

# Love for music leads to scholarship for local student



Kevin Connelly, Shreveport Times 4:20 p.m. CDT April 24, 2016



(Photo: Douglas Collier, The Times)

Matthew Davidson's love for music reverberates far beyond the walls of his makeshift studio in the dining room of his family's house.

It will soon be heard in the country music capital of the world, Nashville, Tennessee.

The senior at Caddo Magnet High School is headed to Belmont University in the fall to pursue a career and life in the music industry. Last week, Davidson received news that he would be getting some help financially thanks to a scholarship award from the National Federation of Independent Business.

Davidson was among 100 winners nationally of the Young Entrepreneur Foundation Scholarship, earning \$2,000 toward college costs. His business, Matthew Davidson LLC, was the lone recipient in Louisiana.

"It's an honor to be awarded a scholarship, especially for something I've put a lot of time into," Davidson said. "Any amount helps when it comes to paying for college."

Matthew Davidson LLC is a business he launched when his band started getting more and more playing gigs. With the help of his parents, Alan and Ella, who are certified public accountants, and a local attorney to ensure the paperwork was handled properly, Davidson was a small business owner before he started high school.

Then again, when a teenager's favorite musical artists are The Beatles, ZZ Top, Creedence Clearwater Revival and Eric Clapton, it should come as no surprise he's wise beyond his years.

Davidson's love for music emerged early thanks to long road trips listening to his dad's CDs or dancing around the house with a toy guitar to "The Wiggles" on VHS. His parents first took notice of their son's musical talent when Davidson was 7 years old. That's when they got him his first real guitar.

"He was just blessed with a gift," his mother Ella said. "And we love music so we were happy to encourage it."

His band's first performance was in June 2010 on the patio at El Chico in Madison Park. Davidson also played in Caddo Magnet's jazz band for three years and played in the high school musical performances of "Grease" and "The Wiz".

Davidson said the teachers and administration at Caddo Magnet have always been very supportive of his passion for music and really helped him manage missing time for performances with his schoolwork. That helped lead him to his next opportunity at Belmont University.

One of the main attractions to Belmont for the Davidsons, besides the great location to Nashville's Music Row, was its commercial music program.

"I love jazz and classical music, but my main thing is blues and rock," Davidson said. "At Belmont with the commercial music program, you can do that and get involved in the music business."

He visited other schools around the Nashville area, as well as a few music schools in Texas, but everyone agreed Belmont was the right place.

"We realized if he was going to make a career of this, he needed to be closer to where the action is," his father Alan said. "We didn't really want him to have just the music degree. We wanted him to have a business or some other degree to go along with it, because everybody's not going to be Taylor Swift."

While Davidson won't be releasing a country music album any time soon, he loves to play and listen to music. He also tries to write as much music as he can in his free time. He's released two extend plays, or EPs, of original music and plans to put out one more this summer before he leaves for college.

While his passion is up on stage under the bright lights, or jamming out in his parents dining room, his future is even brighter in Nashville. His more than 350 performances has prepared him well for the next stage.

“There’s so many opportunities for other music careers,” Ella said. “Whether its publishing, being an agent, a producer, working for a music venue, there’s opportunities to do whatever.”

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