

Class of 2023 – Senior Spotlight

BHS Band Class of 2023

<i>Emilee Ament</i>	<i>Elizabeth Joque</i>
<i>Karlton Anderson</i>	<i>Jada Klecatsky</i>
<i>Jayley Andresen</i>	<i>Dylan Kowalke</i>
<i>Madeleine Archer</i>	<i>Ashtyn Kubista</i>
<i>Nathan Bakken</i>	<i>Mason Kuepers</i>
<i>Abigail Benson</i>	<i>Joshua Larson</i>
<i>Carlia Boggs</i>	<i>Mikayla Lekatz</i>
<i>Haylie Bradley</i>	<i>Beau Lindley</i>
<i>Jacob Brodie</i>	<i>Nathan Lokken</i>
<i>Nicholas Buffetta</i>	<i>Mason Miller</i>
<i>Hailey Cronquist</i>	<i>Chloe Marohn</i>
<i>Anne Cook</i>	<i>Samuel Mattson</i>
<i>Alexandria Dwyer</i>	<i>Ethan Nash</i>
<i>Timothy Fox</i>	<i>Myra Neumann</i>
<i>Caitlyn Garnhardt</i>	<i>Steven Selisker</i>
<i>Caden Hins</i>	<i>Payton Simonet</i>
<i>Gavin Hoelzel</i>	<i>Katherine Stadum</i>
<i>Jordan Hunnicutt</i>	<i>Brayden Tollefson</i>
<i>Ellie Jensen</i>	<i>Katelyn Welliver</i>
<i>Maxwell Johnson-Ding</i>	<i>Harison Woodman</i>

Emilee Ament - I want to thank my dad, whose support never faltered throughout the years and who made the greatest effort to go to every concert. I also want to thank my band directors Fogderud and Sommersness, for their knowledge and encouragement was the only reason I could succeed with my many musical challenges. For next year, I plan to work for a funeral service to find out if it is right for me before pursuing higher education in the field. The main highlight of my high school years will always be band. It was different than any other class, and I found that the energy and atmosphere was a pleasant contrast. It also taught me how to face challenges, as well as showing me the satisfaction of overcoming them.

Karlton Anderson - I'd like to thank my parents, Mr. Fogderud, Mr. Somersness and all of my other band directors, and Mrs. Fogderud and Mr. TH for trombone lessons and tips. I'm going down to Luther in Decorah, Iowa to study Spanish, History and music or something like that and I'm hoping to play a lot of trombone there, and by the way it's in a really beautiful part of Iowa. My band experience was pretty great. No matter what was happening in life and school, I've always been able to go to band and reset for the rest of the day. Some pretty epic trips this last year too where I've become better friends with some awesome people and I've learned a lot of cool music stuff from some legends in the industry.

Jayley Andresen - Thank you to the Brainerd band program for helping me grow over the past 7 years and for providing me with countless friends and wonderful experiences. It has always provided me with a place to perform and be creative. I can't wait to continue playing in the future!

Madeleine Archer - I'd like to thank my elementary and middle school band teacher, Mrs. Binsfeld, who told me I should play the bass clarinet before I could even get a sound out of the mouthpiece, as well as Fogderud and Ms. Olsen, who both made me care about the music and the playing instead of it just being something I was good at. Next year, I'll be continuing in the Gustavus Adolphus College band.

Nathan Bakken - I would like to thank my parents for supporting me throughout my education. I plan on going to NDSU for a degree in microbiology. I have had a lot of fun in band and have learned a lot of important things for life from band.

Abigail Benson - I want to thank my mom for dealing with my clarinet squeaks for so long and all of my band teachers who inspired me to keep playing throughout the many stages of my life. Next year I will be continuing my music experience by going for my bachelor of music in music education and a minor in Spanish Language. I have truly had the best band experience which is why I participate in 2 jazz bands and wind symphony. I think that band really made my high school experience better and has made me more passionate for music.

Carlia Boggs - I want to thank my family for always supporting me through all of my endeavors. I will be continuing my schooling at the University of Mary to study psychology. I have made so many friends over these past years and will always value the memories made. Through hardships during my high school experience, band has been my outlet for creativity and I will miss what has become family to me.

