UNITED STATES AIR FORCE
Band of Mid-America

Fact Sheet

The United States Air Force Band of Mid-America

The United States Air Force Band of Mid-America is the principal musical ambassador of Headquarters Air Mobility Command. The roots of the Band of Mid-America reach back to 1942 at Jefferson Barracks, Missouri. After several moves, the band relocated to Scott Air Force Base, Illinois, in 1944. Initially it represented the Military Air Transport Service, then the Military Airlift Command, and now proudly represents Air Mobility Command. The squadron's mission is to uniquely support the Air Force with world-class musical products and services that promote and support troop morale, recruiting, community relations, and the preservation of our national heritage.

This diverse group of musicians has a heritage of performing many styles of music for people from all walks of life. The Band of Mid-America is often called upon to provide musical support for visiting dignitaries, and has had the distinction of performing for Pope John Paul II, Queen of the Netherlands, President William Clinton, Vice-President Albert Gore, Secretary of Defense, Secretary of the Air Force, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, Air Force Chief of Staff, Chiefs of Staff of our sister services, Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force, and General (retired) Colin Powell. The band performs community relations and recruiting concerts for audiences throughout the Midwest, playing more than 400 engagements each year. In its worldwide travels, the band has performed in the Azores, Costa Rica, Barbados, Grenada, Guatemala, Venezuela, Bolivia, Germany and the Netherlands. Each year, band members perform before more than one million people in person, and for millions more on television and radio broadcasts.

Today's Band of Mid-America is comprised of 45 full-time musicians. All members may perform together for special concerts, parades, and other events, or they may be subdivided into several smaller autonomous units and performing groups to satisfy local, major command, and regional needs. For added flexibility, the Band of Mid-America can utilize various vocal ensembles, protocol combos and individual musicians.

Concert Band programs are drawn from established masterworks of the concert repertoire as well as works of notable contemporary composers. The Concert Band has performed under the baton of Dr. Frederick Fennell, founder of the Eastman Wind Ensemble, and with composers Robert Jager and Claude Smith. The band has also shared the stage with Bob Hope, Dr. William Warfield, Ron Hawking, Anacani of the Lawrence Welk Show, and local television celebrity, Julius Hunter. Throughout the years, the Concert Band has performed current popular styles, jazz, marches, and patriotic music for millions of listeners.

The **Ceremonial Band** represents the United States Air Force at official military functions, patriotic ceremonies, funerals, and at numerous parades and celebrations sponsored by communities throughout the Midwest. The group performs annually before more than 500,000 people during the St. Patrick's Day and Fair St. Louis Parades in St. Louis, Missouri. Recently, members of the band have performed at Milwaukee Brewers, Chicago Cubs, Chicago White Sox and St. Louis Cardinals baseball games, and for the St. Louis Rams and Green Bay Packers NFL teams. They have also perfromed at the Special Olympics and at the Gateway International Raceway.

The **Chamber Ensembles** are variable sized ensembles that highlight some of the finest chamber music of the sixteenth through twentieth centuries. Within the Chamber Ensembles are the **Midwest Winds** and **Freedom Winds Woodwind Quintet's**, **Hot Brass** and **Airlifter Brass**, which often perform independently and provide clinics and master classes for high schools and colleges throughout the Midwest. The Chamber Ensembles perform in academic settings and for community relations events, and have been featured on radio broadcasts throughout the region.

The **Shades of Blue Jazz Ensemble** is a group of 18 musicians whose repertoire ranges from traditional big band and swing to modern jazz. They have backed jazz greats such as Tex Benecke, Denis DiBlasio, Jamey Aebersold, Mike Smith, Bobby Shew, Allen Vizzutti, Jeff Jarvis, Mike Vax, Vaughn Nark, Bill Porter, Carmen Bradford, Shirley Chauvin, Steve Smith, Steve Houghton, and Walt Levinsky. The ensemble is often requested for featured performances at jazz clinics and festivals. They also pay frequent tribute to the Air Force's musical heritage, and have collaborated with actor Wilford Brimley on a highly-acclaimed salute to Major Glenn Miller.

Starlifter is the USAF Band of Mid-America's variety show group. This group of seven musicians presents a fast-paced, high-energy entertainment package, blending multitalented performers, constantly changing repertoire, and innovative programming enhanced by effective choreography, staging, and lighting. Starlifter's primary tasking is to provide entertainment for Air Mobility Command's senior officers and their invited guests at Scott Air Force Base. The group also extends support to Dining In and Dining Out functions, anniversary celebrations, Airlift Rodeo, the Scott Air Force Base Open House, public school assemblies, and other community relations events in the local area. Additionally, Starlifter is often called upon to provide musical support outside of the Band's geographic area of responsibility. Recently, the group has traveled to Vandenburg, McChord, Charleston, MacDill, Little Rock and McGuire Air Force bases.

Whether performing for a head of state, before a capacity crowd in northern Wisconsin, or for our troops at home and abroad, the United States Air Force Band of Mid-America reflects the heritage and pride of our great nation and the United States Air Force.

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