

RC: Welcome, everybody, to the latest episode of The Way Podcast here, the official podcast at the College of Health Sciences at the University of Kentucky. I'm Ryan Clark, your director of communications.

BC: And I am Bernadette Cortez, the director of recruitment.

RC: Bernadette, we've got an especially fun episode today, I think. Does that sound accurate?

BC: Yes. And again, I think I always start it with saying like, this was good. This is a good one. This is very interesting and fun.

RC: So let me ask people, what do they think if they heard that on today's episode we have a scientist researcher, teacher, clinician and also rock star.

BC: What in one person?

RC: Maybe I should thank you for that reaction. Maybe, though I should clarify because we say this a lot. Rock star is kind of our term for everyone who is on this podcast, but today we have actual rock star. And without any further ado, I will say that is Doctor Kevin Schuer, Program Director and associate professor in the Department of Physician Assistant Studies here in the College of Health Sciences. But did you all know that he is also a professional musician? Been in many bands, toured the country? Still might be doing that, actually. We'll get into that.

BC: And met his wife, right?

RC: Love that part of the story, by the way.

BC: It's important.

RC: How can we not have this person on the podcast is really the question. So if that hasn't wet everybody's appetite, I don't know what. Let's get out of the way, and let's let everybody find out a little bit more about the rock star who is actually a rock star. Doctor Kevin Schuer.

KS: I'm Kevin, and I am the program director for the UKPA program, and I, I'm a PA by training, and I've been in the program director role since 22. And then prior to that, just a regular old faculty member in our in our program. So I started here as a faculty member in 2008. I went to school here. So I've I'm a lifer terms of the University of Kentucky. So I actually graduated high school and came here and got my undergrad degree here. So,

RC: And what was that like?

KS: If we want to talk about when that was. That's totally fine. That was the fall of 1992. So I've been here for some time. Yeah.

RC: And what was that? What was the what was the major?

KS: I was a biology major. So arts and sciences guy. Yeah.

RC: Well, so we always like Kevin. We always like to kind of flash back. And first off, can we say what brought you? You grew up in Columbus, Ohio?

KS: Yeah.

RC: Home of the Ohio State University.

KS: Yeah.

RC: So what can we say brought you to Lexington, Kentucky? And and tore you away from from the university there in Columbus.

KS: Yeah. So, I mean, I am a Buckeye. I'm always reminded of that as I grew up in a suburb of Columbus. Wonderful time growing up there. But, you know, that university's enormous. If you've not been to Columbus is just it just dominates the whole city and certainly has it kind of dominates the whole state. But it's a great school. But I just felt like for some reason, I felt like I just needed to get away. I have an older brother who ended up visiting. He's four years older than me. He visited Kentucky and then decided to go north. He went to Michigan State for his undergrad, and when it came time for me to look at schools, he said, you should really take a look at Kentucky. So I came down with my dad. I remember it, walked into the old student center. And honestly, it it was I just remember how I asked my dad, I was like, how is how is everybody down here? So nice? Like, what is that all about? And the campus in Lexington, so pretty. And I just felt like that was a this was a great opportunity for me to just to, to get away from Columbus and, and sort of do, do my thing. And I didn't really know what I didn't know back then. But I'm so fortunate to to have made the trip down here.

RC: I love that. Bernadette, is that how they is that how sometimes people just get here? Is it like,

BC: I think when they're here, yeah, sometimes they've heard something. I think I have a family from South Dakota visiting. Like, it's just crazy when they just, like, hear something about Kentucky and then they come to campus and they really do. Like, I always hear that they're so nice and I appreciate I appreciate that. I try to also do that when I'm walking through campus, which is very seldom. But like I'll see somebody looking at the maps or

their directories and I'm just like, please let me know where they're going. Please let me know. Hey, can I help you find them?

KS: Yeah, totally. Yeah.

