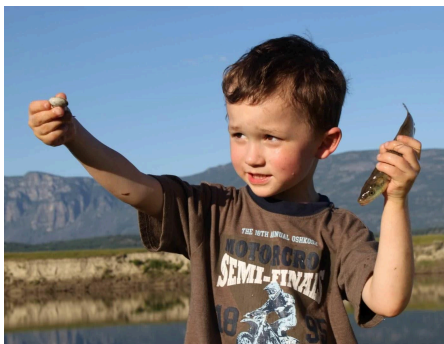




*Congratulations,
Seniors!*





Julien Alviar

I started playing saxophone five years ago in 8th grade, and it quickly became one of the most meaningful parts of my life and education.

Music has shaped how

I spend my time and how I express myself and connect with others. I was fortunate enough to be moved up to Wind Ensemble at the beginning of freshman year and chose to join Jazz Band in the second semester, which gave me the confidence and exposure to take music seriously. I'm incredibly grateful to Mr Slater and Mr Dochnahl who encouraged me to take private lessons and push myself to develop the discipline and joy that music has brought me. Music is incredibly important to me as a form of self expression and as a creative outlet, so I always want to keep a part of it in my life however I can. I will be studying finance at the Wharton School in the University of Pennsylvania, and will continue to play in the jazz ensembles there.



Jax Biddle

I started playing the flute in sixth grade. When I first picked it up, I had absolutely no idea what I was doing— I didn't even know how to hold it properly. But from the second I started band, I was hooked, and so I spent the next six years making band central to me.



I didn't want to continue with band when I was a freshman; it scared me, and I thought I wasn't good enough. But I decided to stick with it and it was the best choice I could've made. Music is the most important thing in my life. I couldn't make it through a single day without it. And for the past four years of high school, I've spent every morning getting to make music with the best musicians I've ever met. I'm eternally grateful for that, and for all the beautiful people I've gotten to know. I've always thought of band to be my family, even people I'm not the closest with. There's a camaraderie and bond that forms between people when you're playing music together every day, one I hope no one takes for granted. It's lifesaving, and life changing. I would know.

Next year, I will be going to college at the University of Montana, studying microbiology. I intend to continue my music on my own. I want to learn as many instruments as possible, and



get more involved with composing and arranging music. I want to thank Mr Dochnahl, for always pushing me to be better than I think I am and for making me want to continue with band. I couldn't possibly ask for a better director and a better person to lead high schoolers. Thank you to the whole band for giving me a place and a purpose, and for being my people the past four years. I wouldn't do a thing differently.

Devon Bird

I started playing brass instruments when I was in 4th grade at the “instrument petting zoo.” Mrs. Griggs was the person who showed me the French Horn, my last choice and honestly the one that I couldn’t make a real sound on. She taught me how to buzz in the mouthpiece and I couldn’t get it. I tried to make a buzz but since the mouthpiece was so small, it was harder for me and I sounded like a chicken. That was the one I wanted for sure! I played up until my junior year when I picked up the sousaphone during marching band season. I still played the



horn until Senior year, where I picked up tuba for Wind Ensemble, and then decided to start the trombone for fun and jazz. I’ve always loved music growing up and see myself continuing it throughout college.



Chloe Cotten

Music has always been something I was drawn to from a young age. Whether it was singing country in the car with my dad on a road trip, going to a concert, or just listening to some Etta James in my room while I cleaned it has always been something that inspired me and is now the most integral part of my life since I started high school.

I started halfway through the fifth grade on the trombone and went on struggling throughout middle school but always found myself excited and drawn to playing in a band even though I had zero clue on how to do it. I slowly learned the basics of my instrument and reading music then came into highschool with a very basic understanding. My first ever class was jazz band with Leon Slater. He was very structured, pushed for his students to always play to the best of their ability, and taught me so much throughout the year I had him. If it weren't for his aggressive determination to have me continue to grow I probably would not be where I am today. Following Mr.Slater, I have had the opportunity to work with Mr. Dochnahl who has shown me that music is not something that is linear. It takes time and ups and downs but always has a constant of care, inspiration, progression, and teamwork that makes music something people can connect to whether they are listening or playing.

