social • TBD	Social • TBD	Social • TBD		

OPEN LAB = observe live teaching with the INCOMPARABLE camp ensemble. Thursday's 11:00 Booster Club Q&A is one combined session for directors and booster leaders.

MONDAY •

LEADING WITH PURPOSE

9:00

Registration / Check-In + Welcome

Vivace Productions | Education Summit | Swope Music Building / Ware Recital Hall

Check in at Swope. The formal welcome begins at 9:45 in Ware Recital Hall. Arrive with one program challenge you hope the Summit will help you address.

10:00

FEATURED Leading from the Podium: Presence, Purpose, and Performance

Bobby Lambert | Wando High School | Ware Recital Hall

Leadership from the podium begins before the first gesture. Explore how presence, purpose, clarity, and conviction shape what performers understand, believe, and ultimately bring to the ensemble.

11:00

Get Moving: Dance Techniques for Band Directors

Susie Harloff | Carolina Crown / Avon High School | Ware Recital Hall

Susie Harloff presents this hands-on dance class designed especially for band directors. This class will focus on basic dance skills that build a foundation for safe, well-executed, and clean band choreography.

12:00 • LUNCH CONVERSATIONS

Where did the morning sessions challenge the way you lead, communicate, or invite performance? Choose a hosted table, reflect on one morning takeaway, and connect with colleagues working through similar challenges.

2:00

Creative Visual Lab

Susie Harloff | Carolina Crown / Avon High School | Swope Lawn

The live companion to *Get Moving*. Watch Susie build body vocabulary and expression with our student campers - introducing a movement concept, correcting without shutting a performer down, and getting students who've never danced to commit in front of their peers.

3:00

Sound Design 2.0: Sound That Serves the Story

Mike Bishop | Mike Bishop Design | Swope 310

Use electronics, amplification, and sonic texture as storytelling tools. The focus is not simply what technology can do, but how it can clarify musical intent and strengthen the audience experience.

MONDAY •

LEADING WITH PURPOSE

3:00

Dressed to Perform: Uniforms, Identity & the Marching Athlete

Vaughan Sawdon | G2 Performance | Ware Recital Hall

Examine how uniform choices shape identity, movement, comfort, durability, and the way performers see themselves as athletes and artists.

4:00

Pulling Performance Out of Performers

Susie Harloff | Carolina Crown / Avon High School | Ware Recital Hall

In today's pageantry arts environment, having students that can be expressive in both movement and face is critical. It's also uncharted territory for many. Join Susie Harloff for this hands-on experience that will provide you with knowledge, exercises, and motivation to start pulling performance qualities out of your most reluctant members. .

6:30

OPEN LAB Simple Systems: Installing Effective Rehearsal Techniques

Full Camp Faculty | INCOMPARABLE Workshop | Matlack Field

Observe a live field rehearsal with the INCOMPARABLE Camp Ensemble focused on installing efficient systems for instruction, repetition, feedback, and retention.

9:00

Summit Social

Vivace Productions | Location TBD

Continue the day's conversations with clinicians and colleagues in an informal setting.

TUESDAY •

BUILDING BELONGING

9:00

OPEN LAB Creative Visual Lab with Camp Winds

Ian Flint | Ian Flint Design / Dartmouth High School | Matlack Field

Observe a live visual rehearsal focused on communication, performer understanding, and turning visual ideas into teachable experiences.

10:00

Authenticity Is Your Superpower: Lessons from the Band Room

Rachael Urquhart | WBDI / Quakertown High School | Ware Recital Hall

Strong leadership does not require imitation. Explore how self-awareness, honesty, and consistency help directors lead with confidence and create spaces where students can do the same.

11:00

Small Band, Big Sound 2.0

Chris DeVona | James Madison University | Ware Recital Hall

Practical rehearsal and scoring strategies that help smaller ensembles create clarity, resonance, balance, and musical presence without trying to sound like a different program.

12:00 • LUNCH CONVERSATIONS

What systems help students feel seen, responsible, and connected to the culture of the program? Choose a hosted table, reflect on one morning takeaway, and connect with colleagues working through similar challenges.

