



May Spotlight

Matthew Jones, '84

Bachelor of Music in Performance, percussion

Our May Alumni Spotlight is Matthew Jones. Matthew received a Bachelor of Music in Performance (percussion) from the School of Music where he studied with Jim Hall. Jim had a profound impact on Matthew and he continued to study with Jim privately for another five years after graduating from UofSC. During his time at the University, Matthew was active in Phi Mu Alpha and Kappa Kappa Psi, and was a member of the Marching Band. Matthew's Freshman class started the infamous Wad Squad drum line and the Squad remained active until the early 2000s.

Throughout his 36-year career as a professional percussionist, Matthew has collaborated with various groups and musicians across South Carolina, and he is a staple musician for Columbia's community theater. He's played hundreds of shows at Town Theater, Workshop Theater, Village Square Theater, Richland Northeast High School and other regional theaters in the state.

Matthew is the Principal Percussionist for the Augusta Symphony, the Timpanist for the Aiken Symphony, a percussionist and timpanist for the SC Philharmonic, and has played with the Charleston, Greenville and Florence Symphony Orchestras, as well. He also performs as a guest artist for numerous churches throughout South Carolina and Georgia.

Matthew is currently in his 6th year as Percussion Instructor at Lander University, and he is the Percussion Instructor at Presbyterian College and also Columbia College, where he has taught since 1991. Since 1984, he has been teaching Middle and High School students privately, and he teaches Marching Band percussion (high school level) and Concert Band percussion (both Middle and High School level). Many of his students have made All State and Region Band and received Superior and Excellent ratings for Solo Ensemble.

Jim Hall had an enormous influence on how Matthew approaches his own teaching. He feels he is passing along all that Jim taught him, and he hopes that his students will do the same when they become teachers. Anyone who has seen Matthew play knows how joyfully he makes music, and he also wants young musicians to learn to find that joy in their own music making.

Matthew currently lives in Columbia and spreads the love of music wherever he goes.