



**“The President’s Own”
United States Marine Band
Hiring: Communication Strategist**

About the Marine Band

“The President’s Own” United States Marine Band is America’s oldest continuously active musical organization, whose mission is to provide music for the President of the United States and Commandant of the Marine Corps. Members of “The President’s Own” perform frequently at the White House in small ensembles, chamber orchestra, concert band, and as soloists. They perform for a wide variety of commitments, to include public concerts, recording sessions, tours, chamber music recitals, military ceremonies and state functions. Today’s Marine Band is composed of 170 of the nation’s finest musicians and a full-time professional staff consisting of Communication Strategists, Recording Engineers, Stage Managers, Music Arrangers, and Librarians. Staff members and musicians selected for “The President’s Own” are **exempt from recruit training** and appointed to the rank of Staff Sergeant/pay grade E-6 **under a contract “for duty with the U.S. Marine Band only.”**

Job Description

The Communication Strategist will be an integral member of a six-person team responsible for protecting and promoting the brand of “The President’s Own” while building and maintaining mutually beneficial relationships with internal and external audiences and advising the band’s leadership of public relations trends, issues, and opportunities. The position includes occasional travel in support of Marine Band performances and initiatives. The ideal candidate will have strong writing and verbal communication skills and be fluent in the fundamentals of public relations and digital marketing. In this team-based position, the Communication Strategist will frequently collaborate with the Marine Band Recording Lab and Library on production and research projects. Must be able to work occasional evenings and weekends.

Duties and Responsibilities

- Writing, editing/proofreading and publishing feature articles, marketing content, biographies, press releases, paid and organic ads, and copy for the organization’s digital properties.
- Social media planning, content creation, scheduling and engagement.
- Email marketing utilizing Constant Contact.
- Media relations, including outreach and earned media coverage at national and local levels.
- Event photography, photo editing and asset management.
- Website management using the Marine Corps content management system.
- Management of the organization’s participation and presence at conventions.
- Interaction with concert patrons, both in person and online via livestreams.
- Event management to include guest invitations/RSVPs, ticket distribution, publicity, etc.
- Meeting logistical matters with performance venue representatives to ensure effective promotion, ticketing and logistical matters for upcoming events.
- Manage vendor/contractor relationships as needed.
- Manage paid advertising as needed.
- Assist in educational outreach as needed.
- Perform additional office and military duties as assigned.

Job Qualifications

- Bachelor’s degree in Communication, Public Relations, Journalism, Marketing, related field.
- Three years public relations or marketing experience.

- Strong written and verbal communication skills. (*Use of AI writing tools is prohibited under Marine Corps guidelines.*) Proficient in AP Style.
- Photography skills a plus (even if not professionally trained).
- An appreciation and basic understanding of music and/or the Marine Corps is a plus in order to write and market effectively.

Ideal software experience includes

- Adobe Creative Suite (Lightroom, Photoshop, Express).
- Cision or Meltwater or other media monitoring software.

Additional Information

- This position is part of the Marine Band's Office of Communication.
- Must adhere to Marine Corps standards, approval workflows and copyright guidelines.
- Must be capable of creating original work without the assistance of AI.
- Requires occasional nights, weekends and travel for concerts and events.
- Encouraged to maintain organized design archives.

Enlistment Qualifications

Those selected for "The President's Own" are **exempt from recruit training** and are appointed to the rank of Staff Sergeant/pay grade E-6 **under a contract "for duty with the U.S. Marine Band only."** Current regulations authorize enlistment between ages 17 and 28. Age waivers are normally granted; however the maximum age for which waivers may be granted to those with no prior military service is 34. Applicants must also pass the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB) and a complete physical examination, which includes complying with established height/weight standards both at the time of enlistment and throughout one's Marine Corps career.

Successful completion of an extensive background investigation is mandatory to obtain a Secret Security Clearance. This clearance is a requirement for the assignment of the Military Occupational Specialty (MOS) 5511—Member, United States Marine Band. Due to the length and scope of the security clearance process, it is initiated following the member's enlistment onto active duty. Failure to obtain and maintain this security clearance may result in administrative separation from the U.S. Marine Corps. In order to successfully enlist in the United States Marine Corps, applicants must also be a U.S. citizen or a permanent resident of the United States.

