

Federal Brass Bio
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The United States Army Field Band

The Musical Ambassadors of the Army
Washington, DC

FEDERAL BRASS

The newest of The U.S. Army Field Band's brass ensembles, **Federal Brass** brings a unique and innovative approach to chamber music. Drawing on its members' virtuosity and collective experience in symphony orchestras, studio orchestras, big bands, jazz combos, and rock bands, their versatility and focus on new and original music give the Federal Brass a signature style all its own.

Staff Sergeant Jeff Lewandowski, trumpet, is a native of Livonia, Michigan and joined The U.S. Army Field Band in 2018. He earned a Master of Music degree from the San Francisco Conservatory of Music and Bachelor of Music degree from Grand Valley State University. Prior to joining the Army Field Band he was a freelance musician throughout the United States. SSG Lewandowski has performed with the San Francisco Symphony, San Francisco Opera, Detroit Symphony Orchestra, New World Symphony, Alabama Symphony Orchestra, Grand Rapids Symphony, and many others. He has attended the Texas Music Festival, New York String Orchestra Seminar, Chautauqua Music Festival, National Repertory Orchestra and the Weimar Bach Academy. In addition, SSG Lewandowski won first place in the International Trumpet Guild Orchestral Excerpts Competition, two first place prizes in the National Trumpet Competition Trumpet Ensemble Division, and was a three-time finalist for the NTC Solo Division.

Sergeant First Class Phillip Kennedy Johnson, trumpet, earned a Master of Music degree from the University of North Texas, where he served as teaching fellow for the Department of Jazz Studies, and a Bachelor of Music degree from Eastern Kentucky University. SFC Johnson has performed with the Lexington Philharmonic, Dallas Opera, Washington Symphonic Brass, and the Moscow Ballet. He was a member of the Glenn Miller Orchestra from 2004-2005. SFC Johnson is active in the Baltimore/Washington, D.C. area as performer, teacher, clinician, and arranger, and studies Brazilian Jiu Jitsu and Mixed Martial Arts at Maryland Brazilian Jiu Jitsu.

Originally from Colorado, **Sergeant First Class J.G. Miller, horn**, holds a Doctor of Musical Arts degree from the University of Southern California, a Master of Music degree from the University of Arizona, and a Bachelor of Music Performance and Music Education degree from the Eastman School of Music. His teachers include Peter Kurau, James Thatcher, Daniel Katzen, and Kendall Betts. SFC Miller has performed with The Who, Mariachi Sol de Mexico, La Sinfonica Nacional De Las America, and Los Angeles area studio orchestras on several major motion picture scores. He was also a performer at the "12-12-12 Concert for Sandy Relief" at Madison Square Garden. SFC Miller has taught as a high school band director and as a clinician at the Kendall Betts Horn Camp and the Colburn Horn Camp. He has also trained as a machinist and welder while working for Lawson Horns, and writes and arranges as co-founder of Veritas Musica Publishing.

Master Sergeant Wesley Ballenger, trombone, is the bass trombonist with the Concert Band, The U.S. Army Field Band Trombone Ensemble, and the Federal Brass Instrumentalists. MSG Ballenger has performed as soloist with the Concert Band on works by Chris Brubeck, Daniel Schnyder, and Eric Ewazen. MSG Ballenger earned his Bachelor of Music degree from Indiana University in 2005, where he studied with M. Dee Stewart and Peter Ellefson. He also spent four months abroad in Vienna, Austria studying with Ian Bousfield. MSG Ballenger served as bass trombonist with the Richmond (IN) Symphony Orchestra, the Columbus (IN) Philharmonic Orchestra, and the 2004 Disney Collegiate All-Star Band in Orlando, Florida. When he is not traveling all over the country with the Army Field Band, MSG Ballenger enjoys traveling all over the country with his wife, Becky.

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Sergeant First Class Carmen Russo, trombone, studied with Per Brevig at the Aspen School of Music and later studied with Don Kneeburg, ultimately earning his Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of South Florida in 1997. From 1994-2004 he performed with a variety of professional organizations including, The Florida Orchestra, Florida West Coast Symphony, The Symphony of Southwest Florida, Sarasota Opera, Walt Disney World, Universal Studios, and for the Holland America and Carnival Cruise Lines. SFC Russo also performed with the Grandlink World opening festival band in Qingdao, China, in addition to several traveling off-Broadway shows including The Lion King, Cinderella, 42nd Street, The Producers, Chicago, and Showboat.

Staff Sergeant Andrew Emerich, percussion, holds a Master of Music degree from Northwestern University and a Bachelor of Music degree from the University of Texas at Austin. His primary instructors include Thomas Burritt, Tony Edwards, Brannen Temple, She-e Wu, James Ross, and Willie Jones III. He is also an alumnus of the Brevard Music Center and the Aspen Music Festival. He has performed with the Maryland Symphony, Midland-Odessa Symphony and Chorale, the Round Rock Symphony, and the Northbrook Symphony. SSG Emerich was active in the marching percussion idiom for several years performing with the Revolution Drum and Bugle Corps, the Boston Crusaders Drum and Bugle Corps, Surround Sound Percussion, Element HPA, the University of Texas Longhorn Band, and the Chicago Bulls' "Stampede" drum line. He has also worked as a clinician, private instructor, and arranger for many scholastic ensembles as well as the Northwestern University Wildcat Marching Band. An active drum set performer, SSG Emerich also plays with various projects in a multitude of genres.