

Issue No. 01

Music

THROUGH THE EYES AND EARS OF
AUTISM



**MOVING MOUNTAINS
THROUGH MUSIC**

PAGE 04

**GIVING BACK TO THE
COMMUNITY**

PAGE 16

INTERVIEWS

PAGE 17

Contents



04



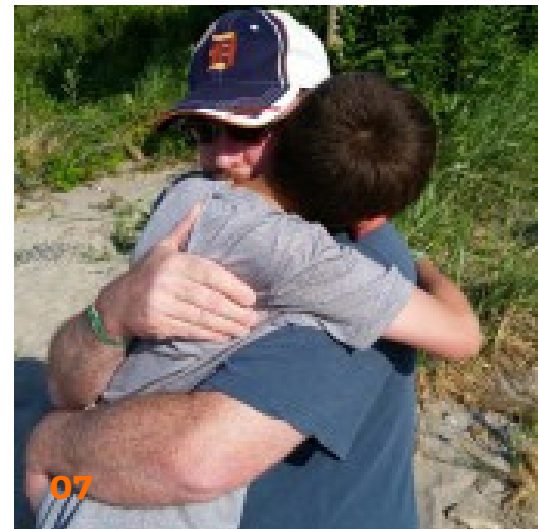
12



01



16



07

- 03 Editor's Letter
- 04 Moving Mountains
- 10 Chieftain Pride
- 12 Life On The Drumline

- 14 Marching Band Rewards
- 16 Giving Back To The Community
- 17 Interviews
- 26 Editors Final Note



Editor's Letter

Hello,

My name is Grant Harrison and I am so excited to have the opportunity to share my Eagle Scout project with so many people.

You may not know this but I have been diagnosed with Autism, particularly Asperger's Syndrome, which is what they call high functioning Autism.

Some of the things that I struggle with daily is anxiety, fidgeting, and textures with foods.

I am lucky because I have a very strong, supportive family and friends who help me push my boundaries to try new things, and remember that they are always there for me when I need them.

So, I decided to create an online magazine showing how music has changed my life. Not only does it allow me to express myself in ways I never thought possible, but it allowed me to build friendships that I will cherish forever. We call this the Band Family.

My hope for this magazine is to show kids with disabilities that you shouldn't give up on your dreams. Push boundaries and try new things to open up a world of opportunities and find your path in life, just like I did.

Even if music is not for you, find what interests you and stick with it. Don't give up and allow people to help if needed.

I hope you enjoy my musical journey through the eyes and ears of Autism

*Grant
Harrison*

Grant Harrison
EDITOR IN CHIEF



MOVING MOUNTAINS

THROUGH MUSIC

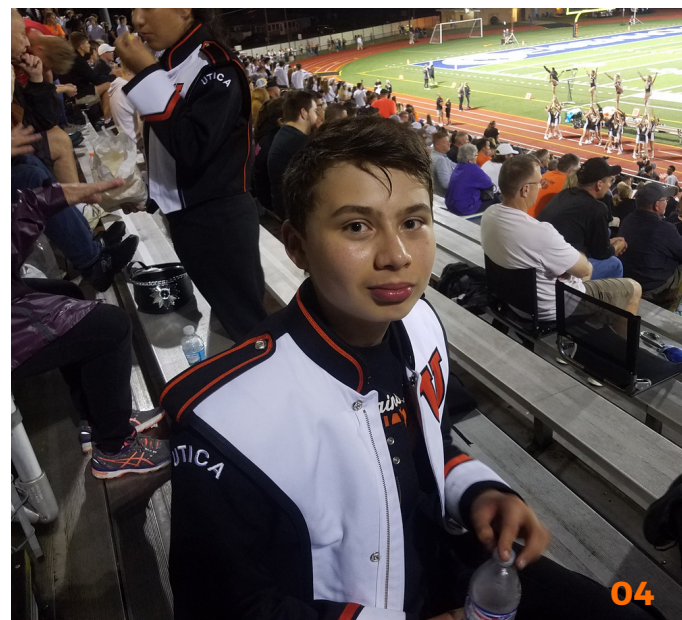
I NEVER THOUGHT THAT MOVING THAT MOUNTAIN COULD CHANGE MY LIFE

I don't look at having Autism as a disability but more of a challenge. It makes me work harder to move those mountains that so many times block my path to where I want to go.

Most kids dream of being popular in school, having lots of friends and joining all the clubs and sports programs they can, but for me I know with my anxiety and fidgeting habits I needed to understand on what makes me happy and look for other kids who have the same hobbies and interests that I have.

Socialization is the key to building confidence in a person, kids learn from their peers and kids like myself with Asperger's have a hard time going out of the box. We are more of rule followers, we like structure in our lives, making decisions and trying new things is difficult for me even today. I struggle with this, but between my family and strong support system of friends everyday seems to get easier.

