

LAPD Band

by Christina Challey

“Computational linguistics is an interdisciplinary field concerned with the statistical or rule-based modeling of natural language from a computational perspective, as well as the study of appropriate computational approaches to linguistic questions.”



Tim Ressler

If you understand the above statement, then you know what LAPD Band member Tim Ressler’s career goals entail. His goal is to join the burgeoning field of “computational linguistics, which involves looking at the ways that a machine would treat natural language, or in other words, dealing with or constructing models for language that can allow for goals such as accurate machine translation of language, or the simulation of artificial intelligence.”

Wow—and he plays a great trombone, too!

Before Tim’s interest in linguistics began, while in the fourth grade he decided to join the band program at school. He told his dad of his plan to play the trombone, and since his dad also played the trombone, Tim figured he would just borrow his dad’s horn to save the family the expense of buying another one. “I definitely didn’t understand the relationship between a musician and his horn back then,” Tim said. I guess Tim wound up getting his own trombone.

Tim’s dad, a great trombonist in his own right, as well as a pretty good piano player, began the family dynasty of horn players. Tim, as well as both of his brothers, are brass players. Tim plays trombone, euphonium and tuba,



LAPD Band member Tim Ressler.

and says he “can fake his way through the rest of the brass family, when need arises.” One of his brothers plays trumpet and tuba, and his youngest brother plays trombone and euphonium. “My mother likes to tease us for the amount of mouthpieces we’ve accumulated over the years,” Tim said.

Tim played in almost every school band possible. He says he started playing in the high school jazz band when he was still in middle school, and by the time he was in college, he was regularly performing with several groups, including Pacific Crest Drum Corps, the University of California, San Diego wind ensemble, the UCSD pep band, Muir Musical, and others. He also started teaching marching bands in his spare time.

When asked if he had ever had dreams of becoming a professional musician, Tim said, “When I was younger, I always wanted to play movie music. I liked to imagine playing trombone with Denis Wick for the London Symphony Orchestra, belting out ‘Star Wars’ fanfares. Now I primarily just want to play for fun as a hobby.”

Some of his favorite styles of music vary, from classical to jazz to ska (which originated in Jamaica in the late 1950s, a precursor to reggae). But he said what he really looks for in music are good motifs and counterpoint. Other than his father, Tim said a couple of his favorite trombone players include Denis Wick, for his spectacular performances, and Glenn Miller, for his band and his music.

Tim said other than playing music, his hobbies include playing games, teaching and visiting national parks. “It’s an honor having the chance to play with the LAPD Band,” he said. “It’s a fantastic group, and I love getting to play with such talented musicians.”

Until Tim finds his place in the world of computational linguistics, the Band is so happy he’s chosen to share his time and talent with them.

For more information about the Band, see our website at www.lasown.com, and contact Jim Starr, executive director, at sngcop@aol.com. For greatly appreciated donations, please go to www.lapolicyfoundation.org, and in the “Comments” box, put “For the Band.” ❖



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