

**Cultivating Harmony Across Generations: Exploring the Benefits of Intergenerational  
Music Making**

**By**

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**Abstract**

This study highlights the benefits of participating in a community band, focusing on personal wellness, musical improvement, and inclusivity. Seven (7) musicians who have or are currently participating in a community band were interviewed on Zoom and asked a series of questions relating to their experiences for this phenomenological research study. It is hoped that communities and local musicians will come to see the positive impact that community ensembles and music has on people in their local area of all ages.

**Keywords:** community band, wellness, musical fulfillment, identity, and lifelong music education

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## **Chapter I: Introduction**

### **Introduction**

Throughout time, music has created, developed, and strengthened communities. Music has been passed down through generations and celebrated together by young and old. It creates space for those to gather around and share a common interest to celebrate. Through creating music together as a hobby – like in community bands – we can build a welcoming environment for all to enjoy and participate. Inside a well-organized community band, there are dedicated participants and musicians who continue to return year after year and their commitment is no coincidence. It is important to understand their desire to continue to participate in the band.

### **Purpose Statement**

The purpose of this thesis is to determine the social, physical, and musical benefits of intergenerational music making, and the importance it has in the community. This thesis seeks to answer the question of how does multigenerational music making provide benefits to those involved musically, physically, and socially?

### **Importance of the Study**

The information in this thesis will be valuable to anyone interested in creating music, whether community musicians, educators, or grade school students. Understanding and publishing the benefits of continuing music education and participation can lead to a larger percentage of young students continuing into lifelong music-making. Educators will be better equipped to inform their students and community members about the reasons they should continue playing their instrument after high school.

### **Definition of Community Band**

Throughout this study, I will be referencing community bands or community music. The definition of community music within this study is a group or ensemble that rehearses and

performs music within an open environment. These musicians are volunteers and are participating in the group as a hobby rather than a career. While certain community music groups discussed may have some requirements to participate, for example an age requirement, it is important to note that most community music groups are open to all ages and abilities.

While every community band around the country looks and runs a little differently, they all have the same goal– to provide an opportunity for adults to continue to create music together. While they are geared towards adults, these bands are great opportunities for students to perform more music outside of school or during the summer months. Grade school students dedicate anywhere from four (4) to eight (8) plus years of their life learning a musical instrument. In high school, they likely participate in an ensemble every day. This becomes a large part of their daily lives and for most of them, it suddenly stops when they graduate. Having community bands allows these students to keep some normalcy or familiarity as they transition into this new phase of life.

There are also large benefits of continuing or starting to learn music as an older adult. A particular group of community music, New Horizon, is an organization aimed at adults 55+ that has bands, choirs, and orchestras around the country. They even offer pathways for adults that have never been a part of one of these groups in their lives to learn and become beginner musicians (Jutras, 2011).

Being someone that has been involved in music since I was 10, I have often heard my great aunt express her desire to learn the trumpet. She was always very supportive of my musical adventure, and she admired my passion. She often shared with me her short experience in band. Her family owned a clarinet that was acquired for her older sister to play in band. This was the only instrument option for my great aunt since it was already purchased. Though she attempted

the clarinet, she soon realized it wasn't her instrument of choice. Throughout much of her adulthood, the responsibilities of caring for her family and establishing her own career left her with little time or money to pursue the trumpet. Finally, during her retirement and the development of a New Horizon Band in her hometown, she purchased a trumpet and finally started her dream at the age of 67. She performed in her very first concert a few months later and was ecstatic to have found a group that allowed her to be an adult beginner.

To summarize and conclude chapter one, I stated the purpose of this study, my research question, the importance of the study, and a clear definition of community music. In the following chapter, I will present my literature review related to this study.



## **Chapter II: Review of Related Literature**

In the previous chapter, Chapter One, I introduced this study pertaining to the benefits of community music across the lifespan. In this chapter, Chapter Two, I will review the literature related to my study of multigeneration music making. The review of the literature will be sorted into the following sections: Wellness, Musical Growth and Fulfillment, and Identity. In the first section on Wellness, I will provide details based on the physical, emotional and mental, and spiritual well-being of the participants in relation to their involvement in community music. In the second section on Musical Growth and Fulfillment, I will provide details on the participants' musical learning, connections in the music world, and how age gaps impact their musical lives. Lastly, in the third section, I will discuss Identity and how music impacts their sense of ownership, purpose, and belonging. For the readers' knowledge, Chapter Two was written after conducting the interviews and the discovery of the main themes, to provide a background through which themes could be thoughtfully and thoroughly analyzed.

### **Wellness**

In this section, I will share insight from scholars who research the impacts of community band involvement on the musician's overall wellness. I will discuss scholars that study physical wellness among musicians which will include cognitive functioning (Böttcher, et al., 2022 and Roman-Caballero, et al., 2018). I will then focus on those that have conducted research about emotional and mental wellness (Hajek, et al., 2023; Brennan, et al., 2018; Morrison, 2020 and Kwan, & Clift, 2018). Lastly in this section, I will present information from those who study spiritual wellness (Murtonen, 2018; Kwan, & Clift, 2018 and Dingle, et al., 2013).

*Physical Wellness.*

Böttcher, et al. (2022), describe the many ways that consistent involvement with musical activities can help keep cognitive function as an individual ages. It is especially effective in strengthening the brain against mental delaying diseases such as Alzheimer’s disease and dementia. Böttcher, et al., explains in their discussion the following:

“We show that musical activity during life is associated with better late-life cognitive abilities in [older adults]. More precisely, participants with musical activity outperformed the matched controls in global cognition and multiple cognitive domains including working memory, executive functions, language and visuospatial abilities. These findings agree with a body of studies, suggesting that active participation in musical activity is associated with higher-order cognitive abilities in [older adults] ...” (p.8). The authors continue to discuss that one might think these results occurred due to the expectation that “high performers exhibit higher education, intelligence, and SES[socioeconomic status] compared to controls” (p. 12) but that was not the case within this study. The control panel was made up of participants with similar education, occupational success, and socioeconomic status. Since they used a fair matched control panel compared to the musicians in relation to their lifestyle and mental capacity, it made the study’s findings even more relevant.

Roman-Caballero, et al. (2018) explains the importance of musical activity on the brain and its role in motor skills. They explain all the different elements that the brain needs to complete while performing in an instrumental ensemble: “...playing in a group requires synchronizing one’s own performance (sensorimotor skills) and listening to the musical cues of other instruments (audio-spatial localization), attending to many types of visual stimuli, mainly the score and the body movements of the rest of the musicians and the conductor (divided

attention), detecting them and responding appropriately (vigilance and selective attention) over long periods of time (sustained attention).” (p. 16). The authors continue to explain even more skills necessary for playing an instrument, such as moving during the performance, the physical ability to play their instrument, as well as memorization of music and recalling it at the time of the performance.