Being in this band has allowed me to grow not only as a musician but also as a person. It is also just a lot of fun

with the opportunities of going to a festival, working on a fun piece, or going on a trip. The people I've met and the experiences I've shared in this band have allowed me to gain so much personal growth and happiness that I do not think can be found anywhere else. I have been so inspired by everyone I have met and watched play through this program and thank them for making this band the amazing space that it is and hope that it can be continued for years to come.

Following high school I plan to attend the University of Montana for Music education. I hope to continue my studies in choir and band through some of their ensembles. I still haven't decided what area of music I would like to teach but I am sure that it is the path I would like to follow. Music will always have a strong influence on my life outside of being my career. I hope that through my teaching I can spread the love and community that music can give. I thank everyone who I've been able to make, share, and experience music with because I don't think that any of us would be the same without it.



Max Diaz



Stella Gardner

I began my band experience in the summer before sixth grade. While deciding what instrument to play, I started asking different family members about their band experience. My favourite aunt told me she played the oboe. I remember listening to it online and thinking it sounded very unique, I was sold. Taking lessons



from Susi all this time has been the best part of playing the oboe. She inspires me every lesson to work toward my goals and become a better musician, I couldn't have done it without her. Being in a band for 7 years has taught me skills in and outside of music- from the importance of listening to others to how dedication pays off.

After highschool, I plan to attend the University of Montana and major in psychology with a minor in music!



I'm very excited to be able to continue my music education and learn so much more and meet new people involved. Music will always have an impact on my life, the skills I've learned so far have helped me in ways I never expected. I appreciate all of the people who helped me along the way, my family, Mr. Dochnahl and my friends in band. I am going to miss being a part of Hellgate Band, though I'm sure I'll still see everyone around town!

Taj Gritzner

My musical career started in second grade, when I started taking piano lessons from my Mom's friend. I was doing piano lessons because I wanted to do percussion once I got to 5th grade, which it was said you needed a few years of experience with the piano to do, which



looking back I do not think was true. Also around 5th grade I started to take private drum lessons with my first drum teacher John Wicks, who taught lessons over at Drum Coffee. When the instrument petting zoo came around there was a test of some sort in order to get into percussion. I remember getting everything right with treble clef, but I messed up on the bass clef section, which sold me a spot in percussion. Since I couldn't do percussion, I chose the flute because nine year old me thought it looked like a lightsaber, which was why it was the obvious choice. I played the flute throughout fifth and sixth grade, which I really did not not enjoy because I was so focused on wanting to play percussion, and midway through sixth grade I decided I didn't want to play the flute at all anymore, but Mr. Supola didn't let me switch instruments halfway through the year. Once I got to seventh grade Mr. Supola finally let me switch from the flute to percussion, and I instantly liked band class so much more. I also played the drums for jazz band in seventh and eighth grade, which introduced me to a new



style of playing music. This new found love of playing music inspired me to keep playing into highschool, and I have really loved all of the band classes I have taken, along with all of the friends I have made from it. After high school I plan on going to Montana State University, where I plan on studying medicine. I am not sure if I will pursue music at all academically after high school, but I will definitely be playing music as often as I can outside of school.

Zoe Gutierrez

My music journey might have started in 5th grade, but my journey really started in the second semester of my freshman year when I joined the hellgate jazz band. Jazz band has been my absolute highlight of the band throughout my 4 years of high school band. I remember playing Sabor De Cuba by Victor Lopez one of my first jazz songs (and honestly not playing it very right) but having so much fun.

Then I started learning about chords and improvisation and being so intrigued. I have been a part of the band program for 4 years at hellgate. I have made so many cool memories and new friends I probably wouldn't have met otherwise. I want to thank



Mr. Dochnahl for creating a great band program at hellgate. I also think that band has brought me some amazing memories from Hawaii and New Orleans, I mean I think it's pretty cool that you get to travel in a high school band.

