

**IN THEIR OWN WORDS**  
**Get to Know the WVS Musicians**  
**Alex Manners, Horn**



**Tell us a little about yourself:**

My name is Alex Manners, and I am currently second horn with the West Valley Symphony. I am originally from Lee's Summit, Missouri, which is just outside Kansas City. I did my undergraduate degree at Truman State University in Kirksville, Missouri, and I worked as a high school band director in Missouri for six years after college. At that point, I decided I wanted a new challenge, and decided to go back to school to work on graduate degrees in French horn. I completed my masters in horn performance at the University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign and moved to Arizona in 2014 to do my Doctorate in Musical Arts at ASU.



I am an elementary band director in the Dysart Unified School District, but in addition to this, I work as an adjunct horn instructor at both Glendale Community College and at GCU, and I work with the horns at Mountain Ridge High School. I live in Surprise with my wife Daniela and our dog Sydney, and we welcomed our first child, Jacob, in January 2024.



I'm a pretty active freelance musician across the Valley, and currently also serve as second horn in Symphony of the Southwest, play in the Phoenix Brass Collective, and I have performed with a wide array of other groups (including subbing with the Phoenix Symphony, the Tucson Symphony, Arizona Broadway Theatre) and for many churches in town.

**Do you have any siblings?**

I do. I have two younger brothers. They both live in Missouri and work in the financial industry.



### **How about hobbies?**

I have been a distance runner since about 2013. My proudest accomplishment was completing a marathon in San Diego in 2020. I find it helps me to clear my head. I also really enjoy baking and traveling!

### **How do you like to spend your free time?**

Being from Kansas City, I am a diehard Chiefs fan (and have been since the early 90's). In reality, I am an avid sports fan, of all kinds (Royals, my Mizzou Tigers, Sporting Kansas City, and I've been happy to adopt the Suns), but my true passion lies with the Chiefs. When I was still single, I was fortunate enough to save up money to attend Super Bowl LIV in Miami – and see my team win their first championship in 50 years.



### **What's your current favorite TV show/movie/binge?**

My wife and I have been watching the current season of Apple TV+'s alternate history SciFi drama "For All Mankind," which is set in an alternate universe where the Soviets win the race to the moon. We really enjoy the way the show builds suspense over multiple episodes.

### **What is your favorite movie of all time?**

*Field of Dreams*. I know it's a somewhat corny movie, but I'm a big baseball fan, and there's just something about it that always strikes a chord with me.

### **What is the best concert you've ever been to?**

I was fortunate enough to get to hear the Chicago Symphony play Mahler's Fifth Symphony at Symphony Hall in Chicago during graduate school; just a fantastic performance of a great piece!