### ***Emotional and Mental Wellness.***

Hajek (2023), a professor of Interdisciplinary Health Care Epidemiology at the University of Hamburg, stresses the importance of social isolation awareness, especially among older adults. Being socially connected is essential to the well-being of any human, “Social isolation and loneliness, representing the objective and subjective experiences of social disconnection, are two well-known social constructs with strong impacts on human health” (p. 15). Music is a very socially connected activity and during the Covid-19 pandemic, not many groups were still rehearsing. Hajek stated, “Many interventions to reduce loneliness are based on group activities, which in the current uncertain situation are not easily arranged and often cancelled or even forbidden” (p. 194). While Hajek does not address music specifically, music falls into the category of events often forbidden during the pandemic's height. Brennan, et al., (2018) also agrees that having social support also impacts that quality of life among older adults. Brennan mentions that “Social isolation and loneliness have both been shown to be associated with higher mortality” (p. E5).

Morrison (2020) discusses a different kind of social connection throughout one’s career, specifically in music education. Being an educator is a taxing job, and being surrounded by students all day can become isolating from other adults. There are also more profound actions that we can take to increase our resilience and capability to thrive in our teaching and conducting

lives. One of these actions, which might also help to combat feelings of isolation, is to ‘build connections with colleagues through mentoring relationships.’ (Morrison, 2020, p. 28). By participating in a mentoring program, both sides can form relationships that can reduce stress as well as combat feelings of isolation (Morrison, 2020). Humans desire connection to others, and we need to feel connected both personally as well as professionally, and music is a great environment to do so. (Morrison, 2020). Kwan and Clift (2018) agreed in their study that music sessions are a great way for participants to make friends. Participants even mentioned extending the social aspect outside of the music rehearsal by getting coffee or another type of social gathering (Kwan & Clift, 2018).

### *Spiritual Wellness.*

The effect that music can have on a young adult can be very spiritually fulfilling according to Murtonen (2018), especially when the music itself is spiritually based. When people express themselves spiritually through music, it builds a sense of belonging and self-worth. “As a mental resource, music could enhance coping in life. The entertaining element of music could add to life-satisfaction. As a hobby, spiritual music offered an opportunity to fulfill and value oneself and sense that one’s existence is meaningful” (p. 218) It is important to note that Murtonen’s study focuses only on spiritual music. Kwan & Clift (2018) had a similar approach in their mental wellness study on the benefits of musical activities. Their study was inside a social service organization that is based on faith which led to some of the musical activities being faith related. “We found that music provided participants with musical experiences that engaged their deeper selves” (Kwan & Clift, 2018, p. 150).

Dingle, et al. (2013), wrote the article, “‘To be heard’: The social and mental health benefits of singing for disadvantaged adults”. While it focuses on singing instead of an

instrumental ensemble, the research and musical engagement are present enough to discuss the benefits of music. This study focuses on adults with mental illness or disabilities and their reasoning for choosing this group is because this demographic is less likely to participate in social groups or activities (Dingle, et al., 2013). A survey was given out that asked many questions about their experience within a choir, “Although there were no questions that asked about a spiritual experience, a few choir members did report a spiritual impact from being in the choir: It lets those emotions out – I believe it gives it to a higher power because I’m a Christian.” (p. 413).

### **Musical Growth and Fulfillment**

This section focuses on literature concerning the history and development of music education, inside schools, and with adults. A brief overview of the literature on music education, more specifically, instrumental music education will be discussed. I will use information from scholars that detail some of the history of music education (Mark, 2008 and Kratus, 2007). Then I will focus on the act and experience of music education within a school setting (Perlmutter, 2010; Väkevä, 2009; Founder, 2014 and Williams, 2011). Lastly, I will share literature from those who have studied music education among adults (Batley & Waldron, 2020; Sobal, 2019; Pike, 2022 and Jutras, 2011).

### ***Music Education History.***

Michael L. Mark was a professor of Music at Towson University and the author of the book, *A Concise History of American Music Education*, which was published in the year 2008. Access to music education, especially instrumental music in the 1800 hundreds was only for the wealthy for it was expensive to own such instruments. Music was not a part of the regular American curriculum at schools until William Channing Woodbridge suggested that it become

part of public education (Mark, 2008). In 1830, Woodbridge presented a speech to the American Institution of Instruction to request that vocal music becomes a common subject in education (Mark, 2008).

Later in the nineteenth century, instrumental music started to become more popular as bands and orchestras began touring (Mark, 2008). As it became more popular, it started to become common that schools have their own instrumental music ensembles, and these were well loved by the American people (Mark, 2008). Mark wrote the follow about music in the 1920s:

“Playing a band or orchestra was believed to lead to character development, healthy leisure activities, or socialization. It also promoted democratic values and citizenship through participation in civic events and playing patriotic music... Bands and orchestras kept boys (but usually not girls) occupied with a productive activity and in many cases, provided the education and experience necessary for them to become professional musicians.” (Mark, 2008, p. 124). Music was thought to have many benefits and was worthy of being a part of our education. This push to grow music education came at an ideal time when the industrial revolution was about to begin (Mark, 2008).

As music education has become a vital part of our public education system, it has been met with challenges along the way. The arts as a whole tend to be the first on the chopping block when it comes to financial concerns in a district (Kratus, 2007). In the article “Music Education at the Tipping Point”, John Kratus explains the budget cuts in education in the state of California. Kratus argues that music programs have been cut in a disproportionate manner than all the other subjects (2008). In today's world, “the Arts and education is perceived as less valuable than others, more pragmatic subjects that provide skills directly related to the workforce.” (Kratus, 2007, p. 44). Music was thought of to build character and enhance many indirect skills of the

students as listed above by Mark. Between the start of instrumental education explained by Mark, to what is happening today explained by Kratus, there has been a large change in the support received.

### ***Music Education Within Schools.***

Music education is continuously evolving as music evolves. It was common to see band, orchestra, and choir classes at schools in the past, now many districts have grown to include music technology, music theory, jazz band, mariachi classes, piano and guitar classes, and so much more. Williams (2011) suggested that “it is essential that we offer interesting, relevant, and meaningful musical experiences for all students that also allow them to develop lifelong musical skills” (p. 53). Not as many students find the traditional music setting interesting or exciting, which is why educators are starting to incorporate these more appealing classes to keep students involved in music (Williams, 2011). Mark Fonder (2015), argues the opposite. He believes that the current model for music education is fine the way it is with large ensembles being the primary focus. Fonder uses the statistic that 80 percent of students do not participate in ensembles due to the thought from other academicians that it is too elite for everyone and that these other educators want to change the structure of ensembles. Fonder states, “These academicians would have us abandon the 20 percent – the most motivated and interested students – to accommodate the other 80 percent” (p. 89).