After high school I plan to go to the University of Montana and study pre professional physical therapy and plan to minor or possibly major in jazz studies as well. I want to thank Mr. Dochnahl, my parents, and my band friends for an amazing 4 years at hellgate band.





Hayden Headley

My first experience with music began with my grandma cleaning out her house. She unearthed my aunt's ancient 1/2 size violin and sent it my way without

warning. So 8-year-old me began to reluctantly take violin lessons. After two years I had some basic playing skills and could repeat back a rhythm or melody but I found myself more interested in my violin teacher's Jolly Rancher rewards than the playing itself. When I got to choose an instrument in fifth grade I wasn't immediately drawn to the trumpet. I came home that day wanting to play every instrument, besides flute, and ended up choosing trumpet because my other aunt had a dented silver one I could use. Trumpet felt like the complete opposite of violin. I went from playing Minuet to Star Wars and found myself liking music without candy incentives. From then on I was in band every year and as I improved I began to like playing more and more.

I've never been the best at playing but that's never really mattered to me. I just find music as a nice outlet for stress and a way to be more creative. I've made great friends through the band and had lots of fun because of that, New Orleans being some of the most fun. Next year I'm going to Cal Poly San Luis Obispo and studying engineering. I'm not planning on playing in any college related groups but if something peaks my interest I might get involved. The plan for now, with music, is to keep playing casually whenever I feel like it and do my best to keep it in my life.





Gus Hickey

I have been playing saxophone for eight years, flute for two (unfortunately), and piano for the majority of my life. Music has, and invariably will continue to be, an integral part of my life. My introduction to band began with the "Instrument Petting Zoo" at the close of fourth grade, and I recall my indecisiveness about picking between the saxophone and the trombone. Luckily, I ended up choosing the saxophone and I began taking private lessons. I joined the middle school jazz band playing piano while playing saxophone in Concert Band, and continued until our (extremely) extended spring break in March of 2020. By the time Freshman year came around I had almost completely stopped playing saxophone because I had no band or jazz band to practice for on account of the pandemic. Despite this, I submitted my, admittedly pretty awful, "audition" for the Hellgate Wind Ensemble and Jazz Band. Mr. Slater, heavily influenced by my brother Simon's commitment to the Hellgate music program, allowed me to join both. Being placed in a band in which I was in the lower echelon of capability on my instrument, as well as the nagging/denigration from my brother and the other upperclassmen, sparked an intense period of growth, and by the end of the year I had revitalized my passion for playing the saxophone. That passion has been fostered by my incredible peers, teachers, family, and friends for the last four years, and I could not be happier with the way my experience with the band has turned out.

Some of my favorite experiences that I've had through band have been; meeting and playing with new people, many of

which becoming lifelong friends; Being able to work with and learn from world class educators such as Mr. Dochnahl, Rob Tapper, Mr. Slater, Larry Gookin, Reggie Thomas, Ben Markley, Johan Eriksson, and so many others; Going on all the band trips such as Hawaii, New Orleans, Pep Band Trips, and AA Band Festival trips; Playing each year at Buddy DeFranco (and winning best saxophone section all 4 years); Performing around Missoula with the jazz band; Witnessing the restoration of the music program at Hellgate after the Pandemic, all thanks to Mr. Dochnahl and Mr. Slater, the Hellgate Band Parents, and the dedication and assiduity of my friends and peers. Words were not designed to express the amount of gratitude I have for this program, my teachers, my peers, and my family, nor to illustrate the change I have felt in my four years at Hellgate.