Application Process

Interested applicants should submit the following items no later than January 16, 2026:

- Application (attached).
- Cover letter and résumé, along with three references with phone numbers.
- Portfolio with at least three writing samples. Examples of graphic design and photography are also encouraged, but not required.

All materials should be sent electronically using a cloud or file-sharing service to marinebandpublicaffairs1@gmail.com, with the subject line: Job Application Communication Strategist.

Only qualified applicants will be contacted after the requested materials have been received. The first round of interviews will be conducted by phone. Those applicants who advance will be invited to visit Marine Barracks Annex in Washington, D.C., for an in-person interview that will take place in early 2026, which will also include a writing exercise and lunch with members of the U.S. Marine Band Office of Communication. Applicants are responsible for their own travel expenses. For further information or questions, please contact:

United States Marine Band
Office of Communication
8th and I Sts SE, Washington, DC 20390-5000
Telephone: (202) 433-5809
marinebandpublicaffairs1@gmail.com
www.marineband.marines.mil



**UNITED STATES MARINE BAND
AND CHAMBER ORCHESTRA**
LIEUTENANT COLONEL RYAN NOWLIN, DIRECTOR

Marine Barracks Washington
8th & I Streets, SE
Washington, DC 20390-5000

Operations: (202) 433-5714
Communication: (202) 433-5809
Fax: (202) 433-4752

www.marineband.marines.mil

CAREER INFORMATION

AUDITIONS

Auditions for “The President’s Own” occur only in anticipation of projected vacancies and are announced through the organizational website, social media, newsletter, and by direct email to college band directors and instrumental music instructors. All auditions take place behind a screen to ensure anonymity in John Philip Sousa Band Hall at Marine Barracks Annex in Washington, D.C., and are conducted much like those of major symphony orchestras. There is no preliminary taped round.

Interested applicants should email a current résumé to marineband.operations@usmc.mil. Applicants must travel to Washington at their own expense.

MUSICAL REQUIREMENTS

No specific level of education is required, but most members hold college degrees, and many hold advanced degrees. The playing ability and expertise required are equivalent to those of any major professional musical organization.

The broad range of commitments by “The President’s Own” requires musical versatility from all band members. Typical commitments include band concerts, ceremonial events, chamber orchestra, educational outreach, small ensemble performances, touring, and recording sessions.

QUALIFICATIONS

Successful completion of an extensive background investigation is mandatory in order to obtain a Secret Security Clearance. This clearance is a requirement for the assignment of the Military Occupational Specialty (MOS) 5511—Member, United States Marine Band. Due to the length and scope of the security clearance process, it is initiated following the member’s enlistment onto active duty. Failure to obtain and maintain this security clearance will result in administrative separation from the U.S. Marine Corps. Current regulations authorize enlistment between ages 17 and 28. Age waivers are

normally granted; however, the maximum age for which waivers may be granted to those with no prior military service is 34. In order to successfully enlist in the United States Marine Corps, applicants must also be a U.S. citizen or a permanent resident of the United States.

Applicants must pass the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB) and a complete physical examination, which includes complying with established height/weight standards both at the time of enlistment and throughout one’s Marine Corps career (see height/weight chart on the following page).

The playing part of the audition assesses only the individual’s musical qualifications. To be offered a position in “The President’s Own,” one must also be physically qualified and capable of being granted the required security clearance. Selection as a finalist is not a determination that one is musically qualified for the position. Finalists are those the committee wishes to hear again in order to make a more complete assessment of their abilities.

Finalists are interviewed at the time of the audition in an effort to identify any potential problems that could affect the individual’s ability to be enlisted for duty with “The President’s Own,” either related to health or the security clearance. The Privacy Act notice included as part of the Applicant Fact Sheet explains that information requested in the selection process and personal interview will provide a basis on which to evaluate the applicant’s suitability to hold a position with “The President’s Own,” and will not be used for any other purpose. While disclosure of this information is voluntary, failure to do so could result in the inability of the staff to evaluate the applicant’s suitability for a position in “The President’s Own” and could preclude further participation in the audition process. Likewise, disclosure of information during the interview that is determined to be disqualifying in nature could result in the applicant’s immediate dismissal from the remainder of the audition process.