With the expansion of music education, students are exposed to different cultures and types of music they might not hear in their daily lives. Students desire to learn and if they are inspired then, "authenticity in learning can also spill over to new areas, widening the musical horizons of the students and introducing them to new musical worlds." (Väkevä 2009, p. 11). Music classes provide students with not only knowledge of music itself but help build curiosity.

Perlmutter (2010) wrote in an article about improving knowledge retention and how a music teacher in Woodland California, "...fosters knowledge retention [by focusing] on having the proper curriculum for her students based on their age, skill level, and interests, a process that requires constant examination and revising." (p. 48). By increasing the interest in students, you also are increasing their knowledge retention.

### ***Music Education Among Adults.***

Beginning or restarting a music education journey among adults, especially older adults, is not an uncommon occurrence. There have been ensembles created to meet the needs of these new musicians, "Aimed at adults over the age of 50, New Horizons groups offer the opportunity to enter as a beginner and learn while participating in bands, choirs, and orchestras" (Jutras, 2011, p. 66). Jutras discusses the trends discovered in their study among participants in an instrumental New Horizons ensemble. Many of the benefits listed "received [a] high percentage of agreement and high ratings of importance, suggesting that study participants both received and valued a wide range of musical and non-musical benefits from their participation in New Horizons." (p. 76). The following list received a 95% or more agreement rating among participants, "Accomplishment, Blend Sound (Listen), Camaraderie, Challenge, Common Purpose, New Friends, Play/Fun, Skill Refinement, and Technique." (p. 76). From this study, it is obvious that adult music education is greatly beneficial to the community.

Bayley & Waldron (2020), in their article exploring adult music education online vs offline, state, "Participants expressed a variety of reasons for participating in music workshops, including personal advancement, the ability to focus on a music task in the aesthetically pleasing setting, and the opportunity to interact on a both personal and musical level with like-minded individuals." (p. 42). While in this article, they are referring to workshops and retreats, where



they are spending multiple days together at a time, this can be translated to a group that would meet once or twice a week for a season. They are constantly surrounded by peers that all have the same goal. These groups may have people of different skill levels, but seeing others succeed and support one another is a motivating factor.

On the other hand, Pike (2022) explains some of the difficulties that occur with this age group, “Adult music students can be susceptible to unrealistic expectations, slower to learn and distracted by competing responsibilities.” (p. 23). While this should not deter an adult from starting an instrument, it is important for the student and the teacher to have the same expectations when it comes to their learning. Pike stated that, “Being empathetic means acknowledging that each person's musical Journey will be unique and that the process cannot be rushed; it means being respectful of the adult’s desires, abilities and non-musical pressures that may interfere with or enhance musical learning.” (p. 25). Music in adults can be very valuable, but it is important to understand and be prepared for the commitment it takes to become successful at an instrument.

### **Identity**

This section discusses literature addressing identity within music and how coming together can improve one's musical experience. I will share details on how motivation works within music (Einarson, et al., 2022; Lautzenheiser, 1990; Oliveria, et al., 2021 and Sinek, 2019). Then I will share findings from scholars who studied the sense of belonging within music (Ansdell, 2014; Dingle, et al., 2013; Gouzouasis, 2012; Pendergast, et al., 2009 and Shamah, 2011). Lastly, I will touch on sense of achievement within in music and academia (Arnaud, et al., 2013; Custodero, 2002 and Hallam, et al., 2021).

### ***Motivation***

The Suzuki method of teaching music has become quite popular, and it is based on the idea of parent involvement and them learning alongside their children to help them facilitate at home practice (Einarson, et al., 2022). Suzuki not only has helped students build musical skills, but also gives them skills that will help them have a strong work ethic, but it starts with consistent practicing. “Setting up a practice routine and teaching self-discipline were important considerations for some families... they also focused on fostering a sense of ownership [within] their child and helping to feel empowered for their music learning process.” (Einarson, 2022, p. 644). Einarson et al. overall believes that parental engagement is very beneficial to creating a strong practice ethic and in turn create strong musicians. The question is, when should the adults in their lives stop being so active in motivating their students, and the students begin to motivate themselves? Oliveira, et al. explain their thoughts on student success and motivation. They state, “Thus, if students are to succeed in learning their musical instruments, they must be able to develop and maintain an intense daily practice routine even in the absence of direct assistance from their teachers.” (Oliveira, et al., 2021, p. 106). Once students are self-motivated without outside influence, that is when we can start to see fast and consistent progress.

Lautzenheiser explains different types of motivation among students and how teachers can help or hinder their students’ progress by the type of motivation that is used. He discusses that giving awards to students to create motivation is extrinsic motivation and the student will always expect a reward for doing said task. “We cannot motivate another individual, certainly in any intrinsic way, which is real motivation. We can coerce, manipulate, bribe, coax, threaten, but in every situation the individual is ultimately responsible for the choice to move in a given direction.” (Lautzenheiser, 1990, p. 34). Finding ways to intrinsically motivate our students can

be difficult. We have become a culture based on rewards and breaking free from this is a challenge. As educators, we must set strong examples and expectations for our students. Sinek wrote in their book, *Start with the Why: How Great Leaders Inspire Everyone to Take Action*, the importance it is to be an inspiration to your students. Sinek states, “Those who really lead are able to create a following of people who act not because they were swayed, but because they were inspired. For those who are inspired, the motivation to act is deeply personal” (2019, p. 6). Sinek explains that creating inspiration in others, whether it is your students or those around you, will be grander than trying to extrinsically motivate them through rewards.

***Sense of Belonging.***

Music, whether inside a classroom or in the community, tends to be a place where people can connect with others and find a sense of belonging. Prendergast, et al. (2009) did a study by asking students to write haikus based on music-related questions. One of those questions being “What does music mean to you?” (p. 310) and this is one of the haikus titled “Blank”

‘i just concentrate  
 everything goes away  
 all my worries (yeah)” (p. 310)

This haiku, in only a few words, shows that music is a safe space for this student to have ease of mind and be able to fully engage in their craft. The classroom environment needs to be accepting and forgiving for a student to let go of their worries. Prendergast wrote, “Music *matters* to young people; it matters in profound and existential ways” (p. 313). Creating this musical culture of openness and acceptance of others is what draws and retains musicians from their high school days to a continued music career or hobby as they become adults.