RC: So, Kevin, one of the things we like to do is because we are a health sciences college, we always like to ask people, and I think this is where this is where we're going to quickly kind of depart from the normal here. But we always ask people has has helping people has been a part of a has the idea of being a part of health care always been there for you or did it come later? Was it something you said you were a biology major undergrad? Or maybe was there something else that you wanted to do when you were younger that maybe set you on a different path? That's a little foreshadowing there for anybody. If anybody was wondering. That's why we're the best in the business.

KS: I talked to a I ran around with about 8 to 10 guys in high school, and I talked really tight with about three of them, still tight with all of them, but I'd only really talked to a couple of them, and I talked to my one of those guys recently. And we, you know, our kids are all grown up. And we were just reminiscing about growing up. And he said something to me that, you know, sometimes you don't know about the things about you unless somebody else tells you or reminds you. You know what I mean? Like, and I think to get to this question, he said, you know, and I totally agree with them. I think this is probably why I'm doing what I'm doing. Is Kevin, you you were he said, I just remember you being so interested in a lot of, a lot of different things. And I thought that was a nice compliment. You know, after, you know, almost 40 years of knowing him. And I think that's probably it. I don't know why I'm a product of the 80s. I mean, there's a lot of, you know, I remember being bored and just being outside and exploring and I owe the caring part of it to my mom. We lost mom two years ago, but she was I mean, all she ever wanted to do is have kids. And so me and my brothers really benefited from her and her care. And I guess I saw her like she didn't go to college. She married my dad, like, really young. And, they were great parents, but I think I saw her really caring for people and how that made a difference. I think that's really where it started for me at a young age. Cool. And and then as I got to learn more about school, I was an okay student. I was interested, I guess, you know, obviously in a lot of the sports and music and a lot of different things. But I always, always, always thought it was so cool. My, my pediatrician is name is Link Murphy. I don't know where Doctor Murphy is now, but he was Doctor Murphy. Yeah.

RC: Shout out to Doctor Murphy.

KS: His father, the original Doctor Murphy was the team physician for the Ohio State football team. So, you know, so I was enamored by that. And then just how how my

pediatrician was super, super, you know, he was very, very he took time to ask me questions and to ask about what I was interested in. I just thought that was really so cool that you could make a living doing that. And I was always, always fascinated with medicine, human body. And so the caring part I think I got honestly from from mom and the way that I was cared for and then just the curious, my, the curiosity part, I probably picked up from a lot of different people in my life who really found an interest in me.

RC: And then, as you have told us when you were nine, there was a little bit of a life change or around nine, little bit of a life change. You got to walk us through this. Tell us what that was.

KS: second, second and third grade somewhere around there.

RC: Yeah. So we're around there. Yeah.

KS: And so I was just real brief. I was I was told this I don't remember I just remember having a great childhood, but I was told that I just couldn't I couldn't stay on task in the classroom. Right. But when it came time for I probably this is probably probably like full of myself is probably really what it was. But when it came time for school productions and music stuff like I was all in, I loved I love the stage, I love people looking at you. It was really probably selfish, probably had somewhat of a complex for that. You know, it's amazing. It's amazing the response you get when you stand up in front of people and you're comfortable doing that. The response, the energy you get back. You always hear musicians talking about how intoxicating that is. It's true. So I had an affinity to for music, but we put on plays and different things. I have a brother who eleven months younger than me, and so we would always be goofing off with music and just singing and doing different things. And what was actually happening was we were giving each other feedback as kids. Like, no, that kind of was terrible. Or no that was great. You do that, you know, like, that's not normal. Like, you know, like you you don't get that sort of feedback, you know, about just kind of stepping out and just kind of doing things. This is when R&B and rap and Michael Jackson was huge. And so like everybody wanted to be Michael Jackson. And then at the same time, my mom and dad were listening to some of the best music of all time, Sam Cooke and Stevie Wonder and the Commodores. I mean, all of this stuff and even back into the 50s, the stuff that they would Bill Haley and the Comets, we would I mean, the GS, it was just insane. Just crazy what we listened to all the time records just constantly on a mom would listen to music and do whatever she probably did escape us or what she did.

