

May 2, 2021

At eight years old, Katie Deselle's parents, who weren't musicians themselves, put Katie in piano lessons. "My parents weren't musical, so they wanted me to give it a try", Katie said.

Katie never could have imagined that music lessons and encouragement from family to try music would lead to starting a band during her freshman year of college and being able to perform at an on-campus philanthropy event.

Katie was all smiles as she spoke of the encouragement from her family to try music. "I have some aunts and uncles who are musical, and they were encouraging me to try it as well, so I just started with piano and just gave it a shot", said Katie.

While the initial push to try music was from her family, Katie quickly developed a passion for music and a desire to grow her abilities.

"They didn't have to force me to practice or anything, once I started taking lessons, I loved it and that's how progressed because I just wanted to practice all the time". "I just had a passion for it, I guess I just fell in love with it", said Katie.

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"I remember it very clearly, Spencer walked into my bedroom, and he was like "hey, we're playing at Bennett Jam. You wanna join?" and I was like "sure", there I am, I'm the bass player now", said Chris Fulbright.

After Katie and four of her friends started hanging out, they quickly realized that they all play different instruments, and they could start a band. They started out playing slower songs in the basement of Bennett Hall and made playing together a regular occurrence.

"It's really cool to have all the instruments together; Ian's drums particularly are one of my favorite parts because I feel like the drums make it legit. And being able to play five songs with all the instruments was really cool", said Spencer Graham, the band's lead guitarist.

Katie and her friends were able to play at a philanthropy event on campus called Bennett Jam. It was their first time playing for an audience together as a band and they played five songs.

"I had to play kind of quiet because we were in such a tight space, so that let me hear the other people more than I normally would. The drummer's normally in the back in a box so I generally don't get to hear what we sound like most of the time. It was nice to hear harmonizing because I usually don't get to hear that", said Ian Parker, the band's drummer.

"It was just really fun to have all the different instruments but having a band where you actually have drums and a bass and two singers, it felt way more legit, and I really enjoyed playing in front of the audience", said Katie.

“We play in the basement all the time just for our own enjoyment, so it was really fun to be able to take what we do for fun and do it for an event”, said Katie.

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Years of practicing by herself out of pure enjoyment and wanting to grow her skills allowed Katie to have confidence that she could play in musical group for an audience.

“I like practicing and getting to hear the outcome”, she said.

“I love listening to music, even if it’s just instrumental, so it’s really cool to me when I can hear a song and then play the same song. Bennett Jam was really fun to me because it was cool to have a whole band and play a song that I’ve listened to”, she said.

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“We play a variety of music, I would say, and we kind of changed it for Bennett Jam from what we normally play because we play slower songs because we don’t have the drums or the bass”, said Katie.

“I’m normally on a second guitar”, said Ian.

“We’re usually just acoustic guitars, piano, singing, and sometimes cajon (which is a quieter drum used for smaller performances), so we usually play chill slower music, but for Bennett Jam we had the two singers and drums and bass, so we did more folk and pop music than what we normally do”, said Katie.

“We changed from what we normally play to fit the vibe of Bennett Jam, but also because we had more instruments than we normally do, so we could play faster more pop-y upbeat songs”, said Spencer.

“I want it to go on the record that I like country music, but we don’t play country music”, said Ian.

For Bennett Jam they played covers of five songs, but a few members of the band do some writing of their own songs. “Spencer writes some and I write some, that’s not as good, but I have like four songs in a journal”, said Ian the drummer.

“I don’t write any music, I’ve tried but it just doesn’t work for me”, said Katie.

“I haven’t written any music, but I want to”, said Chris.

“Spencer plays on garage band a lot and plays around and is making music that way, which is really cool so we’ll see”, said Katie regarding making and performing their own music.

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“It’s weird because we met each other and then we just went in the basement and randomly were like everyone in this group can play an instrument, then we just started playing music”, said Katie.

While they think it is a little cheesy, they named the band “The Basement Dwellers” after the story of how the band came to be.

Ian, the drummer, commented on the band name saying, “We did meet each other in the basement”, making the name fitting.

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When asked about the band’s chemistry as a friend group, Spencer shared a story about how one night they were just hanging out and decided to share bad pickup lines and Chris’ was apparently so good that Spencer did a spit take.

“I’ve never done a spit take in my life, and I haven’t since, I just didn’t expect it to be as good as it was and so I was drinking water and he says his line and I just sent the water everywhere”, said Spencer.

“It was terrible”, said Katie as she was laughing.

Katie’s favorite memory is when they decided to do group costumes for Halloween and their group had the idea to do mascots of cereals.

“Ian was the Froot Loop toucan and made his own beak for the costume. He hot glued feathers to the arms of his shirt”, she said.

“It was so bad”, said Ian as the rest of the group burst into laughter.

“If I’m having a bad day, I just look at the pictures from that night and it makes me happy”, said Katie.

“So yes, we did the costumes, but we also ended up going to OKC and eating with a friend’s family and then we also did a haunted house together and it was just a really good time”, said Katie.

“It was so much fun”, said Ian.

“We’ve had so many funny moments, it’s really hard to find a specific one, said Chris.

Ian said that his favorite memory of them all together was when they were all down in the basement and it was the first time that Chris had brought down his Moral Combat game and while they were playing, some of them got a little too into the game and it was intense and got heated quickly.

“It was hilarious, we just kept screaming at the screen and there were other people in the basement and they just got up and walked out”, said Ian.

They also went to a lake as a group to just relax and get away from school. “The lake wasn’t really funny, it was just a good time”, said Chris.

“Recently, we all watched Napolean Dynamite together and the whole time we were making noises and giving bad commentary which made the whole movie even funnier”, said Chris.

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These four musically inclined friends met in the not well-lit basement of Bennett Hall that has some couches and an out of tune piano. They decided to use that out of tune piano and some of their own instruments to make music together just out of pure enjoyment.

After becoming such good friends and discovering that everyone can play a different instrument, they made playing together a regular thing and when the opportunity to play at a philanthropy event came up, they jumped at it.

Taking what they do for fun and being able to play in front of a small crowd of people in the Bennett Hall living room was pure joy for everyone in the band. As they described what it was like, everyone had a smile ear to ear, eager to talk about how it was a blast being able to make music alongside some of their best friends.

“It was just really fun”, said Katie.