

To Whom it May Concern,

I have had the pleasure of mentoring two exceptional music therapy students, Kathryn Roe and Emily Lehr, in research over the last year. The COVID-19 pandemic was challenging for everyone, but an unprecedented wave of burnout hit WVUMedicine right before vaccinations began rolling out. Administration WVUMedicine requested I provide music therapy for staff support after 31 intensive care nurses quit within 12-hours. With over 600 beds and thousands of employees walking the halls daily, there was more than I could handle alone. After reaching out to all my students, Kathryn Roe eagerly answered the call to serve.

I trained Kathryn in the environmental music therapy protocol which one provides live background music to medical staff as they are working, adapting the music in the moment to the environment and immediate needs of medical staff. Kathryn's incredible musical talents were clear. We were flooded with notes of gratitude from administrators and nurses. Those notes came with requests for additional services, of which Emily Lehr volunteered to assist. Between Kathryn, Emily, and myself, environmental music therapy was provided to day and night shift nurses in our most critical care environments during the COVID-19 pandemic; including when WVUMedicine declared a crisis-level-state-of-care emergency.

Kathryn and Emily's, people skills allowed them to easily walk up to nurses' stations and interact. They could often be found talking and laughing with hospital staff, both approachable and professional during their encounters. As highly independent women, they reliably performed environmental music therapy in their assigned hospital areas.

Beyond serving the medical staff, and by proxy the patients and community at large, they contributed to a research study. I mentored Kathryn and Emily in designing a survey to capture signs of medical staff burnout in response to the environmental music therapy sessions provided. They completed IRB training, followed our developed protocols, and consented individuals in completing the surveys. They helped collect over 200 responses, which were analyzed and presented at the American Music Therapy Association's National Conference in October of 2021.

Mentoring these incredibly talented students is one of my greatest joys in teaching. Not only did they learn and engage in research but they provided high quality music therapy services to drained essential workers to ease burnout symptoms in medical professionals so they could continue saving lives. It was an honor to mentor Kathryn Roe and Emily Lehr and I hope you will consider them for this award to highlight the amazing research and service they provided.

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