But what you're referring to is they they took us to the Ohio State Fair. And I think, I think this is like somewhere between 82 and 84, somewhere in that neighborhood, and actually saw Cool and The Gang open up for the Commodores. And the Commodores are having a

reunion tour where Lionel Richie was welcomed back to the band because of they were having a, I don't know, a falling out, and it's sort of well documented, but I don't know, he fell out from them or they fell from him either way.

But what I mean, what I was saying earlier is I just I didn't really know. I knew the songs, just I knew the tunes just from from hearing them in the house. But what I saw on stage and the lights and the dancing and the energy, and it just was like, I got to figure out how to do something like that. That is, that was and it's just legendary. Those groups are just legendary. And so it was the it was the musicianship. It was the camaraderie. It was the actual music. It was all of it. And that just sort of was really seminal moment moment for me in terms of music.

RC: And then for everybody who's wondering, Lionel Richie is that guy from American Idol, if anybody, and also Nicole's father, I guess people might know him from from that. But even that ages me. That just.

KS: Yeah, crazy.

RC: So that is but that is an awesome first like concert moment.

BC: Oh yeah. And I think after that you were kind of like, I need to get me some of that action.

KS: I always sort of go back to that, you know, like just wow. Unbelievable.

RC: Hey, Bern, I think there were probably a lot of people in that crowd that night who were probably thinking, I got to get me some of that action because they weren't thinking about the concert, though that was probably a different thing.

BC: Like, I need to be up there. I need to be doing what they do

RC: Different different from what I was saying. But yeah, sure, sure, sure. Moving on. So so Kevin. So. All right, this is so this leads to tell me about the Schuer's. Am I saying that?

KS: Oh, wow.

RC: The Schuers.

KS: Yeah. Yeah. I'm not exactly too sure how to start this. So, like I mentioned, my brother Jamie, I've two brothers. My brother Chris in Chicago is four years older than me. And then. Then there's me and then Jamie. He's 11 months younger than me. And so Jay and I, we're all thick as thieves. But Jay and I in particular, we were pretty tight doing all kinds of stuff together constantly. So his friends were my friends. My friends were his friends that we were great, a great apart. We actually could have been in same grade, but it was just kind of

a cool, sort of best built in best friend. And he was an athlete. He played college soccer, and I, I needed something, I wasn't a college athlete, so I needed my own thing. And good on mom and dad for just recognizing that in two young boys you're trying to figure out the world. We just we're the same, but we have two different interests way our interests are different, personalities are different. But everybody knew us as the Schuer brothers. And we would. That's kind of how it was like, What's Jamie doing? What's Kevin doing? The other the other piece of this before I get into the band was that my older brother? I mean, I don't think there's anything better than an old having an older sibling sort of introduce you to music. He's he's four years ahead of me, but it's almost, almost four and a half. But it's almost like a whole different generation of music. Like when he went off to college and he was listening, he went to Michigan State. So he was like, it's when the Red Hot Chili Peppers were just really starting The Smiths and Depeche Mode and and all this stuff, like, I'm in, I'm a freshman in high school in 1989, and all that's on the radio is just like, you know, R&B stuff and pop stuff. The Police and like all that, all the stuff that he was really staying always listening to. He gave me sort of this well-rounded sort of education in terms of music and what who's who's listening to what. So I'll just say that. I mean, I just continue to consume all different types of music as a, as a kid and I got into bands in, in high school jazz bands playing drums. And so again, I said this the other day, I think that was formative for me. And any kid who's in theater or in music that and I pray, honestly pray that that the performing arts just doesn't go away. It's just because it's just we need we need people with that, that have that side of their creative brain.

We're all not going to be math and science, you know, experts, right? We have we have to have both sides. So I just got regular feedback about music and about what we're doing and about this concept of creating space as a drummer, like all this stuff. And so I just continue to develop as a musician and listen and meet people and try to get into musical situations and came to school, got in a band playing, and as a drummer with like 25 year old 20, 30 year olds, which I thought was like, I'm with all these old people and many team.

