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Communications

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Madeline Bame '21 Discovers Profound Stories of Success

BOILING SPRINGS, N.C.—Because music has played a key role in her own life, Madeline Bame, a Gardner-Webb University student from Gastonia, N.C., wanted to find out if music impacts graduation rates in Title I Schools in North Carolina. She conducted her research in the 2018 summer term with a grant from the Undergraduate Research Scholars Program.



Photos by GWU Student Joy
Smith

“I chose this topic because I believe that music education is essential for public education,” shared Bame, a junior music education major. “Currently, many music educators feel that their field is devalued, and many music classrooms are experiencing cuts. I have witnessed inspiration and academic motivation resulting from music education, and I want to produce concrete evidence that supports the concept that music education is important for the success of students.”

Collecting the data proved to be Bame’s greatest challenge. Some of the information could be accessed through public records, but she also attempted to interview administrators and educators in Title I schools across the state. The interview questions measured statistical and qualitative data regarding graduation rate, music education in schools, and the relationship between the two. “The challenges that occurred with the research were all related to the human-based nature of the study,” she explained. “Navigating the websites of each county in the state, and effectively contacting the necessary educators was the most challenging part of the study. I, however, found the challenges to be one of the most important parts of the growth experience.”

Her faculty mentor, Dr. Morgan Soja, assistant professor of music, offered guidance when she hit hurdles. “Dr. Soja was an incredible motivator throughout the course of my project,” Bame related. “Dr. Soja is very well educated in qualitative and quantitative research, and is an excellent teacher. It was an honor to be able to learn from her guidance.”

Bame discovered some profound stories from educators whose students’ successes could be directly linked to their participation in music programs. “This research is still ongoing; however, I have found incredibly interesting results thus far,” she affirmed. “While all of

the responses that I have support my hypothesis, I have been met with a considerable non-response bias.”

She plans to present the findings of her project at Gardner-Webb’s Life of the Scholar Multidisciplinary Conference and the 2019 North Carolina Music Educators Association Conference.

Madeline Bame

Conducting the research will benefit Bame as she seeks a job as a high school choir director and later, when she goes to graduate school. “Summer scholars has prepared me to understand research procedures that most undergraduate students have not yet been exposed to,” she assessed. “Furthermore, the content from this study has fueled my love for music education, as I believe that it can significantly impact a student’s academic success.”

If you are interested in learning more about the programs offered by the Department of Music, [click here](#).

Located in the North Carolina foothills, Gardner-Webb University is a private, Christian, liberal arts university that prepares students to become critical thinkers, effective leaders and compassionate servants in the global community. Emphasizing a strong student-centered experience and rigorous academics, Gardner-Webb is a place where Christian conviction meets intellectual freedom. Ignite your future at [Gardner-Webb.edu](#).