

The Need for a Community Band

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Theory & Method

Situated Learning (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Rose, 1999; Illeris, 2009)
Community of Practice (Wenger, 1998; Boud & Middleton, 2003)
Case Study (Stake, 2005)
Community Musicians (Higgins, 2012)
Lifelong Learning (Manite, 2012)
Musician Social Support (Carucci, 2012)
Identity (Dabback, 2008)
Service to the Community (Vblen, 2002)
Aesthetic Responses (Ruggeri, 2003)

Results

Community of Practice:

"My life is a series of music memories...all of my current best friends I met through band. It allowed me to go places and see things outside of my hometown. It really opened my eyes, broadened my experiences and helped to shape me as a person."

"I was involved in all things music from band, orchestra and choir. I continued that trend through elementary, middle and high school. After high school, I would only consider a college as long as I could be in band there, as well."

"Music is my life. Always has been, always will be. I love the people I make music with. They turn into lifelong friends."

Service to Community:

"a few weeks later someone stopped into my office to say that he was starting a community band and would I hang a flyer in the county kiosk. I told him I'd do one better and join. I also jumped on the band wagon to help recruit."

"We learned that people wanted to hear a community band in town. They brought chairs and were waiting for us to start. The community has been very supportive and it's been amazing. We didn't realize we'd have that kind of support as a new group."

Results (continued)

Music Connections:

“There's a balance between fun and serious and I think this group meets that.”

“I do this for me, as my stress relief for the week. It's my way to unwind and just be me. Sometimes I don't get to just be me with my high-profile job.”

“The majority of us joined as a way to make music and do something for ourselves. Our time away from reality for a bit.”

Abstract

Community music ensembles, activities for musicians to engage in a wide range of musical contexts (Higgins, 2012), exist when common attentiveness is shared by participants in a community of practice (Wenger, 1998). Learning is situated in a specific context and is mediated using tools such as musical instruments within a particular environment (Lave & Wenger, 1991). These ensembles can provide participation for lifelong learners (Mantie, 2012), musician social support (Carucci, 2012), and identity (Dabback, 2008). These groups may exist for self-expressed interests (Bowles, 1991), unique repertoire/performance experiences (Long, 2014), service to the community (Vblen, 2002), and for aesthetic responses (Ruggeri, 2003). Community bands, made mostly of volunteers, function only when continued satisfaction is met in active participants. The purpose of this case study (Stake, 2003) was to examine how community musicians chose to participate and start a community band. Results indicated participants focus their involvement with the community of practice of a community band to serve the local community, since such experience provided satisfying music connections.

This research addressed the following questions: How can community bands appeal to participants? What attributes motivate, increase, and start participation in community bands?