

Brandon Gottshall

Software Engineer • Marine Corps Veteran

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Blazin' Brigade Leadership Selection Committee

November 14, 2025

VALDOSTA STATE UNIVERSITY

VALDOSTA, GA

Application for Section Leader Position

Dear Selection Committee,

Re: Application for Section Leader – Low Brass

Leading from the front defines my approach to leadership. I am applying for the Section Leader position with the Blazin' Brigade because this role aligns with my strengths: **disciplined leadership, musical excellence, and building strong, cohesive teams**. As a Marine Corps veteran, Accredited Technology Instructor, and former low brass section leader, I know that clear expectations and shared accountability are the foundation of any successful ensemble.

My leadership toolkit was shaped by my service in the Marine Corps, where I held the roles of Quality Control NCO and Assistant Maintenance Chief. I managed millions in engineering equipment, wrote SOPs that reduced rework, and trained Marines in high-pressure environments. Those experiences taught me how to keep people composed, focused, and confident—qualities that matter most when an ensemble faces tough rehearsals, complex drill, and tight deadlines. In both settings, clear communication, efficient time management, and decisive action are essential for success. I recognize that music majors are usually chosen for these roles—and for good reason, as their expertise is invaluable. In addition to that musical depth, my contribution is to bring **structure, clarity, and professionalism** from operational leadership. Combined with the ensemble's musicianship, this approach strengthens rehearsal efficiency and elevates performance. Adaptability, teamwork, and steady communication are just as crucial in a collegiate ensemble as they are in military settings.

Mentorship drives me. As an Accredited Technology Instructor, I developed project-based curricula that turned beginners into confident practitioners by focusing on **process over perfection**. I enjoy helping students solve problems—not for them, but with them—because independence builds pride, and pride produces strong performers. As a section leader, I aim to create an environment where every member feels supported and motivated to grow, both personally and musically. I believe in approachable excellence—high standards delivered with patience, clarity, and respect.

After several years focused on service and career, I have rebuilt my musicianship intensively since August of this year. Working with the Worth County High School director, I developed a **daily practice system** focused on **technical fundamentals, airflow, tone, and endurance**. The rapid progress I achieved through this routine deepened my empathy for new or struggling players. It reinforced my belief that progress is a system, not a personality trait—something any member can achieve with the right guidance and accountability.

My vision for leadership is to strengthen the internal support structure of the section. One structured leadership tool I can contribute is a **peer mentorship system** I've used effectively in other settings. I'm not proposing to implement this unilaterally; I can formalize it into an SOP if the staff believes it would benefit the ensemble. The system pairs new members with experienced ones for regular check-ins and early habit-building, allowing the team to identify challenges early and

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COVER LETTER – BLAZIN' BRIGADE LEADERSHIP TEAM

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reinforce strong fundamentals. By applying Marine Corps principles—**leading by example, positive reinforcement, and building unit cohesion**—I will help cultivate a motivated, confident, and unified low brass section.

Thank you for considering my application. I am eager to collaborate with the leadership team and staff to support the ensemble's goals. I would be honored to serve on the 2025–2026 Leadership Team, and I am ready to contribute my **commitment, energy, and experience** to the excellence and momentum of the Blazin' Brigade.

Sincerely,

Brandon Gottshall

Attached: Resume