

Karey Johnson Sitzler holds a Bachelor of Music in Instrumental Music Education with emphasis in Strings from Western Michigan University (1977) and a Master of Music in Viola Performance Pedagogy from Arizona State (1983). She has performed with professional symphony orchestras, chamber orchestras and chamber ensembles in Michigan, Indiana, Arizona, Ohio, and now Virginia for 32 years. She has taught string classes and private lessons to students ages four - adult at beginning to university levels, and has taught in school music programs for 31 years. In 1986, Mrs. Sitzler founded the *Young Strings Academy* of Kalamazoo, Michigan, a not for profit private and group lesson school. YSA worked in tandem with area musicians and community groups to provide scholarships and promote excellence in performance. The organization, which she directed until 1998, named her Director Emeritus and continues to serve west Michigan as the *Crescendo Academy of Music*. From 1989-2000 she was the music director of the Kalamazoo Prep String and Training Orchestras. In 1991 she guest conducted the Kalamazoo Junior Symphony in performance at the Midwest International Band and Orchestra clinic in Chicago. From 2000-2003, Mrs. Sitzler served the Crooked Tree Arts Center in Petoskey, Michigan as Education Director for the Performing Arts and as Youth Orchestra conductor. There, she designed the arts curriculum, organized concerts featuring over 350 students from a three-county area, and coordinated cultural activities for participating schools. The orchestra was invited to open the Bayview Music Festival in June of 2003. Since moving to Virginia in 2003, she has been teaching for the Suffolk, Virginia Public Schools, where she was hired to develop a string program. Working at Forest Glen Middle and Lakeland High Schools she is able to see the students from start to graduation. Her pops arrangements are a favorite on school spring concerts. The Lakeland High Chamber Strings have been featured as guest performers for the "State of the Schools" breakfast for the past two years. This year they traveled to New Orleans for a clinic at Loyola University and a performance at Trinity Episcopal Church. Both LHS and FGMS students perform throughout the community. Since 2004 she has been directing the feeder system for the Williamsburg Youth Orchestras and most recently teaching music appreciation at Paul D Camp Community College. She maintains a small private studio with students who are successfully auditioning for District, Regional, and State Orchestras and have most recently been receiving scholarships to colleges of choice. She has guest conducted the Virginia Beach All City 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Orchestra, District II 7<sup>th</sup> Grade Orchestra, and begun to adjudicate festivals in Tidewater. Karey and her husband, Tommy, blended a family of six children seven years ago. Three are in college at this time. They are active in the church music scene.