To the Washington State University Cougar Marching Band Alumni:

As many of you may already know, Don Hower is retiring at the end of the spring and I will be replacing him as the Director of Athletic Bands and Associate Director of Bands. I cannot thank Don enough for his generosity through this transition process and for his offer to help in any way as we begin this new chapter in the history of the Cougar Marching Band.

For one person to dedicate over two decades of their life to service for a single organization is remarkable, and I am humbled and honored to be following him in working to continue the growth and development of the band. However, it is important to remember that the Cougar Marching Band has not and will never be about the director; it will always be about the talented men and women who give their time and talents to entertain thousands of fans and support Cougar athletics.

Having taught band to beginners through professionals, collegiate marching bands are the most special to me because of the passion of the students and the opportunity we have to connect generations of fans and alumni through school spirit and pageantry. Wherever the Cougar Marching Band performs across this country, it represents Washington State University, its fans, the entire state, and every former band member and student. My goal is to ensure the band represents you all with great pride, class, and excellence wherever we perform.

Another reason collegiate marching bands are special is the relationship with its alumni. Former members are responsible for building the band’s traditions and are truly the heart of WSU and its community. The continued presence of you, our valued alumni, is integral to the future success of the band and for the experience of current students. The positive involvement of alumni allows current students to better understand the history of their organization, see who is responsible for all that they get to experience, and put a face with those whom they are tasked with representing. I take the responsibility of making the university community proud of its band very seriously and look to make sure my students do as well, and their relationship with band alumni is a key element in their development.

Your time in the Washington State University Marching Band was hopefully one of the greatest times of your life, and I look forward to providing those same opportunities for current students for many years to come. I am excited to meet many of you as you continue to support your university and your marching band. Together we can continue the great tradition of the Cougar Marching Band and help lead WSU into the forefront of the great bands in the PAC-12 and all over the country.

Please feel free to contact me any time at troy.bennefield@gmail.com and let me know about your experiences in the Cougar Marching Band band and what it means to you, and let me know if you have any questions. I can’t wait to get on campus and look forward to our first season together.

GO GOUGS!!

Dr. Troy Bennefield