

To all prospective FHS band members,

As a six-year veteran of the Fayetteville bands, and a two-year high school drum major, I would like to take this opportunity to encourage you to become a part of the high school band. For me, band was not just an elective, it was a lifestyle. I cannot even begin to quantify the value of my band experience. I learned more than I ever thought possible--not just about music, but about responsibility, team work, dedication, and work ethic. Band taught me that when you put every bit of effort you have into something, the end result is more than simply the sum of its parts. There is nothing like the enormous feeling of pride you get after putting the final touches on a halftime show, or after polishing the last concert piece. It's such a thrill to perform for others something that you and your fellow members worked so hard on for so long. It's an adrenaline rush that lasts for a lifetime. I'll never forget those moments--everything from a Bands of America show in Dallas, to the last few blocks of the Fiesta parade my senior year. Being a member of the band had a huge effect on me. I feel like I learned how to be a better leader, I learned how to be a better team-player, and I learned how to be a better contributing individual. These are life lessons that I have taken with me into college and will continue to take with me for the rest of my life.

The band is also a wonderful source of friendships. Most of my best friends in school were band people. There is something about being outside on the football field in the August heat that just cements friendships. It's a wonderful thing to walk into high school the first day of classes as a sophomore and already know two hundred people--many of them upperclassmen. We help each other on the field and off, and we push each other to do better. It would be difficult to write about my experiences with the band without talking about the staff. This group of people are the most devoted I have ever met. It takes a special kind of person to willingly subject themselves to working with two hundred crazed high schoolers all year. The band staff genuinely cares about the students and they go to the mat for us--to make certain that whether it's a football field or a concert hall, we're at our best.

I find that I can't say enough about why you should continue to be a part of the band program. There are so many benefits, it would be impossible to cover them all. Instead, I will simply say that band changed my life--and it has the potential to change yours. Certainly it is a lot of work. There's a lot of blood, sweat, and tears that goes into the making of a show or a concert, but the rewards are enormous.

Sincerely,  
Amanda Jones  
FHS Band Alumnus  
Class of 2005