2:00

No Bench in Band: Creating a Culture of Inclusivity

Micki Ferguson | Penn State University | Ware Recital Hall

Design rehearsals, roles, and communication systems so every student contributes meaningfully. Inclusion becomes tangible when no performer feels peripheral to the work.

3:00

Frame the Field: Props, Floors & Visual Storytelling

Carol Bieler | Field & Floor FX | Ware Recital Hall

Explore how physical elements frame the production, guide audience attention, and support the story without overwhelming performers or becoming design for design's sake.

TUESDAY •

BUILDING BELONGING

3:00

The Director's Guide to the Front Ensemble

Sean Rode | West Chester University | Swope 310

A director-centered guide to front-ensemble priorities: sound responsibility, amplification, balance, timing, equipment, staffing, and the questions every director should know how to ask.

4:00

Beyond the Field: Gameday Atmosphere Through Engagement

Micki Ferguson + Greg Drane | Penn State University | Ware Recital Hall

Use traditions, communication, student ownership, and intentional audience interaction to make gameday an extension of program culture.

6:30

OPEN LAB Building the Ensemble: Teaching Sound, Timing, and Responsibility

Full Camp Faculty | INCOMPARABLE Workshop | Matlack Field

Observe how faculty establish ensemble sound, timing, listening, and shared responsibility in a live rehearsal.

9:00

Summit Social

Vivace Productions | Location TBD

Continue the day's conversations with clinicians and colleagues in an informal setting.

WEDNESDAY •

SHAPING THE FUTURE

9:00

From Overwhelmed to Organized: Building the Operating System for Your Program

Greg Drane | Penn State University | Ware Recital Hall

Build repeatable systems for priorities, communication, delegation, planning, and follow-through so excellence does not depend on constant urgency.

10:00

FEATURED An Inside Look at the Boston Crusaders' 2026 Program

Thom Hannum | Boston Crusaders | Ware Recital Hall

Go under the hood of a current world-class production. Examine concept, development, musical priorities, rehearsal choices, and the design decisions that bring the program to life.

11:00

Focusing Student Leadership

Micki Ferguson + Greg Drane | Penn State University | Ware Recital Hall

Translate broad leadership ideals into specific student behaviors, rehearsal responsibilities, communication structures, and feedback loops.

12:00 • LUNCH CONVERSATIONS

Which structures could make your program more sustainable while developing the next generation of leaders? Choose a hosted table, reflect on one morning takeaway, and connect with colleagues working through similar challenges.

2:00

PANEL Women in the Marching Arts: Roundtable

Rachael Urquhart, Micki Ferguson, Brooke Johnson + Marielle Chrupcala | Ware Recital Hall

A candid conversation about leadership, access, mentorship, representation, professional pathways, and the conditions that help women thrive in the marching arts.

3:00

OPEN LAB ENS Music Rehearsal Lab

Gumble, Hannum, DeVona + Yozviak | Summit Faculty | SMB Lawn

Watch master educators work with the live camp ensemble and compare how each diagnoses, communicates, prioritizes, and creates transfer.

WEDNESDAY •

SHAPING THE FUTURE

3:00

Year One, Every Year: Thriving in the First Year and Mentoring the Ones Living It

Brooke Johnson | University of Delaware | Ware Recital Hall

The first year in front of a band is the hardest one you'll ever teach - and most of us got through it because someone reached back for us! For early-career educators: the honest, practical stuff nobody handed you in undergrad...what to prioritize, what to let go, and what "good enough" actually looks like in October. For vets: how to mentor without micromanaging, and how to spot the young teacher who's drowning quietly. Year one or year thirty, you'll leave with something to use - and someone to call!

4:00

DREAM BIG

Todd Marcocci | Under the Sun Productions | Ware Recital Hall

A future-facing invitation to imagine what the production, the performers, and the program can become - then connect big ideas to the decisions required to make them real.

6:30

OPEN LAB Cleaning the Production: Diagnosing, Prioritizing, and Creating Transfer

Full Camp Faculty | INCOMPARABLE Workshop | Matlack Field

Observe a later-stage rehearsal focused on setting priorities, integrating responsibilities, and helping performers transfer learning across repetitions.