There are many levels of Autism, it's called being on the spectrum, I fortunately fall on the high functioning level of the spectrum. Asperger's on the other hand, my cousin falls on the other end of the spectrum and is non verbal. So I consider myself a lucky person because Autism has introduced into my life so many amazing people.





WHERE IT ALL BEGAN

MOVING MOUNTAINS CONTINUED...

Before junior high school, I faced impossible social challenges that plagued me for a good while; such as making friends, finding ways to express myself, and just dealing with my anxiety in general. These were big issues for me because with my anxiety, it was hard to adapt to new situations, and made socialization an impossible challenge overall. However, after being in the band program for the last five years now, I can safely say that band has changed my life for the better. Band gave me the confidence to be more of myself, and communicate and connect with people in ways I never thought possible.

When I was younger I wasn't the type of person who would ever think of going onto a stage and start giving it my all. I was terrified about performing and how others would react to my performance. But one day, I saw that our school was going to have a talent show and I decided on a whim to sign up. This was in 4th grade, I just wanted to see if I could go through the audition stage but never thought my drum playing would get me in.

I submitted a recording of me doing what I loved the most: playing the drums. It got accepted, and the following performance changed my life. To come back to the classroom after playing my heart out on that drum set was one of the most satisfying and rewarding things I can even remember. Mrs. Klida, my teacher at the time, and the whole class gave me a standing ovation. I remember feeling overwhelmed and excited. It was the first time I remember kids really ever noticed me. Before that, I was just the kid in class who had a hard time sitting still in my seat.

Playing those drums that day gave me more confidence and belief that I could really do anything, if I set my heart to it. Nowadays, I go onto the stage with the rest of the band, and I'm not scared or nervous. I'm ready. That's how much music changed me as a person. It got rid of my stage fright and enabled me to do extraordinary things on and off the stage or field. If it wasn't for music and band, I would not be where I am today, and for that I am thankful.

I have been going to school since the age of 2 1/2. Once my parents knew that I had Autism, they made sure I had every available resource available to help me get mainstreamed into my home school.

I have had amazing teachers in the past; especially, Mrs. George, Ms. Keranan, Mrs. Klida, Mr. Cloyd and so many more. But I wouldn't be here where I am today without them in my life, so thank you and I miss seeing you.

Now my biggest thank you goes out to my drum teacher who is absolutely amazing, Mrs. Carol. I have been with you since the age of seven, and I know that Covid has stopped our lessons, but I wanted you to know that I will never forget all the performances you attended with me and the patience you have is amazing, you are a friend for life to me and my family.

Kids trying to find friends with the same interests really is hard. Once I was in the junior high band program at Eppler, my world opened up with kids who were so passionate about music and that's when I realized that this program was meant for me.

Band is very special, they have a no bullying policy and you always have your friends in your class all the way through high school. What could be more better than that?

I am surrounded by friends who not only share a passion for music like I do, but I also found out that most of them love to play video and online games.

One of my most favorite things I love doing is having my friends come over on Friday nights, we all play music together and practice as a group for our own personal band we developed. We perform in my basement while my parents order pizza and just make it a fun activity for all of us. But best of all we always finish off with an hour or two of video games before they go home. My parents also enjoy this time because they get to visit with the other parents and now they have become good friends with them.

True friends will be people who like you just the way you are.

Friendships

Moving Mountains Continued...



FAMILY IS EVERYTHING

Moving Mountains Continued....



THEIR IS NOTHING THAT WE CAN'T HANDLE TOGETHER

My family is a super important part of my life. If they weren't there for me every step of the way, I wouldn't know what to do.

As I get older, my parents are always pushing me to be more independent, make my own decisions and also be responsible for those decisions I make. And even though I am always worried that I might disappoint people, they assure me that I never do.

This magazine has been a dream of mine. I hope that kids, like myself and others, see how special they are. Never stop reaching for those goals you set for yourself. You may have to take a couple extra detours to reach them, but in the end you will reach them like I have so far. But trust me, I have a very long list.

I hope you don't mind, but I really wanted to take a moment to thank my family personally in this article, so here goes....





FAMILY IS EVERYTHING

Moving Mountains Continued...

First is my mom, she is pretty awesome. She always listens to my brother and me no matter how busy she is. She is an engineering manager, so structure is something she is used to and it helps me being structured.

My mom supports me in all my activities, and when she can't, she makes sure I have the resources to help me reach my potential goals.

I thank my mom for getting me started with music, I know it was a big part of her life when she was younger and she just knew it was something that I would love doing.

Probably the coolest thing is that she also loves going camping, kayaking, and traveling so our family does a lot of activities together. She is so patient when I start to get anxiety and can't think straight, she always guides and supports me. Thank you mom for always being there for me, love you mom.

My dad is also an extremely hard worker. As well as a manager, and is honestly one of the funniest people I know. He lives by the value of hard work and dedication, and it shows. He has seen me and my brother grow as musicians and as people, and I think I speak for him when I say that we've come a long way and moved so many mountains together. Dad, you're the best I could have. Never stop being you! Also, thank you for always being with me in our scouting adventures and our biggest adventure yet, completing my Eagle Scout Rank, the highest rank in Boy Scouts. Love you dad.