The criteria for duty with “The President’s Own” are very stringent and are established by those outside agencies responsible for granting physical qualification and security clearances. “The President’s Own” must comply with the criteria and guidance provided by these outside agencies in order to assess applicants. While each applicant is different, and each will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis, the following are some issues that could affect the individual’s ability to be found fully qualified for enlistment with “The President’s Own”:

Physical Qualifications: Disqualifying conditions may include, but are not limited to, failure to meet height/weight standards at time of enlistment; serious vision and auditory problems; hypertension; diabetes; heart defects; seizure; inflammatory bowel syndrome; loss of an eye or kidney; cancer within five years; allergy immunotherapy during the past two years; and physical limitations due to injury or congenital conditions. Laser eye surgery is a potential disqualifier for enlistment. Applicants who have had laser eye surgery should contact CWO3 Sara Sheffield, Deputy Director for Administration and Production, at (202) 433-3993 or sara.sheffield@usmc.mil prior to the audition. When doing so, have a copy of your contact lens/eyeglass prescription from before surgery available.

Clearance Qualifications: Disqualifying conditions may include but are not limited to: arrest and/or conviction of a felony; frequent involvement with authorities even as a juvenile; DWI/DUI; having been a patient in an institution primarily devoted to the treatment of mental, emotional, or psychological disorders; pattern of financial irresponsibility (bankruptcy, debt or credit problems, defaulting on a student loan); membership in any organization that advocates the commission of acts of force or violence to deny other persons their rights under the Constitution of the United States; having petitioned to be declared a conscientious objector to war; moving violations with fines over \$300; illegal drug use (to include any use of cocaine, heroin, LSD, and PCP); and the illegal purchase, possession, or sale of any such narcotics. **Note:** Applicants with questions about their specific cases should contact CWO3 Sara Sheffield, Deputy Director for Administration and Production, at (202) 433-3993 or sara.sheffield@usmc.mil prior to the audition.

At the completion of the personal interview and health/security screening, if it is determined that health and/or background issues could affect an individual’s ability to be enlisted for duty with “The President’s Own,” such matters will be addressed with the respective agencies responsible for physical qualification or clearance matters. If these agencies confirm that an applicant is unequivocally disqualified for either physical or security clearance reasons, the Director reserves the right to eliminate the individual from further consideration.

Once found fully qualified and selected for a position with “The President’s Own,” applicants receive full medical and aptitude testing at the Military Entrance Processing Station (MEPS) nearest their current residence. This testing is coordinated by “The President’s Own” in cooperation with local Marine Corps recruiters.

ABOUT THE ENLISTMENT

The enlistment process is completed at the applicant’s local MEPS. A standard four-year enlistment contract is signed “for duty with the U.S. Marine Band only.”

Marine Band musicians are permanently assigned and may not be transferred to any other unit or location. Upon enlistment, new members are appointed to the rank of Staff Sergeant (pay grade E-6) in the U.S. Marine Corps and receive all pay and benefits commensurate with that grade. They are also subject to the Uniform Code of Military Justice, the rules and articles of which govern the discipline of the U.S. Armed Forces.

Following enlistment, new members report directly to Washington, DC, with official travel and shipment of household goods conducted at government expense.

RECRUIT TRAINING

Members of “The President’s Own” are not required to undergo recruit training. The mission of “The President’s Own” is “to provide music and perform such other functions as are directed by the President of the United States and the Commandant of the Marine Corps.” Unlike other Marine Corps musical units, “The President’s Own” has no secondary combat role, and its members are exempt from all such training. “The President’s Own” musicians report to

Marine Corps Weight Standards

Male Weight Standards:

Height (inches)	64	65	66	67	68	69	70	71	72	73	74	75	76	77	78
Weight (pounds)															
Minimum	110	114	117	121	125	128	132	136	140	144	148	152	156	160	164
Maximum	160	165	170	175	180	186	191	197	202	208	214	220	225	231	237

Female Weight Standards:

Height (inches)	58	59	60	61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70	71	72	73
Weight (pounds)																
Minimum	91	94	97	100	104	107	110	114	117	121	125	128	132	136	140	144
Maximum	124	129	133	137	142	146	151	156	161	166	171	176	181	186	191	197

Washington fully trained to perform their primary duties in the accomplishment of the band's unique musical mission. Therefore, there is no requirement for "The President's Own" musicians to undergo recruit training. New members are instructed by the Assistant Drum Major in appropriate military and band-related subjects. This ongoing process of instruction gives each musician essential knowledge about his or her role in the U.S. Marine Corps.

