



## MUSIC MEETS PRO SPORTS!

This month's Touchpoint features a story about a truly unlikely chance meeting. We are featuring two very different people that have come together because of the mutual love of **MUSIC** - Mr. Darren Verbick who is the K-12 Fine Arts Advisor for the St Joseph School District in Missouri and Mr. Tamba Hali, Outside Linebacker for the Kansas City Chiefs.

### An Interview with Darren Verbick



**Mr. Verbick is the Fine Arts Advisor for a very large district in St. Joseph, Missouri north of Kansas City. Mr. Verbick, please tell us a bit about your school district.**

The SJSD serves approximately 11,600 students. We have 16 Elementary Schools, 4 Middle Schools, 3 High Schools, 1 Alternative School, and one Trade School. We have a Free-Reduced rate of 75%. I supervise 83 Fine Arts Instructors throughout the district, where they regularly have students make All-District & All-State Band and Choir Ensembles, and have even had students performing with the NAFME Band/Choir/Orchestras. For the fourth time now, the SJSD has been named "One of the Best Communities for Music Education" by the NAMM Foundation. In addition, I serve as the district liaison with the Kennedy Center Partners in Education Program, championing the cause of Arts Integration in some of our regular ed classrooms, where they have seen significant gains in student test scores. I also serve as Director of Community Arts for Missouri Western State University, where I oversee two children's choirs - the Griffon Junior Singers, and a youth Symphonic Orchestra. I also coordinate ARTSCAPE each summer. - A week long Arts Camp for children in grades 2-10, which is what I was doing when I first met Tamba Hali.

### **Please tell us the story on how you met Tamba Hali**

This past August, as I just kicked off another week of ARTSCAPE, a gentleman in a bucket hat talking on his phone entered Potter Hall at Missouri Western State University, and asked "Where are the pianos?" I indicated that they were up on the second floor. He replied, "Thank you, I need to practice." OK . . . I thought, and didn't think too much more about it until approximately 15 minutes later when a gentleman with a CHIEFS shirt

come in here asking about a piano?" Why yes, he did, and I believe him to be up on the second floor. So, on they went. About 15 minutes later, I realized that I haven't seen Campus Security escort this guy out of the building, so decided I should go see what was shaking. I go upstairs to discover the gentlemen in the Chiefs shirt with the 2 security officers sitting outside one of the practice rooms. I ask them what was going on, and they said the guy in the practice room was TAMBA HALI, and he needed to practice. I asked if they thought he'd mind if I knocked on the door to meet him, and they said I could probably go ahead, so I did. We chatted for a few minutes, he found out I was a musician and gave piano lessons. We exchanged phone numbers, and I told him if he ever wanted any lessons, to give me a text. Didn't think too much more about it, cause why would a professional football player be contacting me? But lo and behold, about 3 days later, he texted me, we had about 3 lessons while Chiefs camp was still at Missouri Western State University, and for the most part, have continued lessons about every couple of weeks since then. Tamba has come a long way since our first lesson. His biggest hurdle has been becoming musically literate, but he has made great gains in this area, and shows great promise for the future. The man even has a recording studio in his basement. He is very driven and a very humble human being, but I would not want to be across from him on the football field.

---

## **An Interview with Tamba Hali, Outside Linebacker for the Kansas City Chiefs**



### **What made you want to learn to play piano?**

I grew up in the church. I sang in the choir and played the bongo drums, but I always wanted to play the piano. I had been experimenting with music production and really didn't understand where to start. Darren has given me direction with piano lessons.

### **What are you hoping to achieve with your piano playing?**

I want to be able to play fluently by reading music...a very unique trait to have.

### **You are at the top of your game as an NFL football player. What are the similarities you have noticed between learning to play an instrument and becoming a great athlete?**

As far as the similarities, you have to put the time in for both professions. Playing piano and football require learning about fundamentals. They also both require lots of discipline and patience. There's a growth period that will need to occur for the development of playing either profession well.

### **How do you see music being a part of your life once you retire from the NFL?**

I find myself producing music as well as playing the piano on a regular basis because of the joy it brings me.



[Watch the Full Story Here](#)

## New Content on Education Website:

The Division of Education has added several new features to our website! Visit [education.conn-selmer.com](http://education.conn-selmer.com) and click on **CSI Connect** to engage with music leaders from across the nation, view articles and videos from our world-class clinicians, and participate in our new online message board.

[CONNECT ONLINE](#)

Do you have a personal story you would like to share about Conn-Selmer or the Division of Education?  
» [Send us your story.](#)



[education@conn-selmer.com](mailto:education@conn-selmer.com) | 574.523.0698

[Subscribe](#) to our email list

Share this email:



[Manage](#) your preferences | [Opt out](#) using TrueRemove®

Got this as a forward? [Sign up](#) to receive our future emails.

View this email [online](#).

600 Industrial Parkway  
Elkhart, IN | 46516 US

This email was sent to .

*To continue receiving our emails, add us to your address book.*