FAMILY IS EVERYTHING

Moving Mountains Continued....

Bryce, not only is he my brother, but he is also my best friend. We both share many of the same interests which include gaming, Scouting and of course, the love of music.

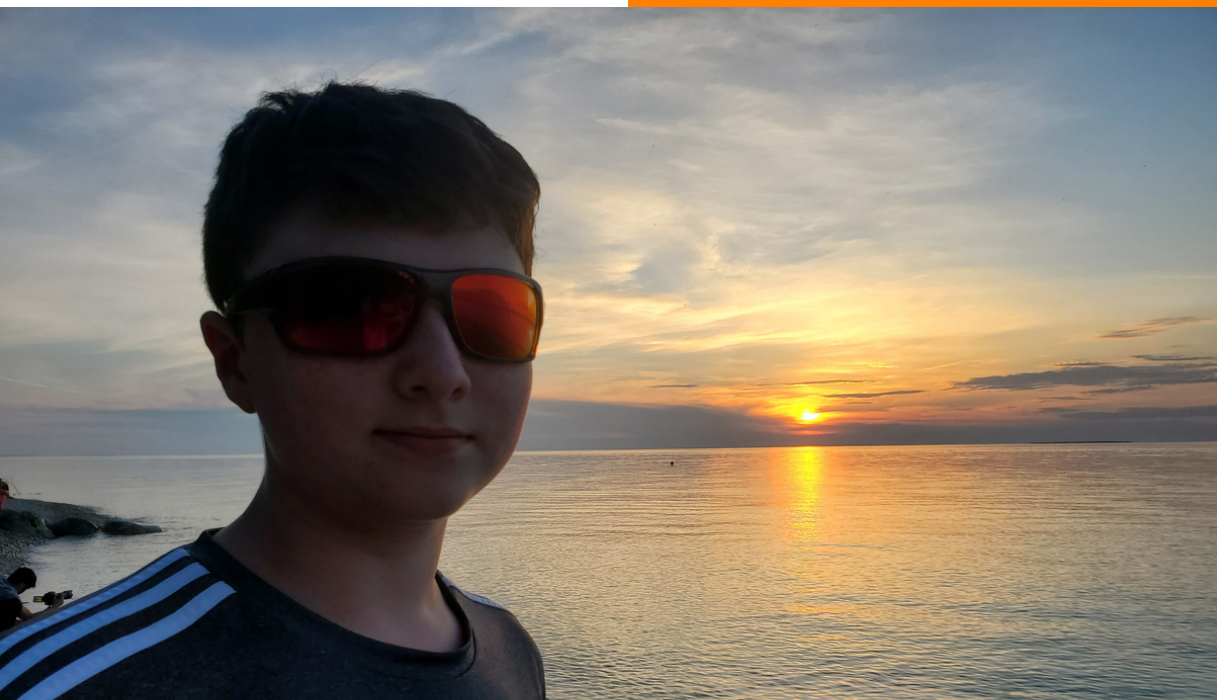
Bryce and my dad have a lot of the same characteristics, they love to cook and both have a really good sense of humor. It doesn't matter how bad you feel, they both can make you laugh.

Bryce is also working on his Eagle Scout Project right now, which makes me happy to see both of us reaching our goal for Boy Scouts.

If anyone knows Bryce at school, they know what I mean when I say he is very kind and takes the time to listen to you, no matter what your issue is.

This is why I am so proud to call him my brother. Thank you so much for looking out for me through our early days at school.

You're the best brother anyone could ask for!



CHIEFTAIN PRIDE ONE FAMILY

UTICA HIGH SCHOOL MARCHING BAND



You go to a high school football game for the first time and even before the football players take the field, you hear the cadence of drums coming from the distance. All heads turn to check to see where it's coming from. The crowd begins to roar with excitement as people see nothing but a sea of orange and black uniforms of the Utica Chieftain Marching Band members as they enter the stadium.

