



300 South 18th Street, Estherville, Iowa 51334

PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release:

MAKING MUSIC WEARING MASKS: COVID-19 WON'T STOP THE MUSIC AT IOWA LAKES COMMUNITY COLLEGE

(Estherville, Iowa) Music professors at Iowa Lakes Community College have spent hours finding a way for Iowa Lakes students to continue making music safely during the coronavirus pandemic.

"Our students love to perform and are very adaptable. They know that without the masks, we wouldn't be able to make music. We all love music too much to allow that to happen," shared Carol Ayres, Iowa Lakes Music Professor.

Every music student wears a mask, but these masks are not one size fits all. Each protective equipment piece caters specifically to the instrument utilized, whether it is a trombone, a flute, one's voice, or any other device.

Iowa Lakes vocal students wear specialized masks designed by Broadway singers. These specialized masks feature three layers of fabric and a filter to reduce respiratory droplet emissions while still allowing space around the mouth to sing comfortably.

Masks for instrument players ensure the face is covered when playing and not playing to reduce respiratory droplets and contain three layers of fabric with a hole sewn into it, like a buttonhole, to allow the mouthpieces to fit through them.

Even the instruments themselves have masks called bell covers. Bell covers help prevent droplets from coming out the other end of musical instruments. Since human breath powers musical instruments, tiny virus particles may become airborne, making bell covers as essential as face masks.

"We are doing everything we can to ensure our students get to continue making music. Measures we've taken beyond utilizing the masks include maintaining social distancing, allowing for adequate air exchanges in rooms, spreading rehearsals out to several locations, and pre-recording musical performances to offer virtually," continued Ayres.



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With protocols on the best ways to safely make music changing frequently, Brett Fuelberth and Carol Ayres, Music Professors at Iowa Lakes, attend countless Zoom meetings and webinars to stay current with the recommended guidelines.

Many professional music organizations including the College Band Directors National Association (CBDNA), National Federation of High School State Associations (NFHS), American Bandmasters' Association (ABA), and National Band Association (NBA), and the National Association for Music Education (NAFME), developed studies to help determine the best way to mitigate potential virus spread through practicing and performing music. The studies measure aerosols transmission and choose the best ways to minimize aerosols produced and distributed while singing, breathing, and playing instruments.

"We realize music is an integral part of who our music students are - enhancing the good times and helping them through hard times. Research has provided us with valuable information needed to provide a safe environment for our students to continue their musical endeavors," explained Ayres.

In the upcoming months, the Iowa Lakes Music Department hopes to offer many musical performances. The Iowa Lakes music department will be hosting the annual Jazz Band Contest in person on February 3 and 4, 2021, with all participants following safety protocols.

Visit iowalakes.edu for music updates and to find out more about the annual Jazz Band Contest.

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MEDIA: For more information, please contact Iowa Lakes Music Department at 712-362-8345 or music@iowalakes.edu; or the Iowa Lakes Marketing Office at 712-362-7947.

Photo Caption 1: Camden McKenny (ESTHERVILLE), a sophomore at Iowa Lakes majoring in music, plays trombone while both he and the instrument are masked. McKenny follows the recommendations to keep 9 feet of distance in front and back of trombonists.

Photo Caption 2: Melody Kuhn (PALMER), an Iowa Lakes freshman majoring in Veterinary Technology, wears a custom-designed mask for her flute during rehearsal.

Photo Caption 3: Owen McKim (SPIRIT LAKE), a freshman in the Culinary Arts program at Iowa Lakes, practices his trumpet fully masked in protective gear that doesn't mask the sound.

Photo Caption 4: Emma Kral (GRAETTINGER), an Iowa Lakes freshman, practices safe saxophone playing in a large space with proper ventilation.



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Photo Caption 5: Andrew Tran (ALGONA), a sophomore in the Iowa Lakes aviation program, also practices safe sax-playing, making sure to take breaks every 30 minutes to allow the air to clear appropriately.

Photo Caption 6: Oskar Reels (WINTERSET), a freshman at Iowa Lakes, masks up himself and his tuba to practice safely.

Photo Caption 7: Members of the Iowa Lakes Vocal Ensemble directed by Brett Fuelberth mask up and social distance.

Photo Caption 8: Hannah Gregersen (POCAHONTAS), a freshman at Iowa Lakes, sings in a singer's mask. The singer's mask allows her to breathe and open her mouth for singing better than a traditional mask.

Photo Caption 9: Close-up of a specialized instrument mask.