In a study done in Japan within a competitive marching band, students were asked questions about their experiences (Gouzouasis, 2012). “69% of the students believed band festivals give them an opportunity to bond with other band members, and 64% of the respondents recognized that band festival experiences help create a sense of family.” (p. 491). These statistics are quite high and show the impact that music has had on their high school experience. Music has many benefits that I have listed earlier, and this study brings to light the positive social environment that is created. This happens not only in instrumental ensembles but choirs as well. “Being in the choir appeared to have a positive impact on the choir members’ perception of themselves. An increase in confidence was commonly reported” (Dingle, et al., 2013, p. 413).

Having that sense of community allows students and local musicians to feel like they have a voice. Another quote from a participant in the study from the article “‘To be Heard’: The social and mental health benefits of choir singing for disadvantaged adults”, states that, “It gives me confidence and that I am capable and can do things when I try. I am not a failure . . . Yes, I’m feeling quite chuffed with myself belonging to the Transformers [local choir]” (p. 413). This choir has opened their doors for a sensitive population and are working to help build their confidence.

Community music and other community activities are a time for young students to interact with adults besides their parents, in a way they might not have before (Shamah, 2011). They see the adults in a new light, exploring and enjoying hobbies together, creating a service for their community, or experiencing traditions to the area. Shamah explored how rural communities build this engagement and make community activities the center of the town. They explained that “Community-based music programs, gaming clubs, and apprenticeships can provide places for youth to feel valued and observe adults with a sense of purpose, as well as provide space for

them to solidify their goals and figure out how those goals matter beyond themselves” (p. 56). Setting these examples and expectations of involvement within younger members, can really help to strengthen and grow a tightknit community that will support one another.

***Sense of Achievement.***

In order for someone to feel a sense of achievement, they must find their rhythm for learning. “Engagement in tasks whose challenges invite a person’s best efforts generates flow. To sustain this optimal experience, skills must improve to meet new challenges, and in turn, challenges must improve to continue attracting enhanced skills, thus creating an ideal learning situation.” (Custodero, 2002, p. 4) Once a musician locks into this flow, they are able to advance in their learning of any topic – not just music – at a successful rate. Musicians must be continually challenged at a level that is appropriate and will advance their skills (Custodero, 2002).

Students successful in academics tend to have a high success rate in music classes too. In a study researching the success rate of students with and without musical experience by Arnaud, et al. (2013), helped to prove that there is a connection between music and cognition. Most students involved in music class at school perform better in their other classes compared to those not involved in music (Arnaud, et al., 2013). “Each year, the mean grades of the students that had chosen a music course in their curriculum were higher than those of the students that had not chosen music as an optional course. This tendency is true regardless of the topic of the course” (p. 258). When students find success in one area, their confidence in themselves tends to rise. Music is an area where success is more often noticed and complimented. “For successful students, previous positive experiences were reaffirmed by high marks and positive comments” (Hallam, et al., 2021, p. 4)

To better understand the benefits of multigenerational music, it is essential to research the experiences of ensemble members. This will provide insights into why they continue to participate and what benefits they perceive from their involvement. The literature included above lays the groundwork of this research because it helps to better examine my research question: How does multigenerational music making provide benefits to those involved musically, physically, and socially?

In this chapter, Chapter Two, I reviewed the literature related to this study focused on wellness, musical growth and fulfillment, and identity. Moreover, the literature here shows that, while scholars have focused on young students and older adults respectively, there is not a lot of research connecting the two – which is the gap this research hopes to fill. In Chapter Three, I will explain the methodology that I used for my research, how I organized the study, and my method for analysis of the data.

### **Chapter III: Design and Methodology**

The last chapter, I reviewed the preexisting literature about Wellness Musical Growth and Fulfillment, and Identity. In Chapter Three, I will explain the path I took to design this research project and share my methods of analysis. I have separated my project into the following subsections for the ease and understanding of the reader: Process, Participants, Qualitative Research, Data Collection, and Analysis. As I noted in Chapter One, the research question driving this study is: How does participating in a multigenerational community ensemble impact individual musicians and their motivation to continue to be active within the ensemble?

#### **Process**

I began the process for conducting this research by trying to understand the importance, value, and motivation for participating in a community ensemble. I wanted to interview people who have been or are currently in a community band. I reached out via email to those who are currently in the Wausau Symphonic Band with the help of director Dr. Patrick Lawrence. Seven (7) band members accepted my invitation to interview and signed the Informed Consent form (see Appendix A). I interviewed each person only once with audio and video recordings and asked them questions related to their experience. I transcribed each interview using a university-issued online speech-to-text translator to analyze the data.

#### **Participants**

My participants were selected as a sample of convenience. "Convenience sampling is non-probability sampling that is often used for clinical and qualitative research. This sampling technique often selects clinical cases or participants that are available around a location..." (Stratton, 2021, p. 373). This kind of sampling identified participants that are relevant to my

study. A sample of convenience is used in order to find participants that are or have been active in a community band. In my research I was trying to understand the motivation to participate in community music, therefore I used a sample of convenience. To receive accurate data for my research, I needed musicians to answer questions related to their musical experience. In addition, I needed these musicians to play in a community setting which is unpaid. To ensure these requirements were met, the invitation to be interviewed was only sent to current members of the Wausau Symphonic Band. I received seven (7) responses from those interested and organized our interview via email. They all received and signed an Informed Consent form (see Appendix A). I had five (5) female participants, and two (2) male participants. They all had varying occupations and experiences within the music community.

### **Qualitative Research**

This study used qualitative research. “Qualitative research is a research strategy that usually emphasizes words rather than quantification in the collection and analysis of data. (Bryman 2008, p.366). By using qualitative research, I was able to take a smaller sample size and really dive into details. I was able to collect data regarding how people perceive community music and their direct involvement. Qualitative research allows for my study to go in-depth into the motivations of why they continue to be involved in community music and what they experience as a result of their involvement. The methodology that I used was phenomenological research using interviews. “An etymological approach to meaning, outlined below, suggests that “phenomenology” is the study of that which can be experienced.” (Williams, 2021, p. 367). Phenomenological research is the collection of human experiences and how the individual perceives different events. The qualitative information was collected through a single interview



with different individuals. A list of the structured questions asked in every interview are in Appendix B.

### **Data Collection**

Since I conducted a qualitative study, I was able to focus on the specific details of each person and gather a very in-depth view into their music-making instead of skimming the surface with a quantitative study. I used phenomenological studies because the goal of this research was to find the perceived benefits of intergenerational community music making. For each person, this would be slightly different, as everyone has different goals when it comes to music. This allowed for a more individualized approach to uncover their thoughts, feelings, and opinions about being in a group with those of such a large age range. While the group can have musicians under the age of eighteen (18), this study only interviewed those who were over the age of eighteen (18).

