

# Black Horse Pike Regional School District Spotlight on Alumni January 2020



## Michael Hengst, Triton Regional HS, c/o 1998

Nominator: Robert Adams, TRHS

Supervisor of Registration, Enrollment and Summer Programs, Mr. Art Alessandrone, discussed life after Triton Regional High School with Michael Hengst. Here's what Michael had to say about his Mustang experience:

- 1. AA: If you attended a college/university, what school(s) did you attend & what was your major(s)?**

*Alumni: I attended the University of North Carolina at Greensboro earning a BM and then attended the University of Texas at Austin, earning a MM, DMA.*

- 2. Describe your career/profession today?**

*alumni: I am Associate Professor of Trumpet and Athletic Band at Metropolitan State University of Denver. I also play trumpet professionally and am an active performer in the Denver Area and travel around the country performing and teaching masterclasses at universities.*

**3. AA: What impact did your high school have on your career path/profession?**

*alumni: I was very active in the music program, performing in, I believe, every musical group the school offered including all of the bands and choirs. This opened me up to many performance opportunities and varieties of music. Playing in the pit orchestra also introduced me to many area musicians that I studied and performed with outside of the Triton.*

**4. AA: Was there a teacher, coach, counselor, administrator, secretary, etc. that had the biggest impact on you while in school, and if so, how?**

*alumni: Obviously, I was given all of these opportunities by Mr. Adams. He gave me the opportunity to perform with all of the groups and presented outside opportunities. I received my first ever paying gig through his recommendation (playing Taps on Memorial Day with the local VFW). I was introduced to my first ever private lesson teacher through the pit orchestra and was recommended by him (and later auditioned for) for a local scholarship for free private lessons. He also believed in me and gave me solo opportunities and was open to different creative ideas. One that comes to mind is the day before or of a jazz band festival/competition, I wrote a new solo for a piece that I was featured on that functioned completely different from what we rehearsed. He listened to it, allowed me to experiment with it the day before or day of the festival, allowed me to do it, and it won a best soloist award.*

**5. AA: Which clubs, sports, activities, etc., if any, did you participate in while at TRHS?**

*alumni: Mainly just the music stuff, but again, it was everything. 4 years of concert, jazz, and marching bands. Multiple years of choir and chorale. Multiple years in the pit orchestra.*

**6. AA: Do you have a favorite memory from high school you'd be willing to share?**

*alumni: My favorite memory was performing a winter concert with Denis DiBlasio, a renowned jazz musician based in South Jersey.*

**7. AA: What advice would you give to our current student body?**

*alumni: Take advantage of every opportunity presented to you, find or create more opportunities to succeed and go your own path. Set a goal, figure out what you need to do to get there, and take small steps in doing so.*