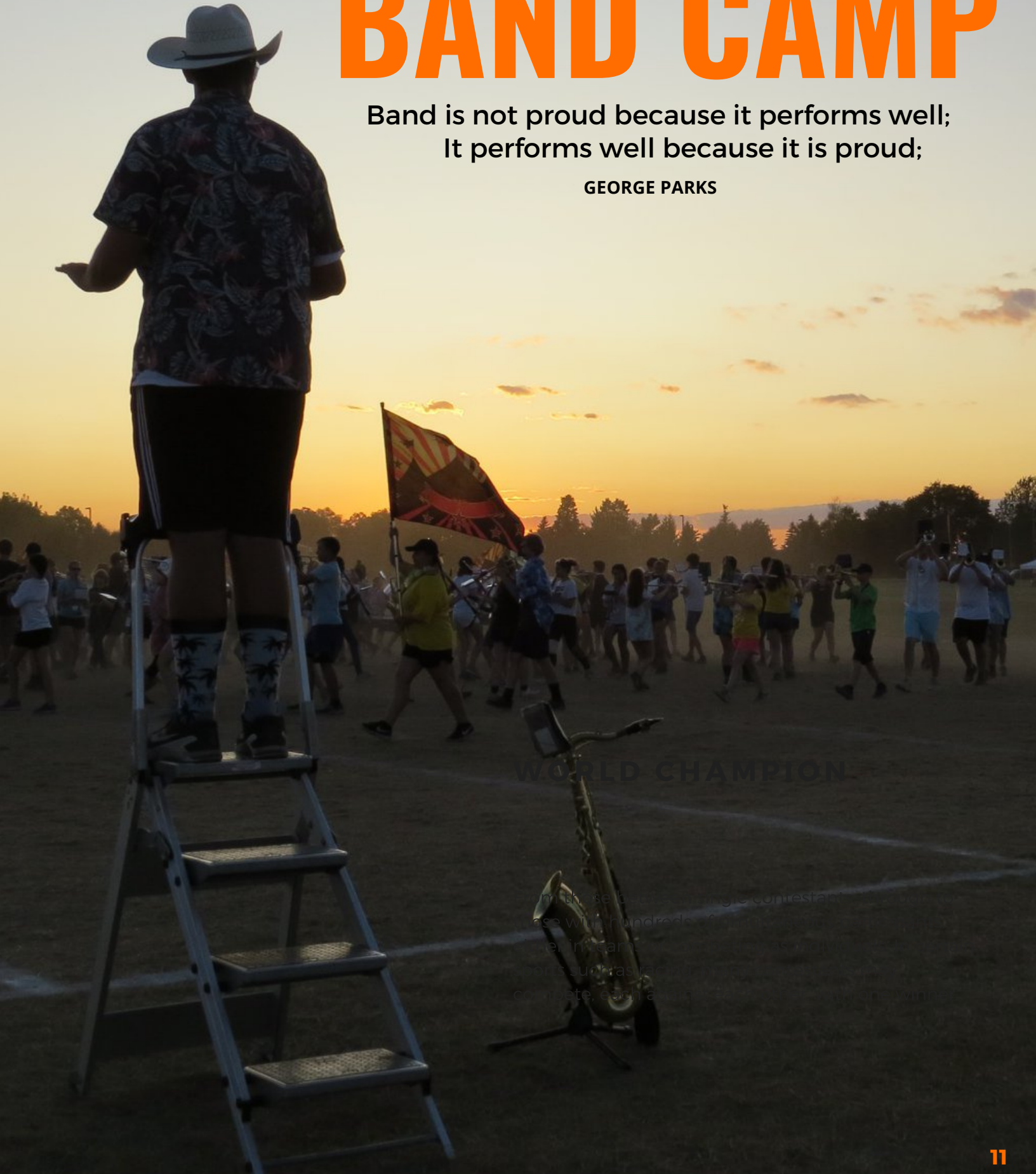
Every band student marches in perfect precision and looks like a fine oiled machine, Then something magical happens, the drums stop, the drum majors blow short taps on their whistles, and the fight song begins. Now the crowd cheers are at the max capacity as they begin singing along. And that my friends is Chieftain Pride-One family.

The Utica High School Marching Band

BAND CAMP

Band is not proud because it performs well;
It performs well because it is proud;

GEORGE PARKS



LIFE ON THE DRUMLINE

The Utica Drumline is a very special place to me, as it taught me more about how to fit in with everyone, teamwork, and sportsmanship.

When I initially auditioned for a position in the drumline I was scared to death of not being good enough, but most of all I was afraid that I wouldn't fit in socially. Everyone's personalities seemed so different than what I was used to. But I was also scared of the massive workload and expectations put upon me. However, in the end, I prevailed and it turned out that I was worried for nothing.

I ended up fitting right on in and people even reached to me if they saw that I was struggling with the music.....Continued



CONTINUED.....

LIFE ON THE DRUMLINE

Our work was paid off a thousand percent. the show program received so many compliments and our band named by WDIV #1 Click-On-Detroit Marching Band of 2019-2020! Season.

Even through all the massive restrictions and road blocks in the way, we ended up finishing the season in an amazing way. I personally, think that the 2020 drumline was the best I've ever seen. We were even more uniform, ready, prepared, and just good to go. When we played our first and only show on the field, I knew all the hardships we went through were worth it.

I am so glad to have been a part of this drumline because everything I have learned from them has readied me for more challenges that life will throw at me.

Next season, I will be a senior and I hope Covid-19 will be a memory of the past, and that our lives settle back to normal. if not, we have proven that we can adapt and keep music alive. we just need to be a little more creative, that's all.

Some advice for new students thinking about trying out for drumline, it's scary auditioning, but don't let that stop you. No one is perfect, but if you put the time, effort, and energy into your auditions, even if you don't make the line, you can always know in your heart that you gave it everything you had. And that is all we can ask for.



