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Office of University
Communications

June 11, 2017

Christian Jessup '17 Has Internship with Hans Zimmer's Film Studio

As a rising junior, Christian Jessup '17 took on the ambitious project of developing a completely original score for the 1977 blockbuster, Star Wars. His work was made possible by a grant from the GWU Undergraduate Research Scholars program. During the five-week research experience, students are mentored by a faculty member and receive on campus room and board as well as tuition remission, if applicable.

photo of Christian Jessup

“After I talked with my adviser, Dr. Bruce Moser, we both agreed that Star Wars was the best film to go with. Go big or go home,” he laughed. “We knew we could choose a random theme, and who knows, that may have been better because then people wouldn’t know the music as well. But the film offers such a diverse range of emotions. I think one of the biggest things I got out of this project was a diversity in composition that I didn’t have before.”

The completed project earned local and national awards for Jessup, who is a music composition and communications studies double major. He received recognition at GWU’s Life of the Scholar Multidisciplinary Conference (LOTS-MC) and was also awarded the Alfred and Shirley Wampler Caudill (LOTS-MC) Best Paper and Best Presentation awards. At the Alpha Chi Honor Society’s national convention, Jessup earned one of two Gaston Scholarships, worth \$3,000 each, and presented to the highest-rated submissions at the convention. He also won the best presentation prize in the Art/Music/Dance papers category.

In addition to the awards, the research opened a door for Jessup to intern for five weeks at Hans Zimmer’s film studio, Remote

Christian Jessup

Control Productions (RCP) in Santa Monica, Calif. “I am shadowing various composers, orchestrators, editors, and producers while I’m there in order to get an idea of the entire process of scoring a film,” Jessup described. “Zimmer has written the scores for over 150 films including ‘The Lion King,’ ‘Pirates of the Caribbean,’ ‘The Dark Knight Trilogy,’ and ‘Gladiator.’ His coworkers at RCP include Henry Jackman, Ramin Djawadi, John Powell, Harry Gregson-Williams, Lorne Balfe, Junkie XL, and many more.”

Jessup is grateful for the accolades and opportunities, and he is thankful for the advice and expertise of Moser, his mentor and GWU assistant professor of music. Since a film composer often doesn't have the final say in the product, Moser served as the director, helping guide the project and offering feedback consistent with the typical production process.

“We have some of the most brilliant professors in the world. I'm amazed by them and I realize once again that Gardner-Webb is an amazing school with top-notch faculty and staff,” Jessup reflected. “In your classes, each professor is going to get to know you. I've developed personal relationships with all of my teachers, and I know I'm establishing lifelong connections.”