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UMASS Multibands field trip-- a special guest

Huntington- Gateway band and choir students took a field trip to UMASS Multibands on Thursday, October 19, with students from grades 6 through 12 attending. UMASS Multibands is a musical showcase of many of the university’s topnotch vocal, instrumental and dance performance groups. Allowing students to attend such a concert helps to inspire and encourage them to succeed instrumentally and vocally.

The concert included ensembles such as a baritone saxophone duo, jazz bands, orchestras, concert bands, color guard, jazz singers, and more! There was truly something for everyone. Students were exposed to different types of performances that they may not have been able to see otherwise, such as an eccentric interpretive dance number.

The students were engaged through the entire performance, particularly when the UMASS marching band took the stage. Gateway alum Anna Pless (Class of 2017) is a proud alto saxophone player in the marching band. Seeing Anna in the band uniform brought excitement to everyone in the Gateway crowd, especially the high school band and Band Director Beth Guertin. Pless credits Mrs. Guertin with spurring her passion for music. “Mrs. Guertin has been a huge influence in my life since fifth grade. I would not have my love for music if I hadn’t been in Mrs. Guertin’s bands. I also would not be here at UMASS pursuing music education if I wasn’t inspired by incredible music educators like Mrs. Guertin.”

When the performance concluded, Pless went out into the crowd to greet her former Gateway classmates and band teacher. Cheers erupted from students as Anna approached while students from other schools looked on with jealousy, wishing they were friends with a marching band member. Anna spoke to the current Gateway band members of the incredible adventure that is college marching band. “Marching band has been one of the most intense things I have ever done. It’s extremely challenging, both physically and mentally. On the other hand, marching band has also been the most incredible, fun, and rewarding thing I have done.”

The Gateway community is incredibly proud of Anna and all that she has accomplished and will continue to accomplish in her life—including marching later this year in the Rose Bowl Parade in Pasadena, California.

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Photo: Gateway Band Director Beth Guertin gets a visit from ’17 Alum Anna Pless, a member of the UMASS Marching Band who visited Gateway students after Multibands.