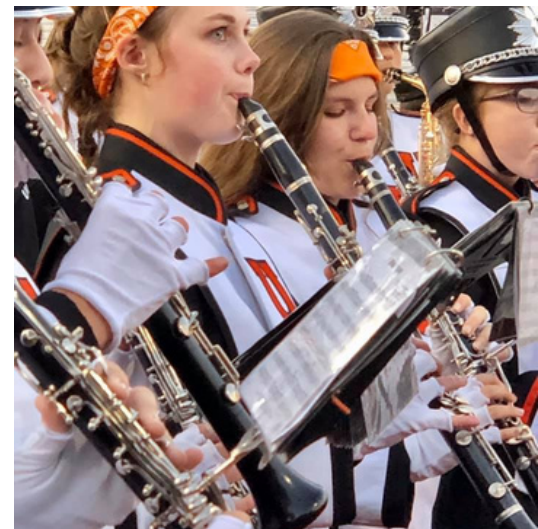
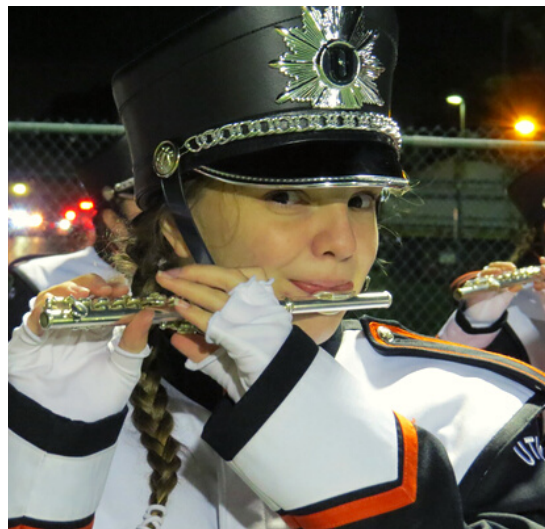
[Click Here to Listen to Our Drumline Practices](#)



Take Lots of pictures with your friends



Taking Lessons is the best way of learning



Marching Band Rewards

Marching Band is probably one of the hardest, but most rewarding activities you could ever be in at school. The commitment you make between the time and practicing that is required is unbelievable. But when the show comes together and you head towards competition night you realize that it was all worth it.

Utica High School Marching Band has received four straight division one ratings and that's because each one of these band members know that it takes a team to win. This team became a family and I think that is why UHSMB is so successful.

SCHOOL MUSIC PROGRAMS

Marching Band



Marching band provides a “society” and “family” to which all band students can belong. It is a place where they learn values and standards, where they can learn to depend on one another in their pursuit of their excellence. They learn about responsibility, doing their fair share, and sticking to a common goal.

[Click here for marching band performance](#)

Concert Band



The concert band offers the best opportunity to achieve the highest level of performance standards. It presents a thoughtful sequence of study related to individual and ensemble skill acquisition coupled with a body of literature selected for musical growth and understanding

Jazz Band



Jazz band: provide a small group setting to introduce different styles of playing and to teach the art of improvisation. These skills will ultimately benefit your entire instrumental program.

[Click here to watch Jazz Band Performance](#)





Giving Back To The Community

When the marching band season ends it feels as if the people who you have spent so much time with during the summer and the fall football season will no longer be there to just hang out.

Fortunately, my parents knew how important it was to keep the friendships close so they suggested having them come over twice a month on Friday night to play music, eat pizza, and finish off with games of Smash Brothers. Our basement is large so this was not an issue with us.

What started out as just a fun night playing music with friends became a passion for this group to make music that sounds good enough to perform at the junior high school band concerts.


Two days before the pandemic hit and closed our schools down, we were ready to play at several elementary schools promoting the band program. We are so sad that we were not able to perform and show off all of our hard work. But as soon as life goes back to normal, I am sure we will come back together again and share our love of the music program to upcoming band students.

The really nice part about this magazine is that it is interactive so I have attached a couple links below of songs we have done with our small group at our schools and at out in the community. Nothing is more rewarding than the reaction of a crowd when you complete playing a song and also seeing eyes of younger kids in amazement and telling their parents that they want to start playing a musical instrument.

It does take hard work to be in band but the rewards are so worth it.

[Click Here to watch Live Performance at Eppler Jr. high](#)

[Click here to watch live Christmas Performance at Eppler Jr. High](#)



CA HIGH SCHOOL

CHIEF
MARCHI
UTICA, M

INTERVIEWS

By Grant Harrison

I am so happy to have had the opportunity to talk with friends, family, and professionals in the music department about what music means to them, how it has been a big part of their lives, and what it means for them to teach other people the values of music.

In the next portion of this magazine you will be able to read those articles. I can't thank everyone enough for taking time out of their busy lives, to write these articles for my magazine.



