

Danny Watring

Danny Watring's name is synonymous with music education in Missouri.

A member of Smith-Cotton High School's Class of 1981, Watring taught instrumental music for 30 years before his retirement in 2016. His teaching career started with Grandview schools as an associate band director; he later served as associate band director in the Liberty School District and Director of Bands at Oak Park High School in the North Kansas City School District before finishing his high school teaching career back at Grandview as the Director of Bands.

Watring most recently served as adjunct professor of percussion and music education at Northwest Missouri State University in Maryville, and conducted the Penn Valley Community College Jazz Ensemble in Kansas City.

He also was a guest director, clinician, drill writer and adjudicator across the Midwest, conducting and judging concert bands, marching bands, and jazz bands. He also had a private percussion studio placing several students into the all-district and all-state bands.

During his days at S-C, Watring earned All-District Band recognition three times and a Superior rating at the state Solo Festival twice. He received both the Louis Armstrong Jazz Award and the John Philip Sousa Band Award during his senior year, when he also was a class officer.

He attended Central Missouri State University in Warrensburg, where he was named Outstanding Senior Music Education Major, and MidAmerica Nazarene University in Olathe, Kansas. Watring was a member of the All-American Olympic Marching Band for the 1984 Olympic Games in Los Angeles and outstanding player/soloist at the at Elmhurst College Jazz Festival in Chicago.

Watring served as the jazz vice-president for the Missouri Music Educators Association; vice-president for the Missouri Association of Jazz Educators, and vice-president for both concert and jazz bands in the Kansas City Metro #3 District. He is also the founder of the Greater Kansas City Middle School Solo and Ensemble Festival. He was inducted into the National Honor Society of America's High School Educators in 2004. In 2019, he was recognized as the Missouri Association of Jazz Education's "Outstanding Jazz Educator."

Watring, who passed away in May 2020, is survived by two children, Devan Watring and Madison Watring Fritts.

Inducted in Smith-Cotton Activities Hall of Fame, 2020

