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Subject: DJJ Media Clip

Attachments: DJJ juvenile playing with SC Phil.jpg

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I am also attaching a photo by Jarid Munsch of DJJ Public Affairs.

Please share with anyone you feel would like to know some of the good news at DJJ.

Also links are on our Social Media. Please feel free to view, like and share as able.

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<http://wach.com/news/local/juvenile-at-djj-joins-sc-philharmonic-for-a-day>

COLUMBIA, SC (WACH) - Musicians from the South Carolina Philharmonic were welcomed by the Department of Juvenile Justice Thursday. For almost two hours, juveniles were able to forget they were behind the fence and get lost in the music. One 17-year-old had the chance of a lifetime- he was welcomed on stage to perform with the orchestra.

Jacob has played the violin for seven years. He started when he was eleven years old. When his DJJ music teacher learned that the Philharmonic was coming to play for the students, he asked if Jacob could join.

"I was scared, but I'm glad I did it," said Jacob. "It was a good experience for me."

The 17-year-old says he started playing the violin because he knew it was his mom's favorite instrument and he wanted to make her proud.

"I already knew how to read music because I played trumpet in fifth grade, so by the time I got to sixth grade, I already knew how to read music," said Jacob.

The teen says he's thankful to be able to play his instrument while he's at DJJ.

"It's kinda like a getaway. When I'm feelin down, I go there. It brings me up. When I'm feeling upset, it calms me down."

For all the other students, they had the opportunity to conduct the South Carolina Philharmonic. The orchestra has been traveling across the Midlands performing free of charge for different organizations. Thursday was the first time they brought "Conduct the Phil" to DJJ. Juveniles got the chance to take the baton and choose the pace of each classic composition.

Gabriel was the first student to conduct. For him, it was a small taste of something he hopes to pursue as a career. Thanks to a second chance at DJJ, he thinks he has the tools to do it.

"It felt like I was at home because when I was in high school, I played in the drumline as lead snare, and then I moved my way up to drum major, so I conducted our marching band through everything that we did," said Gabriel.

South Carolina Philharmonic Executive Director Rhonda Hunsinger says she wanted to bring the Orchestra to DJJ because it would allow juveniles to experience something that many of them have never experienced before.

"You can just see the expressions on their faces change as they realize the power we have with the music," said Hunsinger. "Suddenly everybody's grinning from ear to ear and everybody's having a great time."

Gabriel says he hopes to become a music teacher or conductor some day.

"I do think I'm on a better path because I've changed tremendously. Every aspect of my life has changed while I've been here."

As for Jacob, he just earned his GED in July and has already been accepted into Midlands Tech. He hopes to become a nurse.

Very Respectfully,

*Patrick Montgomery*

Public Affairs Director

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