Haylie Bradley - I want to thank my family for supporting me and encouraging me through the tough trials and tribulations of my high school career. I want to thank them for coming to every concert and praising my playing, even if they so rarely hear it. I, most of all, also thank myself for pushing through the discouraging thoughts and striving to be great in what I choose to do. Next year, I am planning on working and reevaluating my life's trajectory so that I can be happy with where I end up. Finally, my thoughts on my band experience can only be described as an upward climb to where I am now, but an enjoyable one that I hope I get the privilege to continue once I make my way into college. Of course, the teachers and fellow students are what really made it fun- rather than frustrating as learning an

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instrument and new music tends to make you feel. I'm so happy that I got to be a part of this music experience throughout these years. I will miss it.

Jacob Brodie - Thank you to Mr. Fogderud and Mr. Sommerness for making my years with the band so much fun. Band was always the highlight of my day.

Nicholas Buffetta - First I would like to thank my middle school band teacher for being the most amazing and talented teacher that I know. She taught me so much about the trumpet and I wouldn't be where I am today without her. Thank you for all the laughs and good times we had during my band lessons. I would also like to thank my parents for always being there to support me and pushing me keep playing. I would also like to thank my two amazing band directors who have taught me so much throughout my high school band career. Next year I will be attending Montana State University Bozeman. I plan to continue playing my trumpet in their jazz bands and any group I can be apart of. My band experience has been awesome throughout my four years of high school. I have learned and progressed so much as a musician. My high school experience would be much different if I didn't do band. So many memories were made that I will never forget.

Hailey Cronquist - I want to thank my general band experience for its impact in my life. Band, from the time I joined in 6th grade, has been the one true constant within my school career. It brought me Fogderud and Sommerness, who have most certainly been some of the largest adult influences in my life, and to them I'd like to thank so greatly. It has influenced my perspective on life and has framed my mindset. It has brought into my life so many of my closest relationships, and for that I'll forever be grateful. I would not have replaced this experience for anything else.

Alexandria Dwyer - Thank you to my parents for always supporting me throughout every year of band and going to every single one of my concerts. Also, I want to thank my band directors for being so encouraging and helpful in my learning of music. Lastly, I'd like to thank my band mates for making band one of the best parts of my day. I am so thankful for all of the people that I've gotten to know throughout all of my years in music. I will definitely miss our amazing band community. I have learned so many valuable lessons and will take everything that I've been given from my experiences with me into my future.

Timothy Fox - Band has made me a person who looks forward to life. It made me realize what learning is and how to do it.

Caitlyn Garnhardt - Thank you to my parents and the rest of my family for supporting me. Thank you to my band

directors and band mates for challenging me and encouraging my musical progression. My time in band has not only shaped me as a musician, but as a person overall and I will forever be grateful.

Caden Hins - I want to thank the band directors for being kind and inspiring people, next year I'll most likely be working instead of school but my experience in band has been something to remember and has helped me grow to become a better person

Gavin Hoelzel - Throughout my time in band, I want to thank my parents. They always supported me in music and pushed me to pursue my interests and passion. I also want to thank my fellow percussionists. They always made coming to band one of the best parts of my day, and acted like a family to me. Next year I will be attending St. Olaf college with the intent to major in chemistry and run on their Men's Track and Field Team. Band has been, without question, one of the best high school experiences I've had. The effort put in by our directors shows in every aspect of our performance. These groups have been so special to me, and the work put in by each person is incredible. Having a space to go to, knowing everyone cares about each other and the music is something I will not forget. I cannot thank this incredible program enough for helping me develop into the musician I am.

Jordan Hunnicutt - For all of my time in the Brainerd Music Program and in Wind Symphony I would like to thank Mr. Fogderud. I could never have asked for a better band director. He has taught me so much and helped me to develop my passion for band and music. I would also like to thank my parents and family for all the support throughout the years and for coming to every single band concert. Next year I will be attending Concordia College in Moorhead to study Biology and I will be continuing band. I could not have asked for a better band experience at BHS and I'm so very grateful for all of the amazing opportunities I have been given because of it.