BRETT BAYS

Utica High School Band Director

Why music is important to all kids – Music is important to everyone, and kids in particular. Music classes in school are a way for kids to be exposed to music in many different genres and from different cultures around the world. You are exposed to many different kinds of instruments that may only be used in certain parts of the world. Instrumental music classes in school have a profound effect on every student that participates. There are so many different types of ensembles to be in. There are marching bands, jazz bands, and concert bands. All of these groups play a wide variety of music and the challenges they present to the students is very helpful in developing their skills on the instruments.

Even if a student is not a member of their school's band, many get enjoyment from listening to a concert band or get a thrill from seeing and hearing a marching band play at halftime of a football game. All of these aspects of music, and instrumental music in particular, can have a great impact on each and every student who participates in them or hears them play!

SEAN MONDELLO

Band Student - Tuba

The best part of joining band is the friend group you will make within band. These are the type of people who you end up being friends with for a long time, because you will all have something you are passionate about in common. You will end up meeting so many new people inside the program, experience new activities, and develop a fun to learn skill that you will enjoy forever





Brian Roelandt

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF BANDS
LAWRENCE TECH UNIVERSITY

Why music is so important for kids - Brian Roelandt, retired public schools band director

Do you remember your days in school? There were so many different types of students: jocks, rebellious kids, cool kids, quiet kids, the brainy kids, artsy kids, the band kids, etc. Little did everyone know that the band included a bit of every group in the building.

There have been numerous professional athletes, actors, business leaders, and scientists who were members of their school band. Some of the most successful people in the world have played an instrument, including former president and saxophonist Bill Clinton. Albert Einstein played the violin, Warren Buffet plays the ukulele, Thomas Edison played piano, and even Prince Charles of England played the trumpet.

Music classrooms provide students a place to build communication skills, develop leadership skills, use parts of their brain yet undiscovered to them, and a place to belong in a group coming from different backgrounds but working toward a singular performance goal. Music also allows kids an opportunity to express themselves to an audience in ways that words can not.

As a music teacher for nearly 30 years, I have watched students excel in so many ways as a result of being in band or taking a music class. I have watched as the shyest student in class stood before a crowded auditorium to perform a solo that brought the audience to tears, a student who wanted to drop out of school but came to the building everyday because they didn't want to miss band, and a valedictorian struggle to perfect just 3 measures on a page of sheet music. Every student has to overcome individual difficulty for a group to perform successfully, and watching students find ways to support those around them was truly a daily reward of being a music teacher.

Students make music in a band room but also can become better individuals. My favorite memories in the classroom came when we had a group of severely disabled children join our classroom once a week for 12 weeks. Our guests were added to various sections in the band and given percussion instruments or hand instruments to hold. My students aided them to play along to a variety of music as the band played. Eventually at the request of my students this group performed at our concert and were the hit of the evening!

Music is also something that stays with a student for the rest of their life. The friendships made, life lessons, contest successes and disappointments, repetition until perfection, perseverance for many years, and later an occasional answer to a Jeopardy question as an adult.



Samantha Lecca

Band Student - Clarinet

I first started with the Bb clarinet in 6th grade and played it all through middle school and marching band while switching to the bass clarinet for high school band to even out our instrumentation. It's been a constant in my life for a while now. As I adjusted to a new school with 8 classes and full of people I didn't know, band class became my favorite way to connect to people. Being put in a smaller section- the low woodwinds- helped me really connect with those people and made school more bearable. That was also around the time I was diagnosed with an anxiety disorder. You'd think that being in a performing art would make it unbearable, but being a part of a larger group with no specific focus on myself is relieving. The individual aspects of band scare me the most- Solo and Ensemble isn't for me, and I get really uncomfortable practicing by myself at home because it makes me very anxious. I've learned to overcome that though, and I sometimes edit together videos of me playing different parts when usually I don't like recording myself like that. I'm glad I chose to stick with band because it allowed for some really fun moments and I became more comfortable with myself through it.

Donny Larson

Band Student -Trumpet

A question I hear all the time is "what's so important about band?", and to that I ask "what isn't important about band?". Band is an experience unlike any other. You meet great people and learn to be an excellent and confident person and even leader. In band, every part of the music is important, 1st, 2nd, or 3rd part, each one shines in it's own way and it's up to you to make your presence known. Learning to play out when you need can translate to your own confidence levels outside of band. For me, it's helped me realize my own importance and being a part of the bigger picture, fitting into the music when it matters, but still knowing where to stand out when I need. Overall, band is a place where you can learn to be a better person in your normal life, and that doesn't even include all the fun that comes with playing the music itself!



Joseph Syler

Shelby Jr. High Band Director

“After silence, that which comes closest to expressing the inexpressible, is music.” – unknown

The quote above is what I have built my 40-year career as a musician and educator on. There is no substitute for the joy and myriad of emotions that music evokes and at the same time there are so many intangibles that being involved in a music program gives to a person. I am fortunate enough to see it every day.

