

SERGEANT MAJOR OF THE ARMY RAY CHANDLER VISITED THE ARMY SCHOOL OF MUSIC IN VIRGINIA LAST WEEK, SHINING A SPOTLIGHT ON ARMY MUSICIANS.

SMA Ray Chandler, 14<sup>th</sup> Sergeant Major of the Army, “Well I think it is critical to understand that the army band is more than just music. It's about connecting Soldiers to the Army, to music, and also supporting our community efforts.....”

(Music playing)

HE SPOKE WITH NONCOMMISSIONED OFFICERS AT THE SCHOOL AND DISCUSSED THE ARMY’S REFOCUS ON STANDARDS AND THE PROFESSION OF ARMS. ONE MAJOR CONCERN FOR HIS AUDIENCE: THE FUTURE.

SMA BITE: “...you take a look at where we're headed as an army with continuing to reduce the size of the army and all things are on the table, but we know that the bands are very very important to overall army effort .”

THE UNITED STATES ARMY SCHOOL OF MUSIC, OR USASOM, IS A MUSIC SCHOOL THAT DOESN'T NECESSARILY JUST TEACH MUSIC. THE CURRICULUM HAS CHANGED RADICALLY SINCE THE SCHOOL DECONSOLIDATED WITH THE NAVY AND MARINES IN 2011. THE FOCUS CHANGED FROM JUST CREATING MUSICIANS, INSTEAD TO (Singing) CREATING ENTERTAINERS. AS MEMBERS OF MILITARY PERFORMANCE TEAMS, THESE SOLDIER MUSICIANS PLAY POPULAR MUSIC AND PRACTICE SHOWMANSHIP ON PAR WITH SOME CIVILIAN ACTS. THEIR LEADERS ARE TRAINED IN SHOW PRODUCTION AND MARKETING.

USASOM GRADUATION CEREMONIES HAVE A BIT MORE FLARE THAN YOUR AVERAGE AIT. WITH THE SERGEANT MAJOR OF THE ARMY PRESENT TO HAND OUT DIPLOMAS, GRADUATES PRACTICED AND PRACTICED BEFORE THE BIG NIGHT. SGM CHANDLER'S PRESENCE WAS APPRECIATED.

MAJ Paul Bamonte, Deputy Commandant, USASOM, "Having the sergeant major of the army come to visit reinforced how important army music is to ourselves, our field, and how we support soldiers worldwide."

(Music and Singing)

WITH THE RESTRICTIVE BUDGET SITUATION, THE SMALL COMMUNITY OF MILITARY MUSICIANS CONTINUES TO SUPPORT EACH OTHER.

SSG Kevin McCulley, reporting, "And Thanks To Navy Funding, Both The Army And Naval Schools Of Music Will Move Into This Shared Location Once Renovations Are Complete In April 2014. Reporting From Joint Expeditionary Base Little Creek/Fort Story, I'm Army Staff Sergeant Kevin McCulley."