



PRE-DRILL CAMP 2026 · LEADERSHIP SEMINARS · DAY 1

The Line Leader

"Growing the Next Leader, One Rep at a Time"

Dr. Thomas L. Jones, Jr.

Director of University Bands · Winds Breakout, Saturday, August 1, 2026

The Hampton University Marching Force

HAMPTON'S HEARTBEAT

Icebreaker

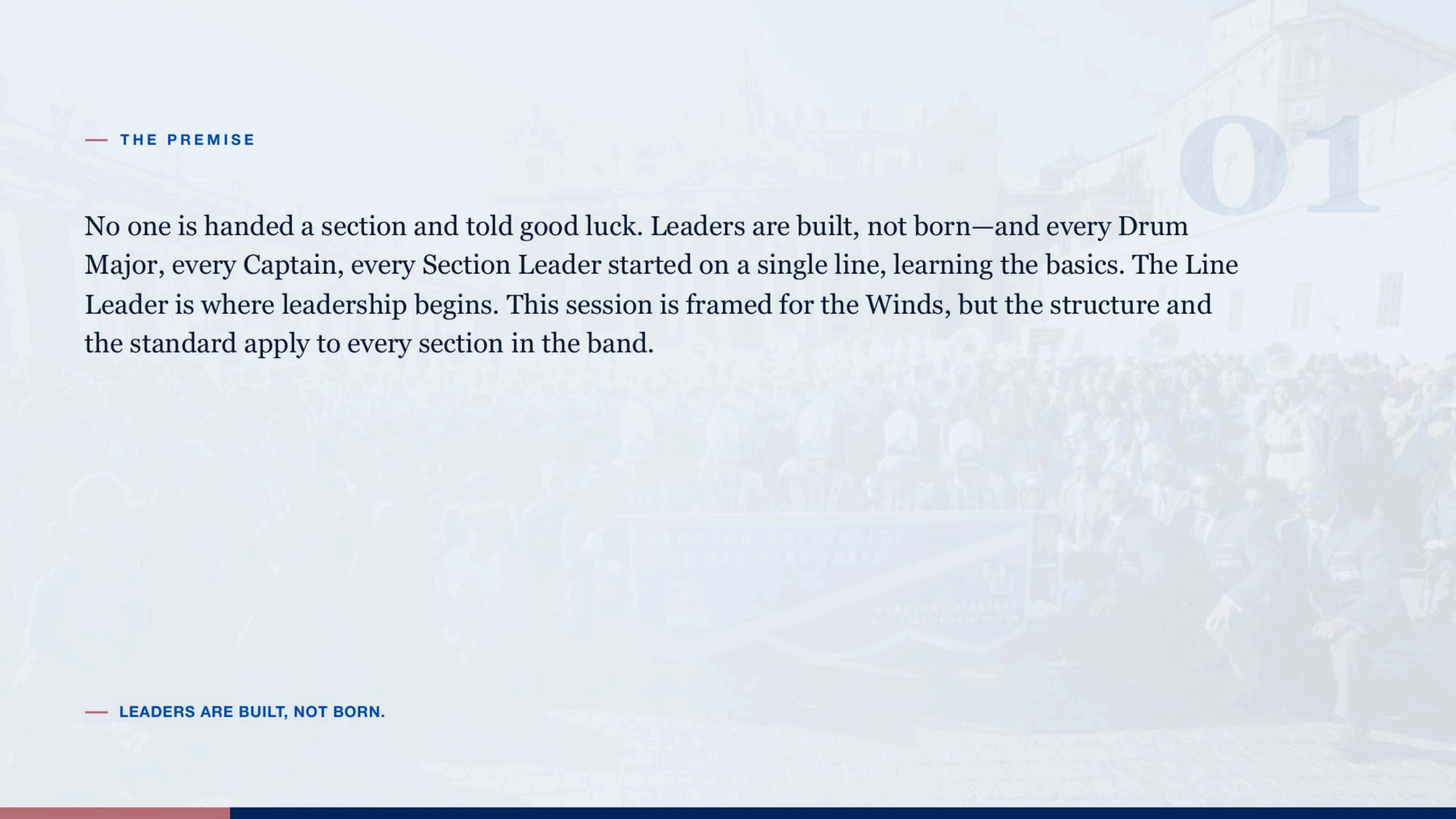
Your deepest fear is not that you are weak, but that you are powerful. A great leader steps into that power—and gives everyone on the line permission to do the same.



Coach Carter — “Our Deepest Fear”

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WATCH · 2:29



— THE PREMISE

No one is handed a section and told good luck. Leaders are built, not born—and every Drum Major, every Captain, every Section Leader started on a single line, learning the basics. The Line Leader is where leadership begins. This session is framed for the Winds, but the structure and the standard apply to every section in the band.

— LEADERS ARE BUILT, NOT BORN.

The Leadership Ladder

Before we zoom in, see the whole chain of command—the same in every section.

