



# “Our Experience on the Hill”

Genesis Mihalko & Tanner Petri

WVMEA March 6<sup>th</sup>, 2020 at 9:00AM: Room: 212

## Summary:

- College representatives from across the United States were invited to participate in the *Collegiate Advocacy Summit* hosted by *NAfME* in Washington D.C. this past June.
- While there, we participated in a series of sessions and ice breakers, which led to the big event of advocating for music education on the Hill with our respective congressmen and senators.

## What is Advocacy?

- Advocacy: a public support for or recommendation of a particular cause or policy.

## What Were We Advocating For?

- We were advocating for music, as a subject, to be included in school curriculum through ESSA (Every Student Succeeds Act), which calls for a “well-rounded” education for all students.
- We advocated for this through two major avenues: Title I and Title IV
  - Title I, Part A: “whole school reform to benefit all students in a high-poverty school”
  - Schools under this program utilize a “Schoolwide Plan”, which “Can include an emphasis on music/arts integration as a means by which to improve academic performance and student engagement for all students” (2016 NAfME).
  - Title IV, Part A: used as a promotion of “constructive student engagement, problem solving, and conflict resolution” as well as “providing music to underrepresented, disadvantaged, and minority student populations” (2019 NAfME).
- We were also urged to use our “Hill Day” stories in conjunction with the specific facts.

## The Breakdown:

- Day One:
  - Ice breakers by the dozens
  - General “Hill Day” information
  - An introduction into forming our own “Hill Day” stories
- Day Two:
  - Speakers, sessions, and panels: oh my!

- The panels provided us with the opportunity to ask hard-hitting questions to national, state, and local educators and leaders in the music education field.
- Sessions about other *NAfME* chapters, and how to build and retain your own chapter.
- Day Three:
  - Game Day: advocacy on the Hill
  - We met with Senators: Joe Manchin and Shelley Moore Capito
  - We met with Congressman/woman: David McKinley and Carol Miller

### **Hill Day Stories:**

- Your Hill Day story explains why you believe music education is important, and why you decided to pursue that as your profession.
- Genesis' Hill Day story: “When I was growing up I had it rough, and the only thing that gave me hope was middle school band. Now, I was fairly awful at the trumpet, but my teacher, Mrs. Diamond didn’t care. She gave me an outlet from the world that I desperately needed. I promised her in 6<sup>th</sup> grade that I would become a music teacher like her, so I could give the next generation the escape that she gave me, and I’ve never looked back since.”
- Tanner’s Hill Day story: “Being an educator was something that I always wanted to do. From a young age, I always looked up to my grandparents, who were both teachers in my hometown of Wheeling, West Virginia. It was not until later that I knew I wanted to be a music educator. I realized that I wanted to be music teacher my 8<sup>th</sup> grade year when I first met my mentor, David Alfred. This was the first year he took over as the band director at my middle school. He would eventually move up to the high school where I would have him again. To this day, we still have a strong relationship. The impact that my grandparents and Mr. Alfred had on me made me want to inspire the next generation to always do their best, much like they did with me.”

### **What Can You Do to Help?**

- Attend the *Collegiate Advocacy Summit* (if you’re currently attending college, or graduating this year)!
- Subscribe to the *NAfME* “Collegiate Members Digest” (collegiate members)
- Subscribe to the *NAfME* “ALF” weekly updates (everyone)
- Get in contact with your local “ALF” representative
- Contact our Congressmen and Congresswomen, and share stories about the music education experiences going on in your area!