But we went to New York City and played and all this stuff. It's like, I'm going to school part time, full time, but part time. And then I got this, got this music thing, and then it's just like with anything else, I played drums so long. I was playing really hard, really fast, really loud. I just was like, you know, I don't want to switch gears and pick the guitar up. And it was almost like I'd always been playing, and it was just really, really sort of magical. Like, I can't believe like any, I'm a right handed player. So I had all the right handed tempo and syncopation and touch, and you can learn anybody, you can teach anybody the chords you need to play. So music was coming out and I could always sing.

And so that started this whole thing with me and my brother writing songs and then forming a band called The Schuer's, which ended up being like a little small business in college. And I barely got out of undergrad because of it, because I was really focused on on that and driving around and doing the college circuit. And so and you were we made two records and we had like a little independent following.

And I'll be in Trader Joe's still today. People were like, wait, are you were you in some band? And it was like, you know, 30 years ago.

RC: That is so cool.

KS: It's nuts. So our stuff is out there on the internet, on it's on iTunes and Spotify and it's a little hard, you know, it's still hard to listen to because I'd do it different. But it's really nostalgic for me because those are personal songs, you know, about whatever I was going through back then and, and we were able to connect with a lot of people over those tunes.

RC: That is so cool. Where all, did you tour where all did you go?

KS: Yeah. So we really we really focused in on the college circuit just because all of our friends were like, yeah, you need to come to Ohio University or you need to come to Chicago and play. Or so it was Chicago, DePaul, Indiana, Ohio State. OH, Miami of Ohio. We went out to Princeton University of play show. And then we would we would play shows in the South. We played in North Carolina a bunch and Georgia. And so, in Tennessee. So yeah, it was really it was really sort of in this part of the part of the country.

RC: What a cool time of your life, you know, what would you for now, folks, that we want we want to let people know you can go out and still find the Schuer's on, on, on your on your, on your places where you go find your music. But so for folks like, what would you compare? I've listened to them. What would you what would you compare them to?

KS: Yeah, I get that. I've gotten that a lot. Like, oh, you were in a band. What do you guys sound like? It's all original music. And I mean, I think we were we were just influenced by what was going on a lot at the time, what was popular at the time. So it's really it's really pop music, I would say indie folk sort of vibe. Right? So acoustic guitar driven.

RC: Yeah, harmonies.

KS: Harmonies definitely. Correct. So yeah. So it's like John Mayer was introduced to the Indigo Girls essentially is what somebody told us. I was like, that's kind of lame, but but yeah, so it was just sort of how we how we did things.

RC: I mean, that is so amazing. And so.

BC: After you decided you're a bio major and you're touring and then you graduate, what was your goal? What was your end goal? What were you doing after graduation?

KS: I'll have to I'll have to shout out Beth Garvey, who's still here. She works at the University. I needed I needed to scratch the science itch and I needed like to make some money. And Beth, who is an accomplished researcher here, 20-30 year career at the university, was new to the university and needed someone to help sort of run her lab. And she hired me and she not only gave me, she not only scratched the science itch. And understanding how a bench researcher works their craft and how I can help with that it's responsibility. And it's she gave me speaking opportunities over the stuff that we were working on. And so, yeah, I'm just I'm just an amalgamation of so many people that sort of helped me along the way. And she's one of them. And not only that understood that music was a big part of what I was doing and allowed some flexibility and schedule for me to to travel and to make up work and to actually and then as, as sort of the writing was kind of on the wall.

You know, a career in music is difficult unless you're a superstar. And oftentimes it's it's just who you meet or it's just super lucky. You know, we always felt like we had to be ready for whatever, whatever moment or situation we were going to find ourselves in. And we were, we were we were a great band. Great. But it just didn't never really, you know, it was hard to pay the bills.

And, you know, you've got five, 5 or 6 guys that you're going around with and they are starting families. And so that that all sort of happened over the course of 2 or 3 years. And I started my family met my wife, we went, she's she's from Kentucky, we met at UK and we started our family. And it's like, you know, I need to have some sort of backup plan, you know, like, what am I doing?

RC: And oh, real quick. Was your wife a fan of The Schuers?

