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Business Student Discovers Community in the Oregon Marching Band By Bianca Genevie Abello, public relations student

In Autzen Stadium, the roar of thousands fills the air, as the Oregon Marching Band plays the fight song after every touchdown. During halftime, one student shines on the field, his passion for music leading him to the heart of the action.

Meet Henry Swint, a junior at the University of Oregon majoring in Business Administration with a focus on Operations and Business Analytics. It wasn't the touchdowns or the victories that captivated him most, but the vibrant energy of the Oregon Marching Band (OMB). Twelve years ago, Swint picked up his first trumpet, igniting a passion that would shape his college experience. He eagerly joined the OMB his freshman year, instantly feeling like he found his home away from home.

As the largest student-led organization with more than 200 members, the Oregon Marching Band brings energy to the stands and presents field shows at home and selected away football games. "After the first few days of band camp my freshman year, I immediately knew this was something I wanted to do," Swint said. "It was the people, and the size of the band with the COVID numbers that were lower at the time - about 180 - that drew me in." For Oregon's new athletic conference, the Big Ten, college marching bands range from about 300 to 400 members. In recent years, OMB is on the smaller side, but students continue to have the support system to strive for excellence and achieve high levels of performance on and off the field.

For Swint, the OMB is more than just a musical ensemble, but a community that fosters growth and provides him with once-in-a-lifetime opportunities. Alongside his involvement in the OMB, Swint is also a member of the Green Garter Band, a scholarship group where members are selected by audition. But his dedication doesn't stop there. As the recruitment coordinator for the Oregon Athletic Bands Council, Swint plays an important role in shaping the future of the band. Despite the long hours of rehearsal, rain-soaked uniforms, and demanding schedules, Swint is a determined student, driven by his passion for music and dedication to the university.

"I think the one correlation I found between band and business is making connections," Swint said. "The more people you know will serve you well in the long run." This is advice that he stands by, as he uses his position to recruit new members and strengthen the band's presence on campus.

For Swint, the impact of his involvement extends past the gameday performances.

“For me, band has really opened me up a lot more than I already was, especially coming out of COVID,” Swint said. “It’s been a great opportunity because it’s given me a chance to be a part of something more than just my own personal goals, but to contribute to something that impacts the entire organization and the entire university.”