

Alfred L. Watkins is Co-Founder, Musical Director and Conductor of the Cobb Wind Symphony, an all-adult community band in Marietta, GA. In 2013, he concluded his 37-year career as a high school band director, serving as Director of Bands at Lassiter High School in Marietta, Georgia for 31 years and at Murphy High School in the Atlanta Public Schools for six. Mr. Watkins is a 1976 graduate of Florida A & M University with additional study in Music Education and Conducting at Georgia State University. Concert bands under Watkins' direction have performed at the Midwest Band Clinic five times, six featured band performances at the Music for All National Festival and four performances at the GMEA In-Service Conference. The Lassiter Percussion Ensemble has performed twice at the Midwest Clinic and once at PASIC. The Lassiter Jazz Ensemble was twice selected as an Honorable Mention in the Essentially Ellington Jazz Band Competition (NYC) and the Lassiter Winter Color Guard was named a two-time Winter Guard International World Champions in 1996 & 1997.

The Lassiter Marching Band was the 1998 and 2002 Bands of America Grand National Champions and also won nine BOA Regional Championships. Under Watkins' leadership, the marching band also participated in four Pasadena Tournament of Roses Parades (spanning 25 years), three times in the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade (NYC), twice in the King Orange Bowl Parade (FL) and once in the Florida Citrus Bowl Parade. During Watkins' Lassiter tenure, all four (or five) Lassiter concert bands received consecutive Superior Ratings from 1993 until his retirement in 2013, and for the last 23 years, the top two bands earning consistent superior ratings in Grade VI. The band program is one of a few bands in America to have received both the Sudler Flag of Honor for outstanding concert bands and the Sudler Shield for outstanding marching band. Watkins has been a judge for Bands of America, DCI, concert bands, jazz bands and has served as a keynote speaker, clinician and lecturer throughout the country. He has conducted All-State Bands in 18 states and has worked with bands in 38 states.

Mr. Watkins has been selected as a member of the American Bandmasters Association, the Florida A & M University Gallery of Distinguished Alumni, the Georgia Chapter of the Phi Beta Mu Hall of Fame and the Bands of America Hall of Fame. Watkins received the Edwin Franko Goldman Award from ASBDA, and in December 2017, he was a recipient with the Midwest Clinic Medal of Honor. He has served as the Guest Conductor of the World Youth Wind Symphony at the Interlochen Arts Camp and has served as guest conductor of the United States Army Band "Pershing's Own" on the West Lawn at the U.S. Capitol, Washington, D.C.

In 2018, Mr. Watkins was selected into the Inaugural Class as a “Midwest Clinic Legend” and currently serves on their Educational Advisory Committee. In 2018, he was the recipient of the Kappa Kappa Psi Honorary Band Fraternity’s prestigious Distinguished Service to Music Medal and has recently been selected as the Phi Beta Mu International Band Director Fraternity 2021 International Bandmaster of the Year. He has received 25 Certificates of Excellence from the National Band Association, the Sudler Order of Merit from the John Philip Sousa Foundation and the Band World Magazine Legion of Honor Award. Mr. Watkins is Co-Founder, Musical Director and Conductor of the Cobb Wind Symphony (1999), an all-adult community band based in the Metro Atlanta area, which has earned the Sudler Silver Scroll Award. CWS has performed three times at the Southern Division Convention of the C.B.D.N.A./N.B.A., three times at the Midwest Clinic and four times at the GMEA In-Service Conference. At present, Mr. Watkins is one of the few conductors to hold three Sudler Awards (Flag, Shield, Silver Scroll) simultaneously. In 2009 and 2010, two doctoral dissertations were written highlighting his life and centered around his work with the Lassiter Band Program. Currently, Mr. Watkins is a Co-Founder and President of the Minority Band Director National Association, Inc., an organization charged to serve, promote, celebrate and mentor minority band directors throughout the country. He is currently an Educational Clinician for Conn-Selmer Corporation and Perform America. The \$1.5 million Alfred L. Watkins Band Building at Lassiter High School bears his name.

He and his wife for 37 years, Rita, live in Marietta, GA. They have two adult sons: Christopher, a trumpeter in the United States Army Band “Pershing’s Own” in Washington, D.C. and Jonathan, a businessman in Ventura, CA.