KS: Yeah. So yeah. So we did meet at, we played a we, we played a fraternity rush party in January of 98. And the Sigma Nus here I'll just awesome dudes still often dudes they had us play two nights. They paid us \$2,000. There's three of us. I thought I was an absolute millionaire. That's a lot of money for three people. Yeah. I'm like, what? I was thinking to myself. What? What band worth any worth their weight is a collection of dudes with college degrees. Like nobody. Like, we're doing this all wrong. So. Yeah. So I met her. So we played and she she walked in with a bunch of her, her sorority sisters and. Yeah, it was.

RC: I did not know that Bernadette.

BC: Okay. See, that is the good part. Because when you said I met her at UK, I was like, oh, like at the student center or in a class or something. And then all of a sudden it found out your music brought the love together.

KS: Yeah. Yeah, it I'm grateful for that. Obviously. So grateful for her and for that, for that moment in time, which we, we replay sort of often. It's sort of a sort of cute romantic and but we have four kids and we just married one of our daughters.

RC: Oh wow.

KS: And so it's just it's UK. I mean, so it is so sweet. But but yeah I met I met her here. Yeah. And so I just felt like I wanted to I wanted to get serious and I wanted to give school a better shot than I did. And it wasn't me putting down music. It was just meaning prioritizing school. And praying that that the graduate school was going to let me in with with what I earn as an undergraduate GPA.

RC: So but here's the thing. And I think there's a big point to all of this that you like to talk about. And, I mean, I'll let you expand on this, but what's cool about the path that you chose is that it doesn't mean that you have to let this other part of you go.

KS: Right? Yeah, I've said this and this is a me problem. This is a struggle that I have. And because I, I interact with some of the brightest, the, the of course our students are the best, but they really are just amazing people. And a lot of a lot of students just have this. They have wanted to be a PA or a doctor since I was in kindergarten, saying, and it's just been on that path all the way through. And I think I, I don't know if the word struggle is the right way to say it, but I am challenged because because of probably just because of my, my personal experience, probably what it is, my personal experience was so circuitous and so kind of I was being pursued, and I honestly think it was providential about all the things that worked on, worked out with me, but and continue to work out.

But I think, I think I just want everybody to sort of experience all of what life has to offer. And now it's it's challenging. We don't have to get into this, but it's just challenging having kids that are, you know, and they're they're young adults and a little younger is that things like comparison and social media like I it's going to make me sound ancient, but like honestly, that's affecting us in ways that we don't even really comprehend. And what honestly. And one of those things is, I think it's robbing us our ability of our ability to take a shot like take, just take, take a chance, be different, you know, to don't worry about being wrong, you know, I mean, if you if you're wrong. If you figure it out. But if you're if you're right, then that's outstanding.

If you want to get into music and you really just get out there and do it and don't worry about what everybody else is doing or not doing and or sort of showing you how life should be on Instagram or Snapchat. So that's a whole different thing. And I know I'm 51, I'm losing touch. But I just I just I just feel like that's a big part of it.

I want I want people to experience life, and then I want them to think about the ways that they've been gifted and go and go and do it, you know, go and do things.

RC: I love that.

BC: I don't say, yeah, that is my favorite. And I genuinely enjoy when I hear other people say that. Because our advisors myself, when we talk to prospective students, we tell them, hey, this is an elective you can take, oh, it's a health something. Okay. Is this interesting to you? Because do you want to do theater? Do you want to do photography? Like what do you want to do because you're going to have so many health related classes. This is not going to be something that, you know, like do something that's fun, enjoy your time here, take advantage of the things that you want to do. And we try to talk about how our students do the same thing. They're involved in this or involved in this. They have passion for this, but they're also doing this. So I love when students tell me some of the things that they're doing that's completely outside of the box, something that I didn't think that they would be doing. And I'm just I love that, that they're still putting that passion that they have and not just like, you know, putting it in a box. And maybe I'll get to it in a couple of years.

RC: And a lot of them we've had on this show.

BC: Yeah.

RC: You know, I mean, it's but it just so illustrates what you're talking about. And now that they also have professors who are doing the same thing and have done the same thing is so important.

