

Cole M. Bennett

Music is my passion. I understand that music can be the tool that stimulates both the body and mind. Music can promote skill development, spark someone's imagination, and encourage someone to take risks as they engage in the creative process. As a future music teacher, I can participate in this journey, enticing as many students as possible to experience music is my goal.

My strong passion for music and more specifically, percussion began almost nine years ago. I started listening to music at a very young age, and was exposed to many types of music. I began actually playing and reading music in 6th grade. I played percussion in my middle school concert band. I also took drum set lessons out of school. It was at these lessons, when I fell in love with playing the drum set. I learned to play many styles including; jazz, rock, and punk.

My skill development continued with four years of high school band. My enduring tenure on the drum line began my freshman year with my unlikely placement on the quads (tenors). The skinny kid, who could barely hold up the drums, marched as a freshman. I was the first person to be given this responsibility as a freshman. I have been the drum line captain for both my junior and senior year. The accomplishment of becoming a part of my high school's drum line means a lot to me. The biggest thing I have learned from our drum line is the concept of our section being a family. We call ourselves "The Brotherhood". It taught me that music is not always about percussion; it is about the music as a whole. I hope someday I can share this philosophy with others and teach the importance of playing a role in something bigger than one's self. Without drum line, I would not be the person I am today.

As a musician, you must be able to convey and share the emotion of the music to your audience. For this transference to be successful, you must first feel the passion of the music from within yourself and then deliver it in a creative way that can relate to every person in your audience. Since the age of 14, I have played in several garage bands with my friends. By playing and writing my own music, I've learned to channel many emotions through music. I became fully aware of this emotional outlet in my junior year of high school. I had very bad anxiety that year and went through a lot of depression and missed school days. Consequently, I wrote some of my most technical and meaningful songs during this time of my life. My genre at this time was heavy metal. I really connected to the music and explored a whole new level of percussion besides jazz and marching percussion. My parents hoped it was a phase I was going through. But what I realize now, is that it was my outlet for my pent up emotions.

Not only did I choose music because I enjoy playing and listening to it, but I also enjoy teaching it. With several generations of teachers in my family, I believe I have learned from the best to become the teacher that will succeed in the classroom. I saw my parent's enjoyment in teaching subjects that they love, and I knew I wanted to do that too. Music can be the tool that stimulates both the body and mind. Music can spark a student's imagination, promote skill development, and encourage them to take risks as they engage in the creative process. As a music teacher, I can participate in this journey. Enticing as many students as possible to the music experience is my goal. If nothing else, I consider music to be something that lives in all of us and should be enjoyed by all.

My experiences with music and the influences of my parents, has inspired me to consider music education as a career path. Next year I will be attending Virginia Commonwealth University and majoring in Music Education. I believe there is no greater way that I personally can make a positive difference in this world than to teach children, and to teach them music. I have a passion for learning which I hope to instill within the children I teach. There are a handful of teachers who have made a difference to me and were positive influences; I hope to be that type of teacher for at least one child. If I am able to help just one, I will count myself a success.

Music is meant to be shared. I plan to continue sharing my gift of music for a very long time.  
"Let the music play on" ...