My research process required me to select specific musicians. These participants would be asked a set list of questions to better understand their experiences. Follow-up questions were asked to some to help clean up any confusion about their answers. While I kept tangent side conversations to a minimum, I did proceed with some of these discussions to increase participants' comfort and to understand them as a whole human being. These conversations included, but not limited to, stories about their children, spouses, parents, friends or any other loved ones, stories about their pets or their work life, stories about their non-musical experiences or musical experiences not related to community music.

### **Approach Analysis**

My data analysis plan focused on *in vivo* coding. "*In vivo* coding is a form of qualitative data analysis that places emphasis on the actual spoken words of the participants. This form of

coding can be especially helpful when researchers interact with participants from a particular culture or microculture to help highlight how those participants use specific words or phrases in their interactions that might not otherwise be understood when using other forms of coding.” (Manning, 2017, p. 1). After all of my interviews were transcribed, I went through them, and hand coded them by highlighting different ideas with different colors.

As I was coding the transcribed data from each interview, I identified subthemes then grouped each of the subthemes into three (3) categories. I combed through all the interview transcripts individually a second time after I had identified subthemes with the first pass and looked for any answers that fell into one of these nine (9) subthemes. I sorted the interview text by highlighting quotes with a specific color that matched the subtheme to which the quote belonged. A few quotes fell into multiple categories, so they were counted twice. This analysis approach made it simple to understand and track the number of times each participant talked about a specific subject.

Here, in Chapter Three, I explained how I organized and conducted my research project. I discussed the outline of my interview focus data collection process and shared my individualized analysis approach of coding for *in vivo* themes. In Chapter Four I will report my findings.

## Chapter IV: Findings

In the preceding three chapters, I introduced the study on the motivation behind participation in multigenerational community music, provided a literature review synopsis related to the study, and described the methodology along with my customized approach to analysis. Chapter Four presents the findings from the collected data. I interviewed seven (7) individuals who participated in a local community band, the Wausau Symphonic Band, to comprehend their motivations for participation. Below are the results of this data collection.

### Subthemes

Nine (9) subthemes emerged throughout the interviews. They were age gap, emotional wellness, networking, musical learning, physical wellness, sense of belonging, sense of identity, sense of ownership, and social wellness. Below I detail each subtheme and the number of times they occurred in participant interviews.

#### *Age Gap.*

Participants referenced Age Gap anytime they mentioned someone's age in general, playing with family members, or younger/older members. Every participant mentioned the age gap for a total reference number of 34. It is important to note that I did ask questions specific to the age gap, so this is not a surprise that they all talked about it. Participants mentioned seniority within the group, some thought it mattered and some did not. Some discussed the age at which it becomes difficult to physically play, and some talked about how some high school students think they should be playing a more difficult part. A lot of high schoolers that seek out additional playing opportunities might be considered leaders in their high school band and expect to receive first part or the solos within a community group. It was said that these students do not realize the

talented musicians that are in their community. This can cause tension between the different generations.

### ***Emotional Wellness.***

Emotional moments were a subtheme, with every participant mentioning it at least once. There was quite a range of emotions experienced within this ensemble. Music was thought of as a distraction from the stressors of life, it could lift their mood or allow them to feel complex emotions, or how the group was a source of support during challenging times. Everyone agreed that being a part of a community ensemble has allowed them to express their emotions. One participant said, “I tend to be depressed a lot. Being involved in music keeps me from being all mopey, thinking too much of myself.” Another participant explained that, “But also, the blue type emotive things, just that gamut of emotion that isn’t a day-to-day thing. It gives you a chance to get into more of the broadness of humanity.”

### ***Networking.***

One theme I did not expect to find within this study was Networking and Building Connections for other music gigs. Five (5) out of the seven (7) participants mentioned how they were asked to play in or found other gigs to play in due to being in a community band. Some of these gigs were other voluntary bands but some were paid gigs. One participant said, “I think as somebody that’s semi-professional in the state of Wisconsin, I would say a lot of my gigs have come from having played in a community band for free.”

### ***Musical Learning.***

Another prominent subtheme was Musical Learning. This encompassed any music education, formal or informal. Musical Learning was mentioned at least four (4) times by each person and referenced forty two (42) times. Participants described learning from their grade

school days, college days, and any learning that took place as an adult from peers. It is important to note that all of the participants were finished with their formal education. Some participants also described their music education philosophy that I put inside this subtheme. Many participants mentioned a variation of music being a lifelong journey.

### ***Physical Wellness.***

The physical implications of participating in community music were a commonly mentioned topic garnering fifteen (15) references between all participants. They referenced this theme by either its' name, breathing, finger dexterity, muscles, or keeping their mind sharp. A lot of participants agreed that while it did not have major physical benefits for them, it was a great way to work on fine motor skills. A couple mentioned that by continuing to play their wind instrument, it has improved their breathing. One participant stated, "When I do practice more, my breathing is better."

### ***Sense of Belonging.***

There were fifteen (15) references of Sense of Belonging. Participants mentioned this by name, feeling accepted by others, or that these are their "people". One participant talked about a band member that had devoted many years to playing in the community band. "There are times where we have dedicated a concert to a person... We dedicated a concert to him because he had played in it for many, many years." Some expressed their feelings of belonging by explaining their relationship with members of the band.

### ***Sense of Ownership.***

Sense of Ownership has only three (3) references. Participants referenced this by saying the name of the theme or taking part in the ensemble by being in a leadership role. There was not a lot of elaboration on this topic, and it is the least mentioned out of all the subthemes.

***Sense of Purpose.***

Sense of Purpose had eleven (11) references. Participants talked about accomplishment, teamwork, community, and motivation and how it leads to a sense of purpose for their life. Many people I interviewed are retired, and the participants mentioned that community bands give them a reason to leave their homes weekly. It was mentioned multiple times that music allows them to be active within their community.

***Social Wellness.***

Social Wellness was one of the most often mentioned themes with thirty (30) references among all participants. Participants referenced this theme by its name, mentioning spending time with others whether it is inside or outside of the community ensemble, or many other ways that they socialize. Every single participant mentioned that community music is a way to socialize or is a social outlet for them. There were lots of mentions of making friends within the group and that they spend time together outside of music making as well. One participant said “I think when I first started it was really an outlet for me, was my night out. Instead of bowling, I went to symphony.”

**Overarching Themes**

The three main themes, into which the subthemes above were grouped included: Wellness, Musical Growth and Fulfillment, and Identity. All nine (9) of the subthemes listed above fit into one of these three (3) main themes. Wellness includes the subthemes of social, emotional, and physical. Musical growth and fulfillment included the subthemes of musical learning, networking, and age gap. Lastly identity was the overarching theme for sense of ownership, sense of purpose, and sense of belonging. Moreover, these overarching themes

encompass the main ideas referenced over and over by the participants throughout their interviews.

