



Youth Artist Spotlight

Caleb Kinney

This month we caught up with Caleb Kinney, a junior at The Classical Academy High School and a member of the TCA Wind Ensemble, TCA Crimson Jazz Band, CSYSA Ascent Big Band, 2025 All City and All State Jazz Bands, and 2025 All City and All State Concert Bands.



What instruments do you play and how did you come to choose them?

I play baritone and trombone. I started my musical journey in the summer before 7th grade as a 12-year-old playing trombone because it seemed like a really fun instrument to play and all the other instruments with valves seemed too complicated for 7th-grade me. Outward encouragement from my dad, who had played the trombone in high school, helped me choose the instrument as well, as well as teaching me the basics of playing before school even started.

Who has been the most influential or inspirational in your musical training?

I've had many wonderful inspirational instructors, including Mr. Van Hoy, a player in the Colorado Springs Philharmonic, and Mr. Barrentine, a jazz trombonist and teacher. They are both extremely talented players, and the instruction and encouragement that they have given me are a main reason that I can play with the skill that I do. They meet me at the skill level I am at.

How has your school/performing group helped you with your training and development?

Playing in the CSYSA Ascent Big Band for the first time was like being thrown into the deep end of the pool without a life vest. The pieces I played were new and challenging, but being able to play with some of the most talented players in the city encouraged me to match their skill, thus putting me out of my comfort zone. As the famous writer and businessman T. Marv Eker says, "The only time you are actually growing is when you are uncomfortable."

What other hobbies or interests do you have outside of music?

I really enjoy architecture and engineering in particular, and love learning and exploring in the physics realm. I enjoy playing video games, laughing, eating lots of food, and watching movies with my friends, cousins, and family. I am an experienced skier and love to ski the expert slopes with my dad and friends during the wintertime.

What do you see yourself doing in the future?

As an adult out of college, I hope to achieve a career where I can pursue my love for music while still working at an architectural engineering career in design. My ideal career set would be playing, ideally here in Colorado, freelancing in big bands and combos alike while still having a blast pursuing the career I love on my off day.

Do you have any favorite jazz artists or songs? Do you have any favorite classical composers or works? Who are you listening to these days?

~ My dad introduced me to the work of Maynard Ferguson and I listened to his music for quite a while, and I still do. However, I began to branch out to other artists. I listen to lots of different artists and groups nearly every day, but as I keep exploring my favorite jazz group to listen to is still Gordon Goodwin's Big Phat Band. I find all of the songs he and his band create to be entertaining and fun to play as well. My all-time favorite jazz trombonist, however, has to be Wycliffe Gordon because of the skill he plays with and the way he brings the stage to life with his emotional playing.

Catch the interview broadcast on Jazz 93.5, every Tuesday at 7:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m.!

