

Mr. James V. Kusserow
1990

Porterville HS
Porterville, California

Raised in the Porterville area, graduating from Porterville High School and College, Jim Kusserow began playing the trumpet at age 9 at Terra Bella Elementary School. Performing solos with the Porterville High School Panther Band on the 50-yard line of Ram -49er games or at Gettysburg battlefield were the backbone of his early days. The Fabulous Studio Band from Porterville High took him across the country and Canada performing at venues like the Today Show in Denver, to The National Press Club and Ford's Theater in Washington D.C. Furthering his music education at San Jose State University, he began teaching at Mulcahy Junior High School in Tulare, CA in 1981. A Master's Degree in the Administration of Public Schools soon followed upon arriving in Tulare. He built successful programs at Mulcahy and Live Oak Middle Schools before accepting the band position back at Porterville High School in 1990. Following the 37-year legacy of Buck Shaffer, which included a Carnegie Hall performance and 5 Tournament of Roses Parades, the Panther Band has continued to attain the highest caliber of musical excellence. There have been only two band directors at Porterville High School since 1953! Consecutive Superior Ratings at CMEA music festivals, recognition as the National Hall of Fame Band of the Year, and performances at The Kennedy Center and Constitution Hall in Washington D.C. have been highlights of the band under Mr. Kusserow's baton. He has been recognized as the National Hall of Fame Band Director of the Year, by Who's Who in America, and Who's Who of American Teachers. The Fabulous Studio Band has continued to thrive under his direction touring annually throughout the United States and Canada, culminating in two performances in the East Room of the White House December 21, 2001. Mr. Kusserow is a member and active in MENC, TKMEA, (serving as president in 1984), CBDA, IAJE, NBA, ASBDA, HSBDNA, CMEA (currently serving his second stint as

secretary), and the International Trumpet Guild. He served as principal trumpet of the Tulare County Symphony from 1981-1998, and he now splits that duty. The Azorean Island tour of 1989 is one of the highlights of his TC Symphony experience. Jim also performs professionally with the Sequoia Brass Quintet. He also adjudicates throughout California, has honor band conducting experience, including the Fresno-Madera Middle School Honor Band in 2005. Jim performed a trumpet solo at Carnegie Hall this past June with Dr. Mike Allards' Porterville Combined Orchestra and will be conducting the Panther Band at Lincoln Center in New York City June 30, 2006. January 1st 2007, Jim will lead the Panther Band down Colorado Boulevard as the Panther Band will return to the Pasadena Tournament of Roses Parade. His hobbies include, bicycling, (he has ridden his bike from Olympia Washington to San Diego CA), racquetball, and watching his kids play sports and perform music. Jim and his supportive wife Kellie have three children Kaylan, Michael, and Christopher.