***Wellness.***

The subthemes of social, emotional, and physical fit very well into an overarching theme of Wellness. The idea that music has an impact on one's overall well-being. There were fifty nine (59) references within the theme of wellness relating to the subthemes. Every single participant mentioned all three (3) subthemes at least once. The participants mentioned the theme of Wellness an average of eight (8) times. In order of frequency, the subthemes Social, Physical, and Emotional, were some of the most mentioned out of all nine (9) subthemes. In reference to Social Wellness, a trombone player said, “But the bond you have with the people that you're performing with, when you're sharing and building, putting those musical puzzles together and everybody contributing their thing. You get to appreciate one another. Just the camaraderie of the whole thing.”

***Social Wellness.***

Social Wellness was the most discussed topic. Every participant mentioned the socialization aspect of being in a community band and some even mentioned it being more important than the music itself. A musician discussed her feelings of being a part of an ensemble in comparison to being a soloist, “I don't want it to be a job where I just come in there and I do my thing and I leave. Like I said, for me come to realize in life that I'm energized by people. That's why of course, I love playing an ensemble and why I truly hate to be a soloist.”

***Emotional Wellness.***

Music can drive our emotions, so it was not a surprise when every participant brought up their emotions relating to either playing in the band itself or music in general. “Music almost

always starts from inspiration, and your ultimate goal is to convey that feeling through you as the performer to your audience” (Green & Campbell, 2009, p. 3). Some participants discussed their care for their fellow musicians, the excitement they have when they see them after a year apart, and how their peers have taken care of them after a tragic event. There are many ways to express and share emotions through a connected group and music.

### ***Physical Wellness.***

Performing music is a physical task combining fine motor skills, gross motor skills, and rhythmic breathing. Some participants discussed the benefits of participating in a community band in relation to their physical health. One horn player mentioned, “You're still working the embouchure muscles and you're still working your diaphragm and everything like that so you're in some relative shape.”

### ***Musical Growth and Fulfillment.***

The subthemes of Musical Learning, Networking, and Age Gap all fit into the main theme of Musical Growth and Fulfillment. As musicians, we are never done learning, growing, and connecting with others. These subthemes are all ways that we connect with one another and music.

### ***Musical Learning.***

The statements that fit inside of this subtheme are anything in relation to learning in a musical sense. Some of those being past formal or informal education, learning through a peer, being a teaching, and the future of music education for themselves and others. A participant stated, “I believe that music is a lifelong thing. I always told my students, don't put your horn away after high school, you can continue to play. I strongly feel that I wanted to keep on doing it”.



***Networking.***

As musicians, networking is vital to getting future performances whether they are paid or voluntary. Community bands are typically voluntary and are meant as a fun activity. Inside of these bands are community members that regularly do paid performances. By being a part of a community band and making connections with other local musicians, a lot of participants mentioned being offered paid performances. A participant summarized this very well with this explanation, “You make contacts. If you're looking to do more in music, whether it's playing, going to concerts, writing music, whatever. There are people there that can point you in the right direction. You make contacts because of things, [by] word of mouth. They don't put out a notice saying we need players”.

***Age Gap.***

The subtheme of Age Gap refers to the age difference between community band members. There can be quite large differences in ages and each participant had a different perspective on those around them. Some saw the age gap to be helpful and allowed them to learn about topics inside and outside of music that they otherwise would not have known. Others discussed the difficulty of communication between the groups and how both older and younger musicians can have a false view of the other group.

***Identity.***

The third main theme that emerged from this study was Identity. It included Sense of Belonging, Sense of Purpose, and Sense of Ownership. The participants explained how they identify with the group and how it helps give them everyday purpose. Not every participant mentioned all three of these subthemes.

***Sense of Belonging.***

Sense of Belonging was mentioned fourteen (14) times from six (6) out of the seven (7) participants. There was mention of the subtheme by name, by feeling well connected to the group, as well as the feeling that they have the ability to be a part of community music as long as they wish. One participant stated, “I feel like I found my people again.”

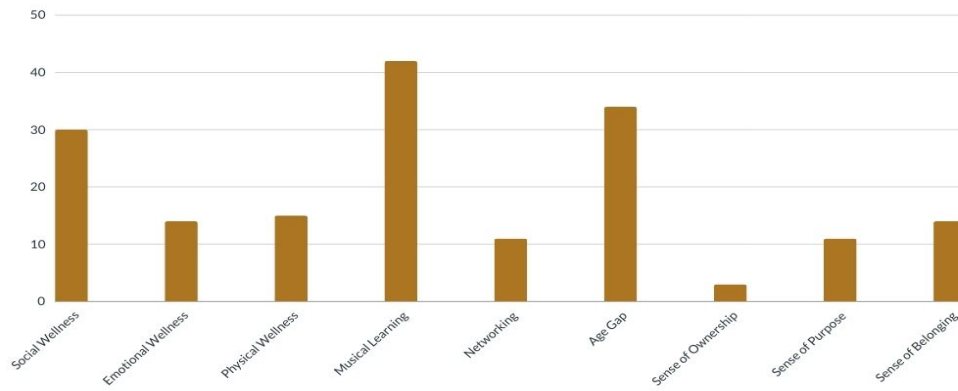
***Sense of Purpose.***

Sense of Purpose was mentioned eleven (11) times throughout the seven (7) interviews. Each person saw their relationship to the band a little differently. Some really thank the program for helping their mental health and giving them reasons to be active. For others it gives them hope for the future. “I don't think it has helped me in my personal life. Other than seeing like [another band member] who's 90, he's still playing. Maybe I won't be just sitting in a rocking chair twiddling my thumbs”.

***Sense of Ownership.***

This subtheme was the smallest of all of them with only being mentioned three (3) times by three (3) different participants. This is depicted in figure 4.1 as it lists the number of occurrences per subtheme. This included being identified by name or by having a leadership role within the group. One participant stated they had multiple leadership roles over the years. Another one mentioned being the director of a community band in the past. Sense of ownership also included the need to pass knowledge and tradition of the group to new and younger members.

## AMOUNT OF TIMES THE SUBTHEMES WERE MENTIONED



**Figure 4.1 :** Subtheme Occurrences

In this chapter, as you can see in Figure 4.1, subthemes that emerged from participant interviews included Social Wellness, Emotional Wellness, Physical Wellness, Musical Learning, Networking, Age Gap, Sense of Ownership, Sense of Purpose, and Sense of Belonging. The top three (3) mentioned subthemes from most to least were Musical Learning, Age Gap, and Social Wellness. The three (3) least mentioned from least to most were Sense of Ownership, Networking, and Sense of Purpose with the second two being tied. I laid out these different subthemes that emerged and organized them into three main themes of Wellness, Musical Growth and Fulfillment, and Identity. In the next chapter, I will discuss the implications of these findings.

