

# 257th ARMY BAND, WASHINGTON, D.C.

## PROJECT CASE STUDY



SOUND-ISOLATION PRACTICE ROOMS WITH VAE® TECHNOLOGY

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– Chief Warrant Officer Sheila M. Klotz



INSTRUMENT STORAGE CABINETS

## CHALLENGE

Equip music facilities on military base, including ensemble room, practice rooms, instrument storage area and music library.

## WENGER SOLUTION

Installing sound-isolating practice rooms with virtual acoustical technology, for individual and small-group practice. Offering modular practice and storage solutions that can be relocated or reconfigured later. Assisting customer with information on product specifications and options.

## BENEFITS

- Realistic acoustical simulations enhance practice
- Guaranteed sound isolation minimizes distractions
- Modular instrument cabinets offer relocation options
- Digital record/playback capability enables self-critique
- Improved sheet music storage aids organization
- Mobile, flexible platforms provide indoor/outdoor versatility

## HIGHLIGHTS

Recognized as ‘The Band of the Nation’s Capital’, the 257th Army Band is one of the country’s busiest National Guard bands. This unit has more than 50 soldiers, almost a three-fold increase since January 2001 when Chief Warrant Officer Sheila M. Klotz assumed command.

“Everyone plays in the Concert Band and we also break out into more than a half-dozen Music Support Teams to meet the smaller requests we receive,” explains Klotz. These teams include a stage band, woodwind quintet and a tuba euphonium ensemble.



FLEX® CONDUCTOR'S SYSTEM

When the 257th first occupied its current space in 2008, rooms featured temporary plywood walls. Klotz says constructing practice rooms would have required installing new walls and soundproofing would have been difficult.

“During a band inspection, the officer reviewing the space suggested I contact Wenger instead,” recalls Klotz. “Our shared exclamation – ‘The modules!’ – was almost simultaneous.” She had first seen Wenger modules at a high school where she taught drum line and thought they were a great idea.

Klotz requested practice rooms with “all the bells and whistles” because her goal was a model installation for other military band units. Four rooms feature Virtual Acoustical Environments® (VAE) technology; the fifth

and largest room will have it added soon. The rooms range in size from 9' x 11' up to 16' x 19'.

Before these new rooms, Sergeant Steven Kemp remembers practicing his tuba in stairwells, classrooms or outdoors – anywhere space was available. “The VAE rooms are awesome,” he states. “The technology is easy to work with and sounds very realistic.” Kemp says the VAE technology gives him a better concept of how he actually sounds, including tone production.

For Corporal Michael J. Smith, the recording capability of the VAE technology provides instant feedback on his trumpeting. “We can immediately listen to what we’re playing and fix things we might have missed during a rehearsal,” he comments.

As the Army moves toward deploying smaller musical teams, accommodating their practice schedules can be challenging. Klotz really appreciates the advantages offered by their five Wenger music practice rooms. “I’m very impressed with the excellent sound isolation,” she comments. “I can have five teams rehearsing at the same time and they can’t hear each other.”

Multiple ensembles require a wide variety of sheet music, and the 257th relies on ten Music Library System units to keep everything organized. “We’re already outgrowing our new Wenger units and I’d like to order a half-dozen more,” comments Klotz.

Their database of sheet music corresponds to a numerical filing system, so locating the proper drawer is fast and simple. She says the heavy drawers pull out very easily. The library room at the 257th also includes a Music Sorting Rack and Music Lab Workstation from Wenger. “We’re more organized now than I ever dreamed possible,” Klotz remarks.

The instrument storage cabinets used at the 257th were originally installed at Fort Knox, Ky., and relocated when that band moved into a new building with existing cabinets. “Although these cabinets were three or four years old when we got them, they still looked new,” declares Klotz.

When the 257th Army Band travels, Versalite platforms frequently accompany them. Klotz estimates their Versalite is used 30 times a year, both during their two-week summer tour and for other D.C.-area concerts.

Along with the professional appearance provided by Versalite, Klotz likes its flexibility. “We’ll set up different levels for our stage band, including trumpets and trombones on one level with saxophones in front,” Klotz explains, adding that Versalite platforms are often used as stage extensions at outdoor venues.

In conclusion, Klotz says they received outstanding service from Wenger throughout the entire process, from her initial inquiries through ordering, delivery and follow-up. She adds, “The internal teamwork and coordination was phenomenal – Wenger never skipped a beat!”



MUSIC LIBRARY SYSTEM AND MUSIC SORTING RACK

## PRODUCT LIST

Sound-Isolating Music Practice Rooms with Virtual Acoustical Environments® (VAE) Technology, Musician Posture Chairs, Instrument Storage Cabinets, Music Library System, Music Sorting Rack, Music Lab Workstation and Versalite® Platform System.