

WSU News

November 30, 2022

Meet a Shocker: Daniel Baird

By WSU Strategic Communications



Hometown

Derby, Kansas

Degree

Bachelor of Arts in Psychology with a minor in Sociology, Summa Cum Laude distinction

Published by WSU News

Archived in SOAR: Shocker Open Access Repository

What made you want to attend Wichita State?

I was interested in Wichita State because I wanted to earn my psychology degree in preparation for social work. I entered the Shocker Pathway program at WSU Tech and really enjoyed my time there, so transferring to WSU was a win-win.

How are you feeling leading up to graduation?

It is a bittersweet feeling. I am excited to be the first in my family to receive a college degree, but I will miss the experiences at Wichita State. College gave me the chance to explore what I am truly passionate about and pushed me to grow more than I ever thought possible. I look forward to the opportunities it leads to.

What has been your biggest challenge as a student, and how did you overcome it?

The biggest challenge has been maintaining a high GPA as an adult student. It has been challenging to absorb as much as I can through my studies and apply myself in my classes while balancing the responsibilities of adult life. College inspired me to start volunteering, help build a local handpan community, and become more active in the Wichita community. My experiences at Wichita State prepared me by teaching me how to manage my time and prioritize my tasks. Completing college during the COVID-19 pandemic also taught me how to adapt to change and further inspired my goal of becoming a social worker.

What has been your most helpful learning experience at Wichita State?

My most helpful learning experiences have come from the Music Department. Dr. Oare helped me tremendously in his Psychology of Music class to become a better musician. This will be invaluable to me in my future specializing in music with social work. Dr. Bernstorf provided me with guidance to help me decide how to proceed in my career. I am grateful she was patient with me, even though I was not one of her students. Finally, my most memorable experience at Wichita State was with Dr. Wine, who invited me to [perform with the Wu Choir and Shocker Choir](#) during the fall 2021 concert. This is the pinnacle of my college career and my handpan journey and has been a major source of inspiration. Thank you all!

What are your plans after graduation?

I hope to release my first album and share the handpan as much as possible until I start grad school in fall 2023. I plan to become a licensed clinical social worker and integrate the handpan into my services. I believe the handpan is the most therapeutic instrument and is perfect for therapy and healthcare.

What advice would you give other Wichita State students?

Keep going! It will be worth it in the end. Try different things, experiment, find what you enjoy. If you're curious about something, ask about it. This is your chance to explore all the possibilities of your future. Don't be afraid of something new because you never know how much you will enjoy it or how much you will learn. College can help you to become the person you aspire to be and more. Most of all, appreciate all aspects of your college journey because it is your time to grow!