

Devon Gilfillian '13

Please provide your biographical information.

I received my BA in Psychology from WCU. I grew up in Morton, PA, just 40 minutes from West Chester. I went to WCU for a couple reasons, I loved the town of West Chester, I wanted to be close to home, and I had a lot of friends that were going to West Chester.

What made you go into this degree?

I studied psychology because I was fascinated with human behavior and how the brain worked and functioned. I also wanted to be able to identify my own neurosis and the neurosis of the people around me.

What is your official title and what are your responsibilities in your current position?

I am a singer/songwriter.

What is a typical day like at work?

If I am home in Nashville I am usually song writing from 10am-4pm, after that I'll do a little admin work, emails, and social media. If I'm on the road we'll be jumping around city to city, usually load into the venue we're playing at around 4pm, sound check at 5pm, play a show at 8 or 9pm, sell merchandise until the venue closes, then head back to the hotel or Airbnb that we're staying at.

What have been the biggest challenges at work?

Staying organized and on top of the admin work is the hardest part for me. Playing the shows and writing come much easier.

What do you enjoy most about your current position?

The creative process is definitely my favorite part of my job, writing the music, the lyrics then taking those songs into the studio. I also love to get on stage and share the energy that I have with my band with all the crowd.

What skills, talents, and other traits are useful and necessary to do your job?

Being able to sing, understand basic music theory, and also playing guitar for over 10 years now has allowed me to be as efficient at my job as I am now. Being comfortable with being in a van for 30 days or even more, not being home in your own bed for long periods of times, and also being able to troubleshoot on the fly is for sure necessary to be a touring musician.

Do you have a favorite or funny story about work?

When we were down in New Orleans for a show not too long ago, my bandmates made me think that our Airbnb was haunted. They had me to the point where I slept on a half inflated blowup mattress in the same room as the other guys so the ghost wouldn't come take me in my sleep. It was quite ridiculous.

What do you enjoy doing in your free time?

I love to get outside when I can, go for a hike. Do some yoga.

Where do you see yourself in five years?

I see myself producing music for myself and for other artists in my own studio that I've built. Traveling around the world to play music.

What advice would you give to a current student who aspires to follow in your footsteps and pursue a similar career path?

I would tell them to put that 10,000 hours in on the stage as much as they could. I would then tell them to move to Nashville if they want to be in a great place to be discovered as a musician and also be in a great place to meet and collaborate with other talented musicians. I would then tell them to build a team of people around them that can help manage collaborate with their career.

How has your WCU education contributed to your success?

Through studying Psychology I have learned a lot about myself and a lot about human behavior in general. Being able to slow down and look in the mirror is important as a musician. It has also indirectly formed my path that lead me down to Nashville.

What do you consider to be your greatest accomplishments (both personally and professionally)?

In the past couple of months I've written about 20 songs which has been a huge accomplishment for myself. Writing can be tough sometimes. Professionally, I would say getting signed to Capitol records has been nothing short of surreal.

What's your favorite memory from when you were a student at WCU?

I gotta say one of my favorite memories as a WCU student has to be my first banana day! I never knew that was a thing till the day of and I got to race a couple bros for a t-shirt and I won.