My favorite quote is from Charlie Parker, "If you don't live it, it won't come out of your horn." Music is your own experiences, thoughts, emotions, and values, and the only way for it to be experienced and played authentically in service of aesthetic value is to be as honest as we can. With honesty we connect to more people than we realize, connect to the human condition and what most people are feeling. Think small to go big. This doesn't only apply to music, always apply yourself with honesty to everything you do, you will always end up connecting to more people on a bona fide basis. I will miss my family, my friends, all the wonderful musicians here in Missoula, my peers, my teachers, and the vibrancy of all the people, places, and things in Missoula. I'm going to be studying at Eastman School of Music in Rochester, New York this fall, and I could not be more excited for the things to come.



Henry Hoff

I started music in 2nd grade when I started playing guitar, which I continued to do until 8th grade. In 5th grade I started playing clarinet when we were required to choose



an instrument. The following year I switched to bass clarinet at the request of Mr. Supola which I have continued to play through high school. Music has been a decently sized part of my life which has shaped my friendships and experiences. I have been inspired by all



my band directors I've had over the years. I am going to the University of Montana for Forestry. I don't know what role music will play in my life going forward so I'll just find out when I get there.

Micah Jaffe

I've been playing saxophone since 6th grade, and really started to enjoy it junior year when I joined jazz band. Music has helped me go to places I probably would have never gone to like Hawaii or New Orleans.



I plan on studying environmental science at MSU next year and plan to join the jazz band while I'm there. Music is an incredible outlet to express yourself through and I hope to continue playing music throughout my life.

Reid Lane



I chose the trumpet at the 4th grade band petting zoo because it was the only instrument I could get a sound out of. I remember trying to play it as soon as I had my hands on my first personal trumpet thinking I would be a pro at it in no time. The first sound I made was no better than a crying duck. So,

reluctantly, I decided I would actually show up to the 5th grade band class and learn my instrument. I remember learning my first song, Mary had a Little Lamb. The distinct feeling of pride I felt when I played that piece urged me to keep playing in middle school.

I originally enrolled in the band in highschool just for the art credit. However, during the marching band practice before school started for the year, the upperclassmen taught me so much about my instrument that I just became more curious. My curiosity was only aided by Mr. Slater as he often pushed me.

The moment I knew I wanted to continue in the band was when we played Pirates of the Caribbean for our final concert of freshman year. It was the hardest piece of music I had ever played until that point and I felt like I had to master it before the concert as we got the piece just a few days before the concert. After the many hours it took to get the melody down, I felt so proud that I promised myself that I would join the wind ensemble the following year. I have stuck with the band mainly because it's been a joy to learn the many new things music has to offer.



Patrick Marsolek

It started with a piano and drums. Since I can remember there has been a piano in the house. Even when there were two houses there were two pianos. That led to piano lessons from ages 7 to 12. I spent five years on the bench with Dianna Pacinia Bauer. That is where I first learned how to read music and was exposed to music theory. At the same time my dad's side of the family has a deep history as musicians. Music has been a part of my life for as long as I can remember.



I can remember the 5th grade petting zoo at Sentinel High School. The bassoon looked cool and seemed like an interesting instrument. When I didn't get selected for percussion the bassoon seemed like the next obvious choice. Although I may not pursue an instrument in college, music will most certainly be a part of my life. Not only do I enjoy being a musician, I also love being on the receiving end of great musical experiences.



Jack Martin

I started playing the clarinet in fifth grade because it looked the most like the recorder. I have been a part of the Hellgate Band Program for all four years, inspired to play by Mr. Slater and inspired to continue and never stop by Mr. Dochnahl. I always enjoy being with the people in this program, and have made a whole lot of friends because of it. While a lot of people probably have some super deep comments about how music impacts them in all these different ways, for me it's always just been fun. It's different from any other class in all the best ways. I've never not been happy playing music at Hellgate, and it's the people here that make that possible.



