

Michael McNulty
Class of 2023
Music Scholar

Fund For Musical Enrichment Outcome Report

I am incredibly grateful to the Miller Arts Scholar program for the minigrant that allowed me to grow so much as a musician over my winter break. In my proposal for this grant I had two goals in mind for how to use this money. The first was to buy reed tools for my bassoon and the second was to take lessons with professional musicians to gain insight into how to best improve my playing and break into the music industry. This generous grant allowed me to achieve both of these.

As pictured below, I was able to buy reed tools for my bassoon. Especially among double reed players, making and being able to fix one's reeds is essential to playing at an advanced level. Usually these tools are very expensive, but they do make a difference in one's sound and professional status as a player. This grant allowed me to purchase all the reed tools I will need to play bassoon throughout college and after school for free, ensuring that I will be able to make my own reeds before I graduate. This will give me a leg up as I am coming out of school and looking to find playing opportunities.

In addition to the reed tools, I also had the opportunity to purchase three lessons from three different extraordinary musicians. In my original proposal the first musician I had planned to take a lesson with was John Scofield. However, when I reached out to Mr. Scofield, although he gave me many helpful tips for free, he was not interested in teaching me a lesson over my winter break. As an alternative, I was able to take a lesson with Will Matthews, the current guitar player in the Count Basie Orchestra and probably the world expert on the style of "Freddie Green" comping that I frequently play in the UVA Jazz Ensemble. Meeting and playing with Mr. Matthews was an incredible experience and very insightful into that style of playing. Topics discussed included the merits of open versus close voicings in playing that style as well as general skills for being a good rhythm player.

The second musician I had the opportunity to study with was Ron Petrides. Ron is a guitar player who I have known for a couple of years who has studied with Pat Martino and has an impressive career playing with Tony Bennet, Sonny Stitt, and many others. Ron gave me very specific advice on how to improve my swing feel, lines, and comping in addition to important advice on starting a career in the music industry.

The last musician I was able to connect with through this grant was Rob Mathes. Rob Mathes is a composer and arranger who has had a very successful career including being the musical director of the Kennedy Center Honors and President Obama's 2008 Inauguration. Rob and I are still setting up a time to meet in the coming weeks, but we plan to discuss some of the scores I've written for the UVA Jazz Ensemble and how to improve my compositional skills.

I cannot overstate how amazing these opportunities were for me. I never would have thought to pursue these opportunities if I wasn't pushed by the Miller Arts Scholars program to do so. I have grown dramatically through these experiences and look forward to continuing to grow through the duration of my time in the program.

Reed Tools Picture:



Budget:

Expense:	Cost:
Reed Tools	\$150
Will Matthews Lesson	\$150
Ron Petrides Lesson	\$100
Rob Mathes Lesson	\$100
Total	\$500