- ◆ The **Director of University Bands** sets the vision and the standard.
- ◆ The **Drum Majors** command the field; the **Student Director / Graduate Assistant** supports the staff.
- ◆ The **Hornline Captains** keep an entire division—Woodwind, High Brass, and Low Brass—sounding and marching as one.
- ◆ The **Section Leaders** run each instrument section—and the **Line Leaders** guard a single line beneath them.

Every tier exists to **serve the one below it**. We are in the Winds today, but Percussion, Auxiliary, and every section run the same ladder.

Reference: HUMF Student Leadership Positions (2026).

Where the Line Leader Fits

The first rung—and the doorway to everything above it.

- ◆ You are the **entry tier** of student leadership, reporting directly to your Section Leader.
- ◆ You are the **pipeline to Section Leader**—this is where the next one is grown.
- ◆ You are **open to freshmen**: the earliest place to start leading, with the grade requirement waived for a freshman's first semester.
- ◆ Most of all, you are the **training ground** for the future of the band.

What a Line Leader Is

The eyes and ears of a single line.

- ◆ You lead a **subsection**—2nd Trumpets, 3rd Clarinets, a single part within the larger section.
- ◆ You provide the **granular, desk-level quality control** a Section Leader managing dozens of players cannot reach.
- ◆ You are a **leader-in-training**: mastering the craft while learning to lead a few before you lead many.
- ◆ Small scope. Real responsibility.

Two Ways to Lead

Transactional leadership manages the task. Transformational leadership grows the person. The Line Leader is where you start learning the difference.

TRANSACTIONAL *manage the exchange*

- ◆ Leads by **rewards and consequences**—do it right, or else.
- ◆ Focuses on **tasks, rules, and compliance**.
- ◆ Keeps the line running—but keeps it the same.
- ◆ Earns a line that **obeys**.

TRANSFORMATIONAL *grow the person*

- ◆ Leads by **example, vision, and belief** in each player.
- ◆ **Challenges, inspires, and develops** the individual.
- ◆ Raises the whole line to a higher standard.
- ◆ Builds a line that **chooses** to be great—and the next leader within it.

Sources: Burns, *Leadership* (1978); Bass, *Leadership and Performance Beyond Expectations* (1985); Bass and Riggio, *Transformational Leadership* (2006).

We Do Not Throw You to the Wolves

Great leaders are grown in stages—never dropped into the deep end.

- ◆ Hand someone a full section with no preparation and you set them up to fail. The research on leadership development is clear: leaders grow through **progressive stages of responsibility**, not sink-or-swim.
- ◆ The **Leadership Pipeline** model frames leadership as a series of passages—each one preparing you for the next. The Line Leader is your **first passage**.
- ◆ **Situational leadership** and **scaffolding** teach the same lesson: match the challenge to the person's readiness, then raise it as they grow.
- ◆ Every small win here builds the **confidence and competence** to lead more tomorrow.

Sources: Charan, Drotter, and Noel, *The Leadership Pipeline* (2001); Hersey and Blanchard, situational leadership (1969); Vygotsky, scaffolding and the zone of proximal development (1978); Bandura, self-efficacy (1977).

How We Grow Leaders Here

A deliberate ladder from follower to leader—the Force's Scaffolding Model.

- ◆ **Deconstruct**—master the fundamentals of your own part first.
- ◆ **Supported Integration**—lead small, with your Section Leader close by.
- ◆ **Differentiated Repetition**—take on more as you prove ready.
- ◆ **Peer-Led Instruction**—teach your line and correct its errors yourself.
- ◆ **Release and Accountability**—own your line, and you are ready for the next rung.

Sources: HUMF Scaffolding Instruction Model (Staff Handbook, 2025); Jones, doctoral dissertation, North Carolina A&T State University (2014).

Make the Section Leader's Job Easier

Your first duty is to carry the basics—so your Section Leader can lead.

1 Own the Basics

Handle the small, granular tasks—attendance spot-checks, part accuracy, folder and equipment counts—so nothing basic ever lands on the Section Leader's desk.

3 Cut the Stress

A Section Leader managing forty players cannot watch every one. You watch your few, closely, and lighten the load.

2 Catch It Early

Fix desk-level mistakes on your line before they grow into section-wide problems.

4 Report Up Clean

Bring your Section Leader clear, early information—never surprises.

What You Actually Do

The daily work of leading a line.

- ◆ Verify the **accuracy of your line** and give immediate, desk-level corrections.
- ◆ Serve as the line's **musical resource**—articulations, fingerings, and The Hampton Sound.
- ◆ Handle **first-level facility upkeep**, and account for all sheet music, music folders, and equipment.
- ◆ **Mentor incoming freshmen** into the line and the culture.
- ◆ **Surface issues upward** to your Section Leader before they escalate.

Who Can Lead the Line

The one rule: master your own part first.