KS: Yeah. For sure, for sure.

RC: So, Kevin, can you tell us. And we've got into this a little bit, but recently we had a PhD student who is also a very talented table tennis player.

KS: Oh, wow. Yeah.

RC: You know, and we've had, you know, students who are PA students. Oh. But also, by the way, are very talented airline pilots and flight instructors. And, you know, everything that we're talking about, what I find interesting is the comparisons that all of them can make and the similarities that they can find in these, what I guess we could call extracurricular activities that they're doing, and they're more professional careers.

KS: Sure.

RC: Can we find any of those similarities in being a performer, or being a singer or a musician, and then being a great teacher, or being a great researcher, or doing something like that in your PA job? Does that exist?

KS: I think so I am, I guess if you boil it all away, I'm a relational person. I, I like relating to people and understanding people and asking where they're from. We talked about Bernadette being from Riverside, like those sort of things. Like, I've really, really enjoyed that because I think it leads to understanding people better. And I've got it gotten into some amazing conversations and learned so much about people in about trials and about perseverance just by asking somebody, hey, where are you from?

RC: Right.

KS: Honestly. And so, yeah, I mean, I don't think it's a stretch also to, to to say that, you know, in the performing arts, it's connection as well. And that's something that's really hard to quantify. But it happens. I've seen it happen where you just connect or not connect with what if it's a play, if it's a show, if it's a concert, it's it's connection. And the other thing is it's an emotional connection. Actually, I mean, to I mean, you know, we've all had this experience and we hear two bars of a song that comes on and it immediately takes you back to wherever.

RC: For me, it's a summer breeze. Just I'm I'm two years old. Yeah.

KS: So that's a powerful, powerful sort of human element that I hope we always recognize and I will always sense and feel. And the same thing can happen in the classroom, too. Like I'm desperate when we talk, talk to our faculty members about our students, regardless of what generation they represent, regardless how old or young its connection, they crave it. They may not. They may not demonstrate that when they're looking at you. I've seen that sort of thousand mile fair, you know, as you're teaching. And it's sort of disheartening because you're like, this is not connecting, but but it is. And that's what they want. And. You learn that through trial and error. And but I think that there's to your, to your question. Right. I think it's that's how I would answer it is that we're seeking we're seeking a strong, strong connection in the classroom with our students and how how to learn how to how to be life changing clinicians and then and then doing what I've done the other part of my life and connecting with people through song and music is special.

RC: I love that so much. And then the other thing too, that I think, I mean, it's kind of a no duh. Right? But like communicating like like you're, you're a communicator and like it just seems like in every way, whether we're just talking, you know, I feel like you're a listener. I

feel like I feel like like you can relay an idea in an interesting way, whether that's a singing or getting up in front of somebody and, and telling a story or something like that.

KS: That's a, that's you just reminded me of. And if any musicians are listening, I think that's, that is a lost art in being a performer or interacting in a band context is active listening. I learned that a long, long time ago. You have to listen. You're a part of the whole Kevin play for this song, not don't play for you. Play for the what the song needs. And so you can only do that as a musician if you're listening. And you know the 10,000 hour, you know, you need to put in the time to work on the chops through the ability to, to play the instrument. But once you've once you've done that, then what's your what? What I try to tell people is we need your interaction in this context. We don't need you to be plugged into the chart, but we need interaction. And that is that when you have a collection of people on stage and and it happens in a classroom too, when you're all connected and you're all listening, that that's a I just wish more people could experience that. That is an amazing feeling.

RC: Oh, I love that. And just to piggyback off that, I think, I think a version of what you're talking about is what anyone in any profession who works within a group of people.

KS: Yeah.