PAY/ALLOWANCES

Military pay is divided into two categories: basic pay (which is taxable) and other allowances (housing, subsistence) which are not taxable. Federal, state, and social security taxes are deducted only from the income's taxable portion. In addition, all members of the armed forces are allowed to claim legal residence in their home state if they so desire. This may also affect their state tax status (see chart below for detailed information regarding pay and benefits).

OTHER PAY INFORMATION

Members of the armed services receive pay increases after the second year of service. These increases continue at the third and fourth year and then are given every two years after that time up to year 26. In addition, requests for military pay raises are presented to Congress each year.

The Basic Allowance for Housing (BAH) is determined by rank. The BAH is recomputed periodically to ensure that it conforms with actual housing costs. The Washington area has

one of the highest BAH rates in the nation.

RETIREMENT BENEFITS

Members of "The President's Own," like all other active duty service members, are covered under the military's Blended Retirement System. Armed services members qualify for retirement at the completion of 20 years of active service at 40 percent of their base pay, with an additional 2 percent each year thereafter. This pension benefit requires no contribution from the individual.

The Blended Retirement System also includes participation in the Thrift Savings Plan (TSP). The TSP is a defined contribution plan that allows members to save for retirement in a tax-deferred, government sponsored retirement plan. The member will be eligible for 1% automatic and up to 4% employer matching contributions to their individual account from their basic pay. The plan consists of five different investment funds that offer diversification over a broad range of bond and equity markets. The TSP is governed by the Federal Retirement Thrift Investment Board. Enrollment opportunities are available to all military personnel. The program is very similar to a civilian 401k or 403b style plan but at a lower administrative cost.

NON-MONETARY BENEFITS

As active duty members of the military, "The President's Own" musicians receive all medical and dental care, x-rays, tests, and prescriptions without charge. Dependents are also authorized

Monthly Pay and Allowances for a Staff Sergeant (Pay Grade E-6)

Effective Jan. 1, 2025

Members of the U.S. Armed Forces are paid on the 1st and 15th of each month. Of the total pay and allowances due, **only the basic pay is taxable.** *Monthly deductions on this chart are estimated based upon average deductions of current members.* These amounts fluctuate based upon specific state of residence, marital, and dependent status. In addition, members are paid per diem while traveling on government business and are entitled to an annual clothing allowance used to defray the costs of uniform purchase and maintenance.

Glossary:

BAH (Basic Allowance for Housing) — a sum determined by housing costs in the geographic region in which the members are stationed; this helps defray rent or mortgage costs.

BAS (Basic Allowance for Subsistence) — the sum allocated to defray the cost of meals. (Both BAH and BAS are non-taxable income).

SGLI (Servicemember's Group Life Insurance) — a monthly deduction entitling the member to be insured for \$500,000. Spousal coverage is also available.

DENTAL — there is no cost for a member without dependents; members with one dependent pay \$11.65 monthly, more than one dependent costs \$30.28 monthly.

USN/MC RETIREMENT HOME — a mandatory deduction for all Sailors and Marines

Pay and Allowances:	Without Dependents	With Dependents
Basic Pay	\$3,276.60	\$3,276.60
BAH	2,892.00	3,459.00
BAS	465.77	465.77
Total Monthly Gross	6,634.37	7,201.37
Total Annual Gross	79,612.44	86,416.44

Monthly Deductions (estimated):

Social Security	203.15	203.15
SGLI \$500,000	30.00	30.00
TSGLI	1.00	1.00
Dental	0.00	11.65
Medicare	47.51	47.51
USN/MC Ret. Home	.50	.50
Total Monthly Deductions	282.16	293.81

Monthly Net Pay (Pre-Tax):	\$6,352.21	\$6,907.56
Annual Net Pay (Pre-Tax):	\$76,226.52	\$82,890.72

Note: *Net pay* refers to the amount taken home; *gross pay* reflects income prior to deductions.

to receive free medical care at selected military facilities. A contributory plan allows dependent dental care to be covered at a modest cost. Members who retire after 20 years of service also retain medical benefits through Tricare.

