

# The People of WGASC

*The People of WGASC is a series of interviews that feature the talented and dedicated people that teach, judge, and assist in running the Winter Guard Association of Southern California; the largest winter guard circuit in the world.*



## James (Jim) Goodrich

**Number of years in the activity:** 14

**What inspired you to become involved in color guard?** *As a band member in high school, I was intrigued by the guard. I had a lot of friends in guard and just decided to start spinning.*

**What is your experience as a performer?**

*Velvet Knights: 1992 – 1993, D.I.T.: 1994, Axxis Winterguard: 1997-1999, Blue Devils: Summer 1998*

**What is your experience as an instructor?**

*Savannah High School: 1999, Axxis A Guard: 2000, Western High School: 1999-2008, Chino High School: 2003-2008, El Toro High School: 2004 – present, Fountain Valley High School: 2006 – present, Mayfair High School: 2009- present*

**Do you have other staff members that help you?** *Yes. At El Toro I have three other instructors on staff. Jenn Johnson is my other half. We use each other to motivate and create. Stephanie Colby is my movement person. Danielle Hontz is my general tech.*

**How often do your rehearse in a week?** *We rehearse 3 days a week: 2 after school and 1 evening.*

**What is your 'day' job?** *I work at Creative Costuming and Designs as a pattern maker and cutter. In addition, I paint color guard and drum line performance floors for several competitive groups in Southern California.*

**What do you believe to be your most successful moments as an instructor?** *For me it is the moment when my students realize they are good at what they do. This usually happens after a few competitions. At the beginning of the season, it is hard for them to know that they can be successful, because they are*

*still struggling with the new show. It is the mid season performance where they realize they have something to show for all their hard work. This is the success for me. After that performance, they are the ones that drive the show forward. I then get to stand back and watch them grow and bring the show to life.*

**How did you get your programs to the level they are currently at?** *It is nothing magical. I focus on training. I learned early on that the students would not succeed if they are not trained. Taking the time to teach the basics is always worth it. I have also grown as a designer...just thinking about my first show makes me cringe.*

**Where do you find inspiration for your creativity?** *Personally, I look to several sources to be inspired. I never copy, but I am constantly looking at other groups to see what it is that makes them great. I also look to other performing arts. There is a lot of great work to there to be inspired by. Dance pieces, musicals, sometimes even a TV commercial can have something that inspires.*

**How do you balance the demands of color guard with your daily life?** *Isn't color guard instruction THE demand of your daily life???* *It is sometimes a struggle. As I have gained some experience, I have learned to take time out for me. When I first started, I was 24/7 color guard. I remember a few all night sewing sessions as I was finishing the flags I needed for the show the next day. I also had to learn to find the time for my friends and family.*

**What is the most important advice you would give a novice instructor?** *Take the time to train your students. Fight the urge to move on because you want to. If your students don't understand how to spin or move, it only makes your job as a designer/choreographer that much harder.*

**What keeps you involved in color guard?** *I ask myself this a few times a year, and the answer is always the same. I love watching my kids grow as students, as performers, and as young people. It amazes me to see some of my students as seniors when I remember how they could not figure out how to catch a flag. Watching a struggling, young person find themselves and gain a self-confidence to try and succeed; it gets me every time!*

**What is something you have learned along the way that you wish you had known from the start about instructing?** *Your students need to understand that they are the main part of creating the show. As an instructor/designer, you create a vehicle for your performers, but they need to bring it to life. If they do not understand what you are trying to create, it will be a rough season for you. Get the students on your side and let them be a part of the process. The younger your team is the more important this is.*