The young people that I have taught throughout the years have followed so many different dreams and career paths, yet all have benefitted from and have a common bond of a love of music. From star athletes to the physically handicapped, to the student with 4.0 GPA or a student that needs constant academic support, music has a place for them all. It is the common denominator and equalizer. If you have a love and a strong work ethic, you will be successful in music. It is something that will stay with you your entire life.

When an ensemble takes the notes from the printed page to the stage, it is a bonding process and sense of community that cannot be duplicated, except within the performing arts. The satisfaction of a great performance and sense of accomplishment and pride especially for students that struggle in an academic setting cannot be underestimated. The confidence, camaraderie, and self-awareness that a student gains through music will last a lifetime. Coming into Middle School and having group of like-minded students to immediately bond with and have a common purpose continues to be invaluable to young people every school year. In a strong music program, students realize this and will make the decision to return year after year, and usually branch off into other performance opportunities.

My own musical journey has taken many twists and turns. My own experience being mentored by an outstanding band director led me to become a music educator. After graduation, I was blessed with the opportunity to teach in the school and district where I grew up, at both the elementary and junior high level. However, there was a time where I thought I would never teach music again. Due to downsizing of the music program in my district, I was asked to make the move from music to other subjects. After three years out, I was asked to teach choir and was ecstatic to return to music but longed for a chance to be in front of a band again. Fortunately, I was able to be involved and nurture my own children’s musical pursuits, but it was not the same. Now after 13 years I am back in front of a school band doing what I love and helping young people to do the same. I could not be happier!

If music fuels your soul, don’t let anything stand in your way. It has been proven time and again, music has the power to overcome almost anything!

INTERVIEW WITH: GRAHAM ROCKWOOD

WHAT IS MUSIC THERAPY

What is Music Therapy?

Music Therapy is the clinical and evidence-based use of music interventions to accomplish individualized goals within a therapeutic relationship by a credentialed professional who has completed an approved music therapy program.

Music Therapy is an established health profession in which music is used within a therapeutic relationship to address physical, emotional, cognitive, and social needs of individuals. After assessing the strengths and needs of each client, the qualified music therapist provides the indicated treatment including creating, singing, moving to, and/or listening to music (American Music Therapy Association)

Music therapy can help a students manage pain and stressful situations. Music can encourage socialization, self-expression, communication, and motor development. Because the brain processes music in both hemispheres, music can stimulate cognitive functioning and may be used for remediation of some speech/language skills.

Our clinic uses music to work with people who have special needs using song writing, song recording, and playing instruments to work on non-musical goals such as socialization, managing mood, reduce anxiety, developing speech. I used music as a way to socialize with peers in high school and in life due to having dyslexia and this is why I chose to become a music therapist.

Here is a little bit about Jesse "I CAN SPARKMAN" he loves to perform.

When I had a rough day at school I would put on my headphone on and go in my own world and connect to the music. Then when I started making my own music, I found out that my music inspired my dad and friends and I realized that music was my gift, I didn't know how to open up to people and music let me speak my mind.

You don't have to read or write you just have to experience life and put it in the music. Jesse was born with Cerebral Palsy and is a Hip-Hop artist from Michigan.



Emily
Bonus

A Career In Music

My love of music started 37 years ago as a 10 year old who wanted to join band. It looked like fun, my Dad played musical instruments and enjoyed it and it got me out of singing practice with the nuns at my catholic school. My Dad was my first private instructor on clarinet and I thoroughly enjoyed every moment playing in my small school band. Progressing on to high school, I couldn't wait to join band and participate in the marching band. The band program at my high school (Rochester Adams HS) was everything to me. I met most all of my high school friends through band. I participated in every band activity offered - solo & ensemble Festival, Honors Bands, Pep Band, Wind Ensemble, etc. At my school, the band kids also gravitated to Key Club, where we could continue working together through community service activities. This experience in band, which included all types of students, including those with disabilities, helped to form who I am and how I related to other people. Beyond the experience of performing music, I formed close bonds and have friendships to this day with people I met through band in high school. In fact, my husband was a fellow clarinet player who stood next to me on the marching band field. We've been together now for over 30 years, married for 25 years!

Once I reached my sophomore year in high school, I started to think about what I wanted to study in college. I enjoyed band and also enjoyed business classes. I had been studying clarinet at a high level, with a clarinetist in the Detroit Symphony and working hard on my instrument. After a great deal of research I found that there is another career in music - arts management. Then explored what that is and what opportunities there are in the field. Arts Management is the study of the business side of the arts - marketing, finance, development, production, etc. Every arts or non-profit organization has and needs business functions to survive. I was intrigued by this and felt it was for me. I knew I did not want to become a professional clarinetist, so I pursued the study of arts management.

After high school, I attended the University of Michigan, majoring in clarinet performance and business administration. At the time, the school did not have a clear degree program in arts management, but they had a degree called Bachelor of Musical Arts. This degree allowed me to fulfill all the requirements of a performance major, as well as the foundation studies in another area. I chose that other area to be business administration. Besides my music studies, I took every foundation class needed for business studies and also found some arts management type classes in the theatre department.