Ellie Jensen - I want to thank my parents for encouraging me to keep on doing music, and for all my music teachers I've had in the past that helped me develop a love for music. Next year I will be attending the University of Northwestern St. Paul to pursue a degree in Nursing. Overall, band has helped me to think about life with an appreciation of togetherness and creation of arts and beauty.

Maxwell Johnson-Ding - Shoutout to Michelle Robertus for introducing me to the French Horn and shoutout to the Brainerd band program for making me good at it, I had a great time.

Elizabeth Joque - I would not be where I am today in music without the support and encouragement of my

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parents and band directors, and I am especially thankful that they always pushed me to keep going, even when I wanted to give up. I also would also like to thank my two brothers for how they help me to see the world and music in many different and exciting ways. In the fall, I will be attending the University of Puget Sound in Tacoma, Washington, and I hope to pursue an English major. I am planning on continuing my music studies as well, as I received a scholarship for saxophone, and I plan to play in the band. My high school band experience has been a wild ride, to say the least. Despite many obstacles and tough moments, what has stuck out to me the most is the community I've become a part of, the deep passion I've developed for music, and simply the joy I've found in coming to band every day. To create music is to create art, to create love, to create emotion, and I am forever grateful for how band has become a place for me to do just that. Finally, I would like to extend my unending gratitude towards Teresa Kingsley and Julie Schreifels, two fabulous musicians who have guided and supported me immensely throughout my own journey as a musician, and who continue to be role models in my life.

Jada Klecatsky - I want to thank all of the music teachers who have taught me throughout the years. I joined the music program in 6th grade because I did not want to have to do gym class in the rest of middle school and now, because of the teachers, I have spent the last 6 years growing and learning as a musician. I have truly enjoyed my experience in the Brainerd band program and being a member of Wind Symphony has truly been an honor. Next year I will be attending the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa to study Spanish.

Dylan Kowalke - I would like to thank my grandparents and parents for supporting me all the way since fourth grade when I started. Band is the reason I am able to go through school with a good enough attitude to find the important things in life. I could've spent my school years developing nothing but my intellect but with band I gained a skill that I hope to take with me through my whole life.

Ashtyn Kubista - I want to thank all of my teachers who have made me a better musician, my parents for coming to all of my concerts, and my classmates for pushing me to be the best I can. I will be attending Montana State University and I am undecided on my major. I loved being a part of band because I got to create so many memories and gain a lot of friends.

Mason Kuepers - I would like to thank my parents, my band directors, and my friends for encouraging me to stick with band all these years. I have had a fantastic band career where I have made many memories and friends. Every day in school I would look forward to band as it was always a nice break from typical schoolwork. Next year I plan to go

to Saint Cloud State University where I will study business and swim on the Huskies Swim Team. Thank you for the experiences and the memories which I will fondly remember as I continue on in life.

Joshua Larson - Thank You to the music teachers I have had from elementary through high school and my parents for encouraging me to stay in music. These people have inspired me to keep music as apart of my life in and out of the classroom. Being in band always gave me something to look forward to in my day, because I didn't have to be sitting at a desk and I could have a fun time with friends.

Mikayla Lekatz - Next year, I'm attending Hamline University in the Twin Cities. My plan is to study forensics and psychology. I want to thank my band directors, Mr. Fogderud and Mr. Sommerness for an amazing few years. Band has connected me to so many fresh experiences, the art of music making, building new lasting friendships, and creating music with incredible people. Being in the band has always been a highlight of my day, and I wish to continue making music long into the future.

Beau Lindley - First I want to thank my parents for making me get involved in band and my sister for telling me to play baritone so I could be "special". I would also like to thank Mr. Sommerness for a great band experience especially talking baseball with me all the time. This summer I plan to go to basic training for the Air National Guard and after completion of my Military duties to attend Mankato State for Electrical Engineering. My thoughts on my band experience was a very good environment filled with good people and great teachers.

Nathan Lokken - High school band has been an incredible experience for me. Between the amazing directors, and the other students who work hard to create great music, I've been surrounded by people who have helped me grow as a musician. I'm very grateful to these people, and I'm going to miss being a part of this band. Next year, at NDSU, I am going to continue playing my euphonium, and I hope band will always be a part of my life. Good luck to the rest of the seniors with whatever comes next for you, and remember to take music with you wherever you go.