## Chapter V: Discussion and Implications

Throughout this paper, I have covered the purpose and definitions of this study, relevant literature, the design and methodologies used, and preliminary quotes and findings. Now, as I delve into the analysis, I will examine and interpret quotes from interviewees in relation to our three primary themes: Wellness, Musical Growth and Fulfillment, and Identity. I will discuss how these quotes relate to each theme and highlight similarities and differences among participants' responses. Finally, I will present my findings and discuss their implications for the field of music.

### Wellness

Wellness covers three main subthemes: Social, Emotional, and Physical. Social benefits were one of the most talked about topics as participants were being interviewed. It is prevalent that attending community band is a social hour for a lot of our participants or a place to build friendships. Many talked about participating in the band because a friend had invited them or that they have made new friends with those that participate. One retired music teacher stated that they enjoy being a part of community bands because they "have made some good friends... it's fun because a number of us are all in the same groups. We play, we'll get done with a concert and go 'Okay, See you tomorrow!'" It allows her to stay connected with her friends in a consistent manner that does not feel like a burden. Another mentioned, "In the summer I play almost every single day. Like I said, without music I would be a very lonely person." Music gives them the social connection that can be hard to find as adults.

Physical benefits were not mentioned as many times as social benefits, but still were discussed often by participants. Some of the main benefits being finger dexterity, better breath support, and keeping the mind sharp. Participating in music involves many different tasks at one

time. Physically playing the instrument involves the movement of air, your fingers/arms, as well as changing your embouchure as needed. This is combined with the act of reading music that involves comprehending what is written on the page, keeping a steady beat, watching the conductor, and being responsive of the ensemble sound as a whole. It is safe to say that performing music requires a lot of the body and mind. One participant mentioned that “after years of not playing music [and coming back to it], I felt like I was opening a new portion of my brain that was maybe sitting dormant for a while.” Music has been known to activate many parts of the brain, “... music perception engages brain networks related to action, emotion and learning in addition to the auditory system” (Vuust, et al., 2022, p. 287).

Emotional moments were mentioned multiple times throughout most of the interviews. I will not call them benefits because some of the emotions were considered sad. One horn player mentioned coming back to the community band in his hometown after being away for a few years at college. He was excited to see some of the older members he had grown close to in the community band, but he was saddened to learn that some of them had passed away. “And then when you return, you're expecting them to be there, but life continued on for them as well.” There was another participant that suffered the loss of her husband, who was a bass drum player in the same community band with her for many years. “It was very difficult losing my husband and to go to band the first summer without him and to play was very hard. I took his drum beater, and I gave it to the band. There were just so many memories and everything, but also the people that I knew there were supportive. Without play[ing], I would have been very lonely and probably more depressed.” Being part of the music community, although it was hard to attend at first without her husband, gave her the support she needed during the difficult time in her life. Other participants mentioned being in a better mood after playing in an ensemble, or that it

releases some of their anxiety. For different people, music communities create different emotions or relief from emotions.

### **Musical Growth and Fulfillment**

Inside of the overarching theme of Musical Growth and Fulfillment, as described in the last chapter, subthemes included Networking, Musical Learning, and the effects of Age Gap. Being part of larger community ensembles allows musicians to connect with people they might not otherwise have met. They could learn from one another, create connections for other musical activities, form new friendships, and interact with age groups they might not typically be around. This main theme was the most mentioned among the participants.

None of the questions asked in the interviews related directly to networking, so it was interesting that five (5) out of seven (7) participants discussed it at least once if not more times during their interview. Some mentioned how they were recruited to play in the community band. “She [current ensemble member] took my name and sent me information, when they were going to start rehearsing, that's when I started playing. Then a number of years later they needed bass drummer and I said, ‘Well, I think my husband played bass drum when he was in the Navy.’ And so, I came home and told him about it, and he started playing bass drum.” By someone recruiting the interviewee, she in turn was able to recruit her husband, and the chain of involvement keeps going. Another participant said that she is “always trying to recruit people” because she enjoys playing so much. Others talked about getting paid gigs from other members that play in the community band. By being available and seen within the community on a volunteer level, it allowed them the opportunity to get paid to do what they love.

There were many discussions on the education of the participants. Some are current or retired music teachers, some are professors or work at a university, and some have nothing to do

with music or education at all. One thing they all had in common is that they all played music in high school. Some had taken time off and brushed up on their skills years later in life to join community band, others have been actively involved in music their whole lives. One clarinetist went to school for music but found herself in a rut “After college, I was so sick of music and practicing that I took years off, didn't get my clarinet out at all, and I always thought, ‘oh, someday I'm going to come back to it’” Eventually she did return to playing music for a community band. She lost her sense of passion for music, but it never left, it just needed some time to heal.

Several interview questions focused on age gaps within the community band. I sought feedback on how different age groups collaborated in this setting, given that many activities are typically divided by age. Many comments were positive, noting that younger musicians look up to the veterans for guidance and advice, while the veterans turn to the younger students for new techniques or approaches to music. “For me, I don't have that much contact anymore with younger people. It is nice to have that contact and for the younger people to have them see us in a different light.” There are not as many opportunities for different generations to come together in the same environment and work towards a common goal. This has allowed for that generational barrier to be broken down, even if only for a short period. One participant mentioned both sides of the age gap, and how it has positively impacted her, “I don't have much family around here, so having the younger kids around and being a mentor for them is nice. Having the older people around to take place of the parents that I don't have is really great.” In a sense, this community has become her family.

## **Identity**

The last theme of identity encompasses the way the band members feel about their participation and relationship within the ensemble. They feel that they are bringing enjoyment and entertainment to those around them while also giving themselves fulfillment with their daily lives. While it has less direct mentions specifically about the subthemes of Sense of Ownership, Purpose, and Belonging in comparison to other subthemes, the actions of these participants showed their feelings. For example, Sense of Ownership only had three (3) mentions but if these seven (7) participants did not have a sense of ownership within their music making community, they would not have reached out to be a part of this study. They feel pride in what they are accomplishing within the group, and they were willing to share those feelings with a stranger.

Having a sense of purpose is important for everyone, but especially those who are retired. Careers are most people's sense of purpose but once completed, they must fill that void with something else. A retired band director iterated that "The older people that may be retired and don't have the work that is giving them an essential purpose, this keeps it going." Music has given them a duty to their community, to provide music for others around them without the fees or extra travel. It was stated in an interview that "it's a service in a sense, for the community, for those people that don't play music but still love to enjoy it. It's a great way to go out and see those without paying the big-ticket price of going to the larger ensemble." They are making music accessible to all and creating role models for children that experience these performances who might not otherwise hear live music.

