**Ken Steorts **

Dr. Ken Steorts is the founder and president of Visible Music College and founding guitarist of the Grammy-nominated band Skillet.

During his tours with Skillet, Ken saw many promising musicians with talent and drive but in need of structure and instruction for success in a music career. He developed the appropriate curriculum and founded Visible Music College in 2000 to offer them a degree granting program and hands-on professional experience in a Christian discipleship model. The college's name, "Visible" comes from the German theologian [Dietrich Bonhoeffer](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dietrich_Bonhoeffer) who described Christian believers as a “visible community infiltrating the darkness, bringing a light into the world that cannot be hidden.”

Students from all 50 states and over 20 foreign countries come to Visible and become professional artists, musicians, worship leaders, audio technicians, and music business leaders through instruction in music performance, music production, and music business.

With Ken’s vision and leadership the school has progressed from its 2000 beginning in an abandoned catfish restaurant in Lakeland. In 2011 it relocated to its dramatic current home at 200 Madison in the 2011 repurposed C&I Bank, an iconic architectural landmark in downtown Memphis. Since then, Visible has opened campuses in Chicago and Dallas, and it also gives students the chance to experience the music industry in the Black Forest of Germany at its affiliate campus. Its students have recently been finalists on NBC’s *The Voice* and *American Idol*.

Ken represents this vibrant institution to the local music industry and church leaders, creates opportunities for musicians of all kinds to interact and forges partnerships with groups like Stax Academy, Ardent Studios, and various churches and ministries around the world. Visible Music College also operates Madison Line Records and the Visible Community Music School – a program providing affordable and accessible music education to underserved communities.

Ken received a Master of Music degree in Composition and a BFA in Commercial Music – Recording Technology from the University of Memphis; toured as a Dove Award-nominated songwriter/musician, worked in management and marketing within the music industry and received his Doctorate in Sociological Research at Oxford Graduate School.

He has served on the Board of Governors of the Memphis Chapter of The Recording Academy (Grammys), is a member of the Gospel Music Association, regularly participates in the Greater Memphis Chamber of Commerce and received the Downtown Memphis Commission’s 2013 Visionary Award. Ken is happily married to his wife Joy and they have two sons, Freedman (19) and Skye (16).