Chloe Marohn - Being a part of the Brainerd Music Program has taught me so much, not only about music but about life. I have enjoyed every minute spent here, and have made so many bonds I will never forget. I want to thank my parents for introducing me to music from the day I was born, and my band directors, who have constantly supported me and helped me become the best musician I can be. I would also love to thank the friends that this program brought me. They helped contribute to what band means to me. Next year, I will be attending the University of Minnesota Twin Cities, and hope to participate in music

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ensembles there!

Samuel Mattson - I plan to attend St. Olaf next year to pursue music and a STEM major. Band has been an integral part of my life for the past 6 years and I enjoy almost every part of performing. Many of the best moments of my life have come playing an instrument or singing. I would like to thank my parents for everything they've done to support me.

Ethan Nash - I want to thank all of the band directors I've had over the years. They've all encouraged me over the years and each one has had a positive impact on my progression through the band program. My family has been there to support me both emotionally and financially and I couldn't have done it without them. Next year I am going to be attending Minnesota State Mankato where I plan to get a degree in Mechanical Engineering. I also plan on continuing to play Jazz drums there as well. I've had nothing but good memories with good people throughout my band years. We've gone through good times and also difficult ones, but we always stuck together and supported each other through so many means. I am truly grateful for all of my peers and directors.

Myra Neumann - For a long time I struggled with taking up space, I think often we all do. It's hard to exist, and know our actions impact others, yet here I am, graduating, and playing the tuba. I haven't always been able to take up this amount of space. When I first started band, I had a hard time taking up the space of a trumpet. Sommersness thankfully never stopped providing space for me, space to exist within. 6th grade, man, feels like forever ago. My life has had so many drastic changes since then, I don't think I'd recognize myself. Yet, Mr. Sommersness does, he continues to welcome me, and to provide space for me. Regardless of musical ability, band has been fun, and band has helped me take up the space needed to exist. Currently I am constantly on facebook marketplace looking for instruments, with the plan to continue to take up space. I want an instrument of my own. I'm excited for what the future holds, and hope it's lighter than a tuba...

Steven Selisker - I would like to thank my parents and my younger band teachers. I am going to Skyborne Airlines Academy next year to become an Airline Pilot. I have always made great friends with my chair partner where I would not be able to make anywhere else.

Peyton Simonet - I want to thank my parents for providing the encouragement to pick up an instrument in the first place. And letting me chase my dreams. This time next year I will be studying soil science at UWSP University of Wisconsin Stevens Point. Band is full of every possible personality imaginable along with every instrument you could think of so creating a blend of all those people really

was a wonderful thing to witness.

Katherine Stadum - I want to thank my family, coaches, and all of the teachers I have had through my whole career. I would not be where I am today without the endless support and love from all of them! Next year I am going to St. Ben's to major in either biology or chemistry with a pre-medicine focus. I also am planning on playing volleyball there. My band experience has been so meaningful to me. I have met some of the nicest people and band has definitely taught me to have a broader perspective in my life.

Brayden Tollefson - Spending time learning and reading music with my band friends is a great memory I'll have forever. I'm grateful to see my family come to watch us play. I will be studying business management next year.

Katelyn Welliver - I'd like to thank the people that have been a support to me in the hardships and those who try to help where they can. I'm not entirely sure what I'm doing next year but I'm leaning towards going into 911 dispatching. As far as my band experience, the last 7? Years, band was the thing I always looked forward to, it has been the highlight of my day for a long time. Just to realize how hard and long I've worked on something and seeing how short it seems but seeing how far I've come with it, I'm proud of it, I'd like to thank all of the band directors I've had to make that experience possible for me. Thank you!

Harison Woodman - I think that throughout my band experience I have to thank my peers and my directors. They have both taught me more about what it is to love music and how to do it. Next year after Army AIT (second phase of training) I will be attending college at Vermillion North College up in the great BWCA area and a few minutes from Canada to take both certificates in deep wilderness EMS and Backcountry guide and will be pursuing a degree in outdoor recreational therapy. As far as my experience in band goes, it was really positive, there was the bumps and the chaos one might expect from a bunch of high schoolers but it didn't hinder my ability to enjoy myself and see it as a reason to wake up every morning, a life without music is no life at all.