9:00

Summit Social @ PJ Whelihan's (West Chester)

Vivace Productions |

Continue the day's conversations with clinicians and colleagues in an informal setting.

THURSDAY •

BEYOND THE BAND ROOM

9:00

Copyright and YOU!

Isaac Brooks | J.W. Pepper | Swope 310

A practical guide to permissions, arranging, licensing, recordings, digital use, and the copyright questions marching programs encounter most often.

9:00

BOOSTER SEMINAR Seeking Harmony: Navigating District Constraints

Chris Adams | 1st Light Consulting | Ware Recital Hall

Identify the interests, pressures, and communication patterns that shape district decisions - then build collaborative strategies that move the program forward without unnecessary conflict.

10:00

Eyes On, Hands Off: Building Trust

Chris Adams | 1st Light Consulting | Swope 310

Explore how clear roles, healthy boundaries, and consistent communication allow directors, administrators, and support organizations to build trust without micromanaging one another.

10:00

BOOSTER SEMINAR Travel-Savvy Boosters: Tools, Tips & Lessons from the Road

Charlie DiCarne | Peak Group Travel | Ware Recital Hall

Plan safer, smoother, and more successful travel through realistic budgeting, communication, timelines, expectations, and lessons learned from complex group travel.

11:00

COMBINED PANEL Booster Club Q&A

Charlie DiCarne, Chris Adams + John Vilella | Summit Faculty | Ware Recital Hall

Directors and booster leaders bring real questions into one shared conversation about roles, governance, communication, finance, travel, advocacy, and partnership.

12:00 • LUNCH CONVERSATIONS

What partnership, policy, or communication move would most strengthen the systems surrounding your program? Choose a hosted table, reflect on one morning takeaway, and connect with colleagues working through similar challenges.

1:00

DEMONSTRATION INCOMPARABLE Workshop Demonstration

Workshop Participants + Faculty | INCOMPARABLE Workshop | Matlack Field

See the principles of the Summit come to life as student participants demonstrate the musical, visual, and leadership growth developed throughout the week.

APPLIED LEARNING

Live Lab Observation Guide

Watch for what changes in the students, the task, and the environment.

1

IDENTIFY

Of everything the clinician *could* have fixed, what did they choose first? How did that align with your instincts? Was the issue a MISTAKE, or a MISUNDERSTANDING?

2

DIAGNOSE

Did they ISOLATE TO EDUCATE (pull one thing out to teach it clean) or try to fix the whole picture at once? What did they leave alone on purpose?

3

ADAPT

Watch the teach itself: where did you hear Say It, See It, Sample It, Secure It? What got relabeled, re-demoed, or re-paced when the first rep didn't land?

4

RESPOND

Connection before Correction - what did the clinician do *before* the fix that made the room willing to take it? How did the performers answer good teaching?

5

TRANSFER

Did they stop after one good rep, or go 1x-2x-3x until it was a pattern? Did the learning survive the next rep, and how did they hand responsibility back to the students?

6

APPLY

What's the 1% version of this move for your own program - smaller, younger, fewer staff? One thing you'd borrow for Day 1 of Training Camp?

REFLECTION

Leave with three: one teaching move worth borrowing, one question worth asking your own students, and one adaptation your group requires. Keep Going!!!!

IMPLEMENTATION

My 30-Day Summit Plan

One idea becomes valuable only when it changes what students experience.

THE CHALLENGE • What problem in my program am I trying to address?

THE INSIGHT • What idea, phrase, process, or teaching move changed my thinking?

THE EVIDENCE • What did I observe that made this idea credible?

THE FIRST MOVE • What will I do within the next seven days?

THE PEOPLE • Who needs to understand, support, or participate in the change?

THE MEASURE • What will students or staff do differently if this is working?

THE CHECK-IN • When will I review progress and make the next adjustment?

LEAVE WITH A MOVE

Before you leave West Chester, choose one specific action that can be completed before your first rehearsal of the fall season.