In the fall I'll be studying engineering at Purdue University. I won't be in any of their large ensembles, but I'm always gonna keep the clarinet with me, and I know that I'll continue to play going forward, even if that's just with a group of friends. I'd like to thank my mom and dad for always supporting me, whether that's playing the clarinet or travelling for soccer or literally anything. None of this would be possible without you guys :)

Kieran Mattson-Radle

It began in a creaky old administration building on dreary day in October. The morning sky cracked with lightning and brimmed with dark energies. Rain pelted against the metal roofing, permeating the hallways with a gentle but ominous pittering. I climbed the marble stairs, each footstep echoing out and foreboding my arrival. I was there for one thing and one thing only. A sacred relic capable of immense power. A Saxophone.



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As I strode towards the administration desk my woolen cloak traipsed behind me like I was Severus Snape. My immense aura immediately pierced the middle aged overweight desk lady and struck her with fear.

“H-hello” she stammered, I peered up at her with a dark and mystical gaze.

“Bring me the saxophone” I commanded with a cool and assertive tone.

She struggled to her feet, quaking under the weight of the malaise I had descended upon the building. She hobbled over to a set of decrepit wooden shelves along the wall to her left and grabbed a small black polyethylene case about a foot wide and two and a half feet long.

“NO!” I barked, “I’m in need of something larger.”
She studied me for a moment, “follow me then”.
She led me behind the shelves through a narrow passage
into the bowels of the building. We descended far further
than logically possible, a cold breeze began to wisp and
trill. No one had been here for a very long time.

Eventually we came upon an eldritch door composed of
fleshy scales with a beating socket at its center. The
administration lady just kinda poked it with a brass key and
it opened with a wet creak. Inside was a small room with a
medium sized black polyethylene case. Etched into its side
was one word. Tenor. I picked it up and swiftly ascended
the stairs and exited the building.

I kneeled on the building steps in the pouring rain, staring
at the case in front of me. I undid the latches and opened
the lid. A wave of musical intensity washed over me, and I
surged with unbridled
spirit.



I put the instrument to
my lips, and I blew.
“Skweeeewee skwoo
dweee dah daht”, the
brobdingnagian
reverberations
consumed the air, filled
the earth, and coated
the sky. My time had
come.

The end.

Margot Pence

The first time I picked up the french horn was in 5th grade, during instrument orientation day.

Throughout middle school and high school, being part of the band community has given me space to grow, learn, and connect with so many amazing and artistic

people. Playing the horn has taught me the importance of patience and teamwork through every rehearsal and performance we did together. Music has shaped me into someone who listens more closely to both myself and others and I am very grateful for the amazing opportunities I have been able to experience.



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Throughout the years, I've been inspired by the passion of my peers, Ms. Rory Genazzi, and Mr. Dochnahl. After high school, I plan to attend Chapman University in Orange County, California. Music will still play an important role in my life whether that's dancing, attending concerts, or simply playing for fun. Music taught me how to be present, and that is something I will always carry with me.

Sarah Ratz

My musical journey began in first grade when I chose to play the guitar in an effort to stand out from my sister who at the time was playing piano. I started lessons through Childbloom and continued for eight years, developing a strong foundation and love for music. In fourth grade, like all MCPS students, I attended the instrument petting zoo, initially planning to choose the flute or cello. However, I was drawn to the bassoon—an instrument taller than I was at the time—and decided it was the right fit for me. Little did I know at the time that choosing the bassoon would mean being mistaken for playing the oboe nine times out of ten—or facing a barrage of questions from people who had no idea what a bassoon even was. That summer, my wonderful mother enrolled me in lessons with Alicia Brischli, who would become my teacher for the next eight years. Through my dedication to the bassoon, I have had the opportunity to participate in prestigious ensembles such as All-State, All-Northwest, and the Missoula Youth Symphony (MYS), deepening my passion and experience in music.

Over the years, a few people have truly guided and inspired me in my bassoon journey. One of them is Alicia, of course—I've grown very close to her, and she's constantly pushed me to do my best while

helping me keep my passion for the bassoon alive, introducing me to the possibilities of jazz bassoon and fun arrangements of ABBA, Billy Joel, and Elton John along the way. I also want to thank Mr. Dochnahl, who has made being in band such a positive and rewarding experience. Thanks to their support and encouragement, I've decided to continue playing the bassoon in college and will be pursuing a double major in Bassoon Performance and Wildlife Biology at the University of Montana.