The musicians of “The President’s Own” receive full exchange and commissary privileges for themselves and their dependents. Members who retire after 20 years of service also retain full exchange and commissary privileges.

The Washington, DC, area has a wealth of government and military facilities that are available to active duty members and their families. These include swimming pools, tennis and racquetball courts, gymnasiums, and golf courses. Marine Corps Community Service offers rental of camping and athletic equipment, etc. at little or no cost. In addition, there are ample opportunities for recreational, cultural, educational, and historical pursuits throughout the Washington, DC, metropolitan area.

LEAVE (VACATION) TIME

Marines receive 30 days paid leave each year plus some federal holidays when not on duty. Special liberty may also be granted by the Director. All requests for leave are approved or disapproved based on the band’s schedule. “The President’s Own” has no “blanket leave” periods during which the entire band is on leave at the same time. To accomplish its mission, it is necessary for the Marine Band to remain operational 365 days a year.

EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE

When funds are available, Marine Corps tuition assistance pays up to 100 percent of tuition, instructional fees, laboratory fees, computer fees, and mandatory course enrollment fees combined, not to exceed \$250 per semester hour equivalent and \$4,500 per individual per fiscal year. Tuition assistance funds are authorized for vocational-technical, undergraduate, graduate, undergraduate developmental, independent study, and distance learning programs. Courses must be offered by institutions accredited by agencies recognized by the United States Department of Education.

In addition to tuition assistance, the Veteran’s Administration offers educational assistance to all active duty service members in the form of the GI Bill. Two different GI Bill programs exist: the Montgomery GI Bill and the Post 9/11 GI Bill. These programs offer a range of benefits including the opportunity to transfer educational benefits to spouses and children. Some programs require a contribution from the service member. Information regarding the GI Bill and other educational benefits is available from the Veteran’s Administration. There are a number of colleges and universities in the Washington area, including Georgetown University, George Mason University, George Washington University, Catholic University, the University of Maryland, and the Peabody Conservatory of Music.

HOUSING

Military housing is limited in the Washington area and should not be anticipated. The majority of members live in the Washington metropolitan area, including areas of Maryland and Virginia. BAH is not paid if a member obtains military housing.

“THE PRESIDENT’S OWN” HISTORY

“The President’s Own” has been part of the events that have shaped our national heritage for more than two centuries. Its omnipresent role in events of national importance has made it part of the fabric of American life. Established by an Act of Congress in 1798, the Marine Band is America’s oldest continuously active professional musical organization. Its mission is unique—to provide music for the President of the United States and the Commandant of the Marine Corps.

It is believed that the band performed for the inaugural of Thomas Jefferson in 1801, and research suggests it has performed for every Presidential inaugural since that time. In Jefferson, the band found its most visionary advocate. An accomplished musician himself, Jefferson recognized the unique relationship between the band and the Chief Executive and he is credited with giving the Marine Band its title, “The President’s Own.”

Whether performing for South Lawn arrival ceremonies, State Dinners, or receptions, Marine Band musicians appear at the White House more than 300 times each year. These performances range from a solo harpist or chamber orchestra to a dance band or full concert band, making versatility an important requirement for band members. Additionally, the band participates in more than 500 public and official performances annually, including concerts and ceremonies throughout the Washington, DC, metropolitan area. Each fall, the band travels through a region of the United States during its concert tour, a century-old tradition started by John Philip Sousa, the band’s legendary seventeenth director.

The Marine Band’s integral role in the national culture and in the government’s official life has affirmed the importance of the arts as a bridge between people. Since 1798, “The President’s Own” has remained the only musical organization whose mission is to provide music for the President of the United States and the Commandant of the Marine Corps. The Marine Band continues to celebrate its rich history and tradition while also breaking new ground in the organization’s third century of bringing music to the White House and to the American people.