I continued to play in the U of M bands and participated in musical experiences wherever I could, such as being a music critic for the Michigan Daily newspaper, serving as an usher for the Theatre Department, and working as an intern at the Ann Arbor Symphony. To complete my degree and gain experience in arts management, I completed additional internships and jobs in the summer with Meadowbrook Music Festival, Spoleto Festival USA, The Chicago Symphony and The American Symphony Orchestra League. After graduation from college, my first job was working as the Assistant Operations Manager with the Nashville Symphony. I was on the track to working for orchestras in arts management. During this time I also joined the Nashville Concert Band, an adult community band in the area. Beginning with playing with my Dad in the Warren Concert Band in high school, I fell in love with playing my clarinet in community bands. I joined community bands in the towns I had my summer internships, as a way to keep playing and meet new people. I have played in community bands for over 30 years now! If you want to see the power of music and what being in band means, visit a community band. No matter where I went or what job I had, I have found a home with the people I perform with in community band. There you will find people from all walks of life, abilities, ages and backgrounds. All are welcome! The community band I currently play in, along with my family, is the Royal Oak Concert Band. You can check us out on YouTube and on our website <http://www.royaloakconcertband.org>

ALEX ROY



Being an instructor for Utica's drumline is a dream come true; as students, my friend Evan and I would joke about running the program together. Years later, we consider ourselves lucky to have worked with so many talented players and given back to our alma mater. I graduated Utica in 2018 and began attending Michigan State University, working towards a Bachelors in Genetics and a Masters in Microbiology. Though I spend a lot of time in the laboratory, music remains an important part of my life. Not only do I spend time drumming as co-section leader of the MSU Bassline, but I also am a member of the MSU Ballroom Dance Team. I could not have made it this far without music. The discipline it has helped build carries me through whatever challenges I face.

Being on the MSU Drumline is an experience unlike any other. Seeing them perform while I was in high school sparked yet another musical dream, one that came true after lots of practice and failed attempts. Deep at the core of the Spartan Marching Band is tradition; you follow the same uniform code, march the same pregame, and play the same drum cadence that have been around for decades. You rehearse for at least 15 hours every week, not including individual practice time. You practice until you can't get it wrong. Game days are a whole day affair: wake up at 6am, be ready to play at 7am. Practice until lunch, march around campus performing, then march to the stadium for pregame. Perform pregame, halftime, and pep tunes in the stands. Then perform postgame and march home, usually close to 9 or 10pm! Every moment of it is a blast, even when it's pouring rain or boiling hot. What I can't overstate is the feeling of pride imbued in carrying out those long-standing traditions. You feel part of something bigger than yourself, especially when you meet alumni from the '60s who have stood in your shoes.

SCOUTING AND MUSIC

All that being said, Scouting has been with me the longest. Years ago, a man named Mr. Firestone appeared in our kindergarten class to talk to the boys. In the hallway, he told us about Cub Scouting. In hindsight, I can't remember what he said; all I know is that I was mesmerized. I had to wait until first grade to join, which I found to be an injustice. After all, the year of waiting was almost a quarter of my life at that point. Once joined, though, the yearly campout became the highlight of my summers. Continuing to Boy Scouts was an easy choice. Like many others, I attribute almost all of my ability to lead, speak publicly, and be prepared to Scouting. At my Eagle Court of Honor, I tried to make one thing clear: being an Eagle is about character, not getting requirements signed off in a book. I am glad that Scouting has opened up to boys and girls alike. Anybody who embodies those ideals deserves the chance to embark on that journey, one that I have been so lucky to complete.

I have learned that nothing worth doing is ever easy— but you can have fun along the way. Scouting and music have shown me that the end result justifies the work.



The MSU Drumline playing one of their signature pieces, 'X'

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GMDnXMNNI6E>

The Spartan Marching Band playing 'Latin Jazz' in the Big House!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=brdpRuaJroE>



Editor's Final Note

A very special person told me once that it's okay to be afraid, but don't let it stop you from the things you really want to do in life. So I wanted to dedicate my last page and Editor's Note to Mrs. George my sixth grade teacher from Wiley Elementary, you may not know how much you mean to my family and I, so I wanted to say it now. Thank you so much for all your patience and guidance throughout my years in school, I looked forward to every tutoring class we had for Math and English, it's because of you and others who care that I am able reach those goals that I set out for myself.

My favorite special time was when you were teaching my brother and I how to make homemade pasta, and how to grill a pizza. We won't talk about the outcome of the pizza, but it didn't matter, it was a great time. I looked forward to every week you came for tutoring. Thank you Mrs. George for being such a great mentor and friend.

To all my readers, thank you for listening and reading my story. Remember there is nothing that we can't handle together, you're never alone.

Grant Harrison
EDITOR IN CHIEF