

## **Bill Mathews – 2011 Award Winner – Red Wing Campus**

Bill Mathews received the 2011 Outstanding Alumnus Award from our Red Wing campus.

Bill became interested in band instrument repair when a high school music instructor suggested he consider looking at some of the programs that were available. After careful consideration and a national search for the program that would meet his needs, a nine-hour trip to Red Wing sealed the deal.

Bill began instruction with the program's founder Gene Beckwith and instructor Dave Townsend. Through the program he acquired the entry level skills needed to build a career. He carved a successful path by focusing on continual learning, an unending search for new techniques, and high level of perfection.

During his career, he worked as a technician at repair businesses in Texas, Vermont, and Illinois. At each stop, he ensured he was working with technicians who would continually help him perfect his repair skills and grow his knowledge to manage a repair shop, which he accomplished in Illinois. His career path led to a leadership opportunity with Yamaha Corporation of America Band & Orchestra division, starting at the bench and later earning a promotion to National Service Manager, a position through which he served as liaison to technicians across the country and traveling and lectured on behalf of the corporation.

All roads circled around, eventually leading Bill homeward once again to NAPBIRT in Normal, Illinois, where he assumed the Executive Director position in 2003.

Bill's expertise and advocacy of all repair schools, along with his relationship as an alum, make him a valued member of our Band Instrument Repair Advisory Committee. The nature of his work permits him to advise people who are considering the trade, just as he did nearly 30 years ago. "While you are in school, you need to take every opportunity that is offered to you and realize that your education will continue for a lifetime."