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Music is My Oil

Ever since I began grade school, I have had a hard time paying attention in class, staying on task, or even listening to the teacher. Twelve years later, I was diagnosed with ADHD, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder. Despite this diagnosis, I am continuously pushing to achieve a higher education and become a music educator. I am driven to not be defined by my struggle.

My recently diagnosed disability is pushing me and driving me towards success. Struggle has made me stronger. For most of my schooling, I was undiagnosed and just thought something was wrong with me or that I was lazy. Because of this, I developed coping skills and strategies to help me do well in school. Instead of becoming my struggle, I use it as my drive. I have trouble focusing in class, so instead of taking easier classes, I enrolled in Dual Enrollment/AP classes. Strategies like sitting in front of the class or setting extra time for homework have been important to me. The most effective learning strategy for me involved music. Some of my struggles, like time blindness and memory problems, have been addressed by music. Most importantly, music gave me the motivation to do well.

Music was my safe haven growing up, which contradicts the common assumption that music in school, is a waste of time or money. People say that kids should be learning math, science or other core subjects and music should be removed from high schools. Just a couple of years ago, many music students had to worry about a budget cut to the Orchestra program. However, the music program was the only thing keeping me focused on my studies. Music was my oil that helped me perform better academically and musically. I started learning Trumpet my freshman year and now in my senior year, I am in the Advanced Band, leading the band as Drum Major.

I aspire to become a music educator because I want and *need* to. I was able to succeed and push myself to my full potential because of music. It helped me perform well in my studies, but also gave me a support system that I needed. In the future, we need the best music educators in our schools, which I have the passion to become. I am driven to earn my bachelors and masters in Music Education and provide the support/role model for younger generations, in the same way my orchestra and band teachers did for me. I hope my educational journey will demonstrate that my struggle is not my enemy, but my drive to succeed. Because regardless of your hardship, music can be the inspiration, motivation, support and safe haven to accomplish your dreams.