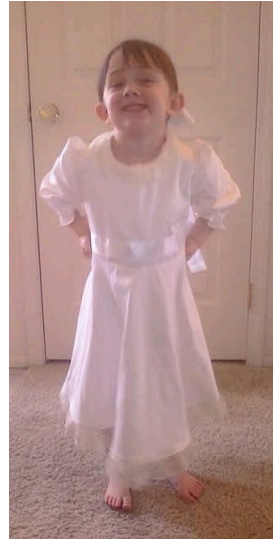
Dani Rhodes

I started playing french horn because my parents made me learn an instrument but since picking the french horn in fifth grade I have grown to really love playing music. Music has become such a vital part of my life, it has become something that calms me down when I'm upset, distracts me when I'm anxious, and brings me so much joy. Genuinely nothing makes me happier than coming to band everyday and playing music with this band.

When I was a freshman I had no intention of continuing band but that all changed when I actually got here and fell in love with the community I found. Band has changed me from a quiet girl unable to even talk to people without breaking down crying to a much more confident person. Now as a senior I am just filled with so much pride in what I have accomplished here and the community I got the opportunity to be a part of. This band is filled with the most warm, crazy, wonderful people and I am so proud of all of you and the community you all have built.

Next year I will be attending Concordia College in Moorhead Minnesota to study music education. It has been my time in the

Hellgate Band that made me realize I wanted to do this for the rest of my life and has inspired me to continue down this path. I want to thank Mr. Dochnahl and Rory Genazzi for helping me become the musician I am, I don't think I would have loved music as much as I do without their support. I also want to thank the people who I got to spend these last four years in band with. There is a special place in my heart for all of you and I can't wait to see what amazing things you all go on to do. Thank you for such an amazing four years.



Jake Robbins

I began banging pots and pans from a young age while my grandmother would cook and watch my older sister and I as my mother was off working. This began my love for the art of hitting things. In pre-school I opted out of music class because I thought it was too “you’d” my mispronunciation of loud. That stuck for quite a few years but I began to find a love for the trumpet

after watching *The Princess and The Frog* about a thousand times and annoying my dad and step mom by repeating the same line from the song “Going Down the Bayou”. When it became time to sign up for instruments in fifth grade I was torn between playing the trumpet with my best friend Noah or my extreme desire to play the big concert bass drum and make a major departure from my previous distaste and “too you’d” comment. After some thought I chose to play percussion as my great-grandma Dorothy told me she always wanted to be the drummer in a swing band and I thought that sounded fun so I signed up to play the snare drum.

In Middle School I didn’t like the band all too much but loved when the MCPS Pep Band would come in and play loud pop tunes. I knew I wanted to be the drummer in that. So, I emailed Mr. Dochnahl who was teaching at Big Sky at the time. I got put into Percussion Ensemble and the Jazz Band as I knew I had to make my great grandma proud as the next Gene Krupa as she would put it. I fell into music hard freshman year, flat on my face. I sucked. And I hated that. So I began lessons with my still



current amazing mentor Ed Stalling who I attribute a majority of my musical love and progress to. Thank you so much Ed. I later realized Big Sky was not the right fit for me and felt Hellgate would meet my musical needs better, so I filled out plenty of forms and promised not to be late everyday and got my transfer request accepted into Hellgate. Where my musical desires were definitely better met and I got a thousand better opportunities. And even though they are not here I would like to thank Ben, Alex, Shohei, and Jackson who despite being top level goobers took a chance on me and gave me chances to flourish as a musician.