Lastly, there is a sense of belonging, knowing you'll always be accepted year after year in a place that unites you with others who share similar interests. Whether that is in high school, college, or community band, a participant felt that "all the music people were my people." She felt a strong connection with fellow musicians, knowing that was where she truly belonged. A



different person, mentioned earlier about going to college and then returning to his hometown band, stated that when he returned after five years that, “it was really cool to be like just accepted again. Like you never really left, or you went away for a period of time.” Everyone understood the rollercoaster of life and was simply happy to have him back.

## **Implications**

### ***Band Directors.***

Community music, for all the reasons listed above, is a phenomenal activity to be a part of or even lead. Most large cities have their own community band, typically they will rehearse during the summer inside some fine arts building. Smaller communities do not have as many opportunities to make music. Band directors – we can create these opportunities and it can benefit your program as well. By getting support from your administration, using your band room during the summer, offering rehearsals and a performance space will not only make your band more visible to the community, but it also keeps your students playing throughout the summer. It will also allow your community members to become leaders and mentors for your young musicians. You might be surprised by the talent that is hidden within your town.

### ***Funding Organizations.***

Finding someone to sponsor the community band, might be a tricky task, but I promise there is someone who will. Music is so prevalent inside the school system, and people cherish their youth and want to be supportive of activities like music. Depending on the culture in your area, you can reach out to local businesses, the city, the school district, or even individuals. Offer to support their business, or maybe team up to create a larger event out of the concert. Example: food trucks donate to the program and in exchange can serve food before and after the concert. You might have to get creative, offer people the chance to sponsor one piece of music, or the

salary of the director for one season. Avoid requiring fees for playing in the group or to attend concerts. Instead, place donation buckets at the concert to cover these costs.

### ***The Field of Music Education.***

As music educators, our goal should always be to create a welcoming environment and instill a lifelong passion for music in our students. By promoting community ensembles and emphasizing their benefits, we can achieve our objective as educators. We know that not many of our students will continue into a career of music, but if we can continue their hobby and passion for supporting music and being active in their community, we have done our jobs well. It is not fair of me to ask every band director to give up their summers to run these community ensembles, but we can start the conversation and find someone who is willing to put in the time and effort.

### ***Future Research.***

In the future, I will repeat this study but focus on a different demographic. I would focus on younger adults to gain their perspective on community bands. Why don't young adults participate more often, especially in communities with a thriving high school band program. I would also like to focus on adults that did not begin a music career until later in their adulthood. How has learning an instrument influenced and affected their lives? How has the ensemble added value to their experience?

### **Conclusion**

Throughout this paper, we have explored the benefits and effects of participating in a community band. The main themes identified in the interviews were Wellness, Musical Growth and Fulfillment, and Identity. These findings, through interviews and supported within the review of literature, suggest that community music offers a highly positive experience for most

individuals and is a valuable addition to any community. By continuing to support and fund community bands, we create a safe environment where musicians of all ages can come together, enriching their own lives and making a difference in the lives of others.

As we continue life's journey, take a moment to notice all the instances where music has enhanced experiences. Music often improves our lives subconsciously, becoming obvious only when it's absent—like during a quiet car ride or a completely silent movie. Now, imagine life without music for those who have found their home in it. We must continue to provide musical outlets for people of all demographics, everywhere.

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## **Appendix A**

### **Consent letter**

#### **Informed Consent Form**

Emilie Anderson, a master's Student at the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point, would appreciate your participation in a research study designed to determine the benefits of community music within multigenerational musicians. You are being asked to complete a zoom interview that should take up no more than 30 minutes of your time. Your participation is completely voluntary. The benefit of this study is the knowledge of how participating in an ensemble can enhance the mental, social, and musical skills of a person.

We anticipate no risk to you as a result of your participation in this study other than the inconvenience of the time to complete the interview. You could, however, experience some discomfort if you have had an uncomfortable interaction with a peer musician and completing the interview causes you to remember this. You may choose to not answer a question or end the interview at any time if you feel uncomfortable continuing.

While there may be no immediate benefit to you as a result of your participation in this study, it is hoped that we may gain valuable information about your involvement of community music.

We feel that a one-on-one interview is the quickest and easiest method for obtaining this information to gather the in-depth experience. You may also choose not to participate as an alternative. The interview will be recorder for analyzing purposes.

The information that you give us in the interview will be kept anonymous. We will not release information that could identify you. All recorded interviews will be kept in a password protect OneDrive of Emilie Anderson and will only be accessible by Emilie Anderson and her

faculty advisor, Rachel Brashier. Any information shared during publication will not contain names or identifying features.

Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. If you want to withdraw from the study, at any time, you may do so without penalty or loss of benefit entitled. Only anonymous information provided will be retained. All identifiable information will be removed from the study and destroyed or deleted.

Once the study is completed, you may receive the results of the study. If you would like these results, or if you have any questions in the meantime, please contact:

Emilie Anderson

School of Education

University of Wisconsin – Stevens Point

Stevens Point, WI 54481

(920)540-6575

[Eande395@uwsp.edu](mailto:Eande395@uwsp.edu)

If you have any complaints about your treatment as a participant in this study or believe that you have been harmed in some way by your participation, please call or write:

David Barry, PhD

IRB Chair

Associate Professor, Sociology

2100 Main St.

Old Main 208



University of Wisconsin, Stevens Point and Extension

Stevens Point, WI 54481

715.346.3799

[irb@uwsp.edu](mailto:irb@uwsp.edu)

Although Dr. Barry will ask your name, all complaints are kept in confidence.

I agree to participate in this anonymous interview via Zoom

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Appendix B**

### **Interview Questions**

1. How long have you been participating in a community band and why did you first join?
2. How old were you when you joined and how old are you now?
3. What are your personal joys of being part of this specific band?
4. Would you describe your main reason(s) for continuing to participate? Some examples:  
musical aspect, social aspect, health benefits, etc.
5. How has participating in the band influenced your emotional well-being and overall happiness?
6. What is your most memorable moment from participating in a community band?
7. In what ways, if any, has being a part of a community band impacted your sense of belonging?
8. What challenges have you faced with age gaps within the group?
9. What benefits have you experienced from the age gaps?
10. Do you recall any moments of a younger and older member growing and learning together musically? Either of yourself or others.
11. Has being involved in a group motivated you to be more active and intentional with your music making?
12. Have you noticed any health benefits from being a part of a band?
13. How has the experience of being a part of a multigenerational band helped your personal life?

14. What advice would you give to someone considering joining a multigeneration music group like this, based on your own experiences and gains in terms of social connections, emotional well-being, and musical growth?