

Norma Thomas-Dudley

Norma began her musical journey watching rehearsals of, and occasionally singing in, productions of the White Rock Choral Society at the age of 5, which was produced and directed by her family. By age 7 she began learning piano and later joined Junior Choir. By age 11 she played accompaniment for a local children's theatre production.

Norma began learning flute at age 12 and through her high school years studied with Nancy Doerksen. She took RCM exams in piano, flute and theory and entered Douglas College for the first 2 years of a Bachelor of Music Degree. At Douglas she studied flute with Kathryn Cernauskas, flute music composer and publisher, and Nancy Doerksen. After obtaining an Associate of Music Diploma, Norma transferred to Western Washington University in her third year and studied flute with Karla Flygare. During her time at Western she also studied instrumental conducting with Bruce Pullan. She completed her Bachelor of Music, Music Education degree.

During these university years Norma began private teaching flute and piano lessons. Upon graduation she began working as a TOC for the New Westminster School District for Elementary and Secondary school band and choir. Norma's goal had always been large ensemble teaching/conducting. She never expected she would feel a strong "pull" to return to private teaching. She missed the one-on-one focused teaching of each individual student.

Norma decided to follow that "pull" and began private teaching piano, flute, clarinet, alto and tenor saxophones, music theory and history. She has also taught trumpet, trombone and ukulele!

Through her 30 year teaching career Norma's students have earned Royal Conservatory of Music Provincial Gold Medals (highest mark in the Province) on Flute, Clarinet and Alto Saxophone. Several of her students have been invited to perform at the RCM Gold Medal Concert of Excellence.

Her students have also been members of Surrey and Vancouver Youth Orchestras, and also participated in Lower Mainland and Provincial Music Festivals.

Norma founded the Woodwind Program at the Vancouver International School of Music, White Rock branch, in 2015. Since that time her Woodwind students have earned RCM Gold Medals in 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022.

In 2021 one of Norma's students earned the Royal Conservatory of Music National Gold Medal for Flute, Level 8. (Highest mark in Canada).

In 2021 Norma was appointed Education Director of the Vancouver International School of Music, White Rock.

Through the VISM Concerto Program and the VISM Solo Recital Program, Norma's students have performed at the Bell Centre, Chan Centre, Grosseto, Italy, and Carnegie Hall, New York.

Norma believes that music education provides not only enjoyment and skill in performing music, but also a firm foundation in life skills, such as good work habits, perseverance, goal setting and achieving.