I know music will always be a part of my life and I would love to play drums of any type until I'm old and gray. After some consideration mostly in the department of tuition I am currently planning to join the Montana Air National Guard's 120th airlift wing and continue my path in aviation and later on forestry. Lastly, I'd like to thank Mr. Dochnahl and the entire percussion ensemble. Mr. Dochnahl has been an amazing mentor and teacher to have in my life and I would like to thank you with the utmost gratitude for being an amazing teacher and person. And for the kids in my TA period, thank you for always making my day better and being great kids who I know will go far in life whether it's in music or whatever else. Your dedication and friendship with one another will take you a long way in life and I hope you guys keep that up. You guys are awesome, thank you.



Liam Rose

In fifth grade when I was knee high to a grasshopper I picked up a trumpet and it changed my life. Starting to play on the trumpet was fun but I knew in my heart that I wouldn't stick with that tiny horn for too long (euphonium!). Music on top of being something that I consume everyday is something that allows me to focus in on where time flows and all there is to think about is what sound your horns are going to make. Music has taught me that nothing in life is impossible, it just depends how hard you work on it. Whenever I would hear a song, solo, riff, or tone that caught my attention and really made me think how much I liked the sound of it, I aspire to try and replicate that feeling inside myself when sharing music with others hopefully sharing with them that wonderful feeling as well.



My plan for life after school is to enjoy what life has to offer, find out the greater mysteries of the world and that of humanity. Every single day for the rest of my life I will listen to at



least one song because music is something I can never picture myself without. Thank you to all the amazing people who have been a joy to collaborate with, and a special thanks to Mr. Dochnahl for being one of the most stand up, humble, and kind human beings I have ever encountered. And how lucky I have been along with anyone else who has had him as a teacher for his guidance. Thank you.

Eleni Spaliatsos

For as long as she can remember, music has played a vital role in Eleni's life. She grew up as quite the performer and would put on shows for just about anyone in her family that would listen. She started singing in church around the age of three and began taking piano lessons in elementary school. Eleni started playing the clarinet in 5th grade, discovering a love for band and discovering her love for music even further.



As a freshman, Eleni was given the opportunity to join the wind ensemble which allowed her to grow immensely as a musician and person. High school band has allowed her to make some of her best friends and become a part of a warm, welcoming, and talented community. As a sophomore, she also became a member of the choir program at Hellgate continuing to expand her musical horizons. As a senior Eleni holds section leader positions in both ensembles, participates in extracurricular bands and choirs, and has played lead roles in the Hellgate musicals.

Music and performance are not only her biggest passion but also what she will be pursuing as her future career. She is planning on studying opera (but is still deciding where as of now), and is immensely excited to continue on her musical journey. Eleni would

like to thank her parents for their unwavering love and support of her and her siblings and friends for always making her smile and bringing so much light into her life. And finally many thanks to her music teachers, especially Mr. Dochnahl, Mrs. McKenzie, Mr. Dean, Anne Bashor and Angela Dailey, for their guidance, patience and constant support.



Oscar Valliant

I was around 4 or 5 when my mom signed me up for piano lessons. Even though I didn't like them very much they still taught me a lot about basic music theory that has definitely helped me through the years. Piano was the only instrument that I played up until the fifth grade when I started band and the clarinet. I pretty quickly found out that I didn't really like the clarinet that much either (mostly because all of my friends played the saxophone) so when the music teacher said that the switch between clarinet and saxophone was easy I decided to switch at the beginning of 6th grade.



The only moment that I vividly remember from my first week of 6th grade was second period (Band) on Thursday. Every Thursday Mr Supola would give us a playing test that we had to play in front of the class by ourselves. However, that Thursday I had not yet learned a single note on the saxophone and immediately began freaking out. I told my friend who was sitting next to me what my problem was and asked him what the fingerings were. Thank god



my last name starts with V so as he moved down the list of students in alphabetical order I had some time to learn. The closer it got to my turn the more nervous I got, to the point where I don't even really remember what I played but I do remember being satisfied with the results and managing to avoid the embarrassment of crashing and burning. Next year I plan to attend St. Lawrence University in Canton, New York, and I definitely plan to play saxophone in their band/jazz program.