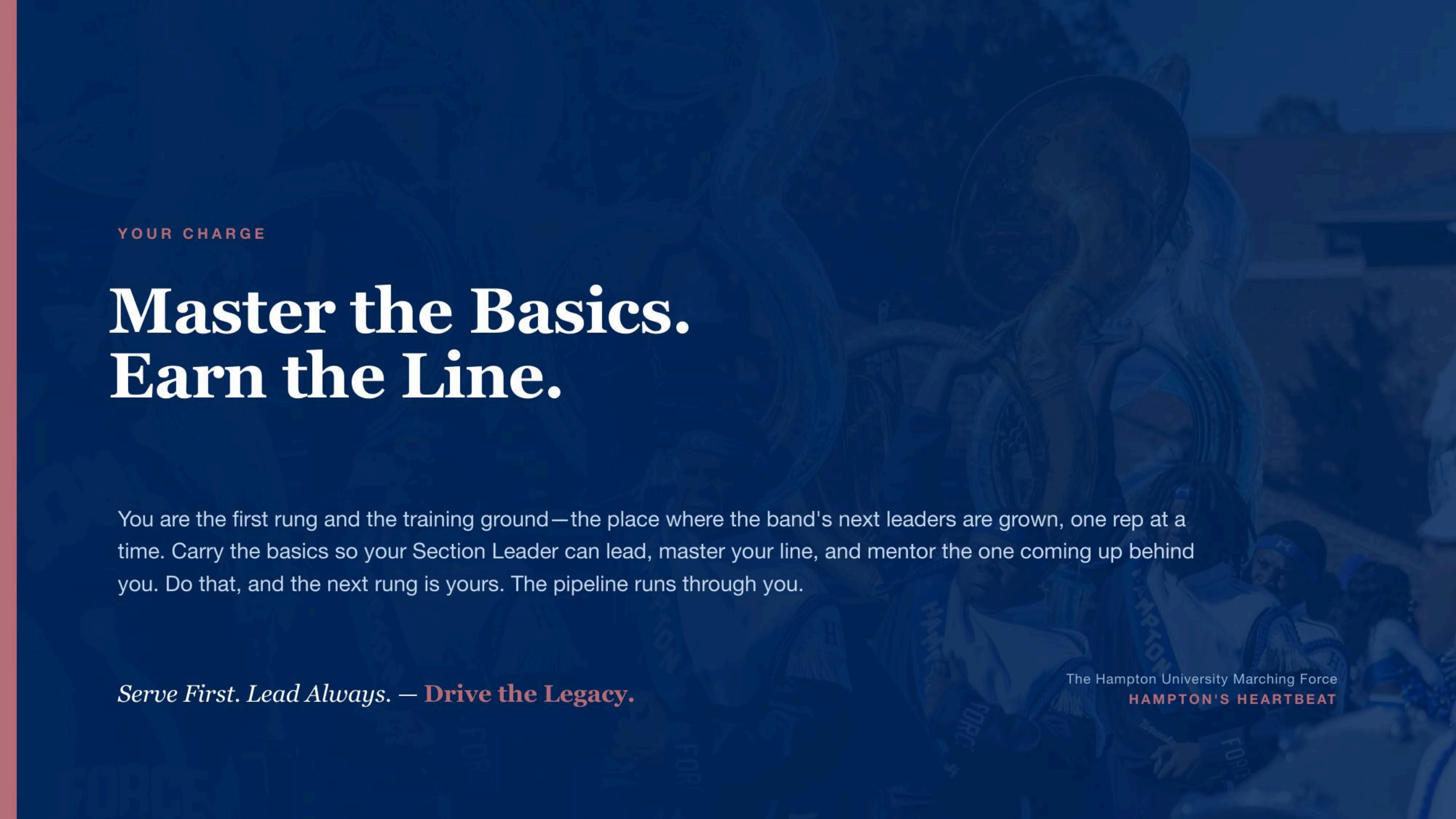
- ◆ **Open to freshmen**—the grade requirement is waived for a freshman's first semester, so the earliest leaders can start early.
- ◆ **Total mastery of your assigned part**—you cannot lead a line you have not mastered.
- ◆ Strong **organization** and steady progress toward your degree.
- ◆ A real **desire to grow** into more.

Reference: HUMF Student Leadership Positions (2026).

Your Path Forward

Everything you do now is training for what comes next.

- ◆ Master the line, and the **Section Leader** role is the next rung.
- ◆ Every correction you give, every freshman you mentor, and every folder you account for is a **rep**—building the leader you are becoming.
- ◆ The basics you drill today are the foundation you will lead from tomorrow.
- ◆ **The pipeline runs through you.**



YOUR CHARGE

Master the Basics. Earn the Line.

You are the first rung and the training ground—the place where the band's next leaders are grown, one rep at a time. Carry the basics so your Section Leader can lead, master your line, and mentor the one coming up behind you. Do that, and the next rung is yours. The pipeline runs through you.

Serve First. Lead Always. — **Drive the Legacy.**

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