

Dr. Maurice (Gene) Kelley II

It is hard to imagine a way to fit anything more into a musical and military life than Dr. Maurice (Gene) Kelley II has accomplished in his days – and he just keeps going.

A 1988 graduate of Smith-Cotton High School, Dr. Kelley is a freelance bassist and clinician. He is the former Director of Orchestras at Angelo State University and founder of the ASU Symphony and Strings program. He also directs the Concho Valley Chamber Orchestra, which he founded in 2013. He

regularly performs with the Big Spring and Midland-Odessa symphonies, as well as Texas country singer Case Hardin's Day Money Band.

While a student at Smith-Cotton, Dr. Kelley was a four-year performer and letterman in orchestra; he also played in S-C's Jazz Ensemble, Symphonic Band, Jazz Combo and Pep Band. He was in the Pit Orchestra for four musicals. He was active in other areas, as well, earning three letters in football, participating in track as a freshman, coaching Powder Puff Football and being active in the Latin club.

He holds a Doctor of Musical Arts degree from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, where he was a recipient of the prestigious Othmer Graduate Fellowship, a Master of Music degree from Louisiana State University, and a Bachelor of Science degree in Education from Missouri State University. At the time of his induction, he was working toward a Master of Arts in Curriculum and Instruction, which he will complete this summer.

Before relocating to Texas, he served as a Strings Specialist in the Kansas City, Kansas, school district and taught Orchestra and Humanities at Sumner Academy of Arts and Science. He has been an Instructional Systems Specialist for the Army School of Music and served on the faculties of Concordia University and Union College in Nebraska. Early in his career he was an instrumental music teacher in Lawrence, Kansas and the Double Bass Instructor at the University of Kansas. Over the past 25 years he has performed in the U.S. and Europe with a variety of ensembles including 15 symphony orchestras. He has also performed with jazz and popular artists such as Roger Ingram, Bobby Shew, Frank Mantooth, Si Zentner, John Davidson, Ahmad Alaadeen, Clark Terry, and Frankie Avalon.

He was deployed to Iraq as a member of the 36th Infantry Division Band. During that assignment, his non-musical duties included being the Sergeant of the Guard and a Counter Radio Controlled Improvised Explosive Device Electronic Warfare Specialist. He received the Bronze Star Medal for service in Iraq.

Dr. Kelley is a second-generation Smith-Cotton graduate. His parents, Norris and Peggy Kelley, graduated in the 1950s. Norris was inducted into the S-C Athletic Hall of Fame in 2013.

Inducted in Smith-Cotton Activities Hall of Fame, 2018