RC: Could take and use that, use those skills and that advice, you know, Bernadette, we talk about this all the time. We talk about the marketable skills that people are looking for when they're hiring today. And what are we? We always talk about good communicators. What else do we talk about? We talk about like people who listen, people who can problem solve. You know, nobody ever talks about what your GPA was in your math class. You know, it's always what are these interpersonal skills that either some people have or some people don't. And we want to hire the people who can work with others, who can listen, who can help figure out stuff and find the easiest, cheapest way to be able to solve a problem, and who also enjoy communicating with other people and can do that. I just feel like as a performer or as a clinician or as a whatever, these are the things you can take away from this. And it's fascinating to me. And it's also like the most basic like thing we could ever think of. And it's become so important.

KS: Yeah, yeah. Totally agree.

BC: So, Kevin, how are you getting your music itch scratched now?

KS: So couple ways. One is I used to lead worship at our church, which is something like I never, ever. Like, I was like, nope, not not doing that. I'm not going to be. If I told I say this all the time, I was like 25. And I said, If I'm 40 and I'm leading music in a church or singing at weddings, I'm a loser. And like, that's kind of what I do now. And and in the reality, I'm just

there's nothing wrong with that. What I've come to realize is that a big part of me is big part of my identity is being a musician. Okay? But it doesn't change. That doesn't change based on where where my primary source of income is or who my friends are. Like, it's just like, that's just who I am.

That's just part of who I am. And so many people fought into me, so many great experiences on the road and with my brother and friends and like, like, so that's what I do. That's just what I do. And so I'm not shy of any sort of musical context to, to participate in. And now I find myself sort of mentoring younger people and just talking about music or songs and, and how, how it relates and instrumentation, like all the stuff that I've learned over the years from people I'm able to share and so I'm active in our at our church and developing younger, younger people who are wonderful musicians and like our musical director of our band, when we were in our band, Mike Vandermark got to shout out Mike.

RC: Shout out Mike.

KS: He auditioned to be in the shoes that we need a bass player and 1999, and this kid shows up with like a binder. He had charted out all of our songs by hand and then just knocked out the audition, and I was like, wow, this guy is ready to go. The the sheet music for the base of the songs. I couldn't believe it. But Mike and I have been dear friends forever. And so my started a he started variety things, was in a was in a band called Funk Seminary after after after the shooters and he works here in town. Probably the best musician I know. And then he started maybe ten, 12 years, probably 12 years ago, the Lexington Lab Band, which has been I don't even understand it, but it's been a crazy experience.

Some of the most talented people in town and in this region have participated in, in creating what is the Lexington Lab Band. And so I'm, I'm active in that group, which is so much fun and been in the studio and Yeah, so that's.

RC: We have to tell everybody what what you guys do.

KS: Honestly, okay, so when he first I'll say this when he first asked me, hey, I want you to come and sing these songs, I had no idea what he was doing. I'm like, what do you mean? I'm going to sing Huey Lewis. I don't I don't Huey Lewis in the news. If this is like, okay, I'll come and sing. He's like, no, what we're going to do is you're going to show up in a in a studio and everybody's going to know these songs. There's like 3 or 4 songs, and each song we're going to play three times, and every time we play, we're going to be there's going to be video, video, people just walking around and filming it, and we're going to, we're going to post, we're going to post, produce it, we're going to edit it all down, you know, but it's going to be live. It's going to be a live performance, but we're just going to take bits and pieces and of the audio as well as the video, and then we're going to put all of that on, on YouTube. And

I was like, fine. Well that sounds that sounds interesting. We'll do it. Well, I mean these first of all, I've never I've never interacted with musicians this gifted I mean, literally that will say we're going to do Richard Marx in the summer night and can can you guys can you guys record the tune on this date a month away? Sure. I'll be there. I show up to sing it and every it's when the musicians start in. It sounds like the it literally sounds like the record. Like I have the I hate to say I have the easiest job in the world because we've done we've done all kinds of I've done well they've done all kinds of stuff. I've done like I've done Stevie Wonder and Lewis, Richard Marx and like songs, Bruce Hornsby songs that I've been singing, you know, in the in the shower, in the car, whatever for 30 years, whatever.

And so show up and sing these tunes and it sounds just like the record. And he puts it on YouTube, and people just watch these things all over the world. We have a live show every September, the first Sunday in September. There's like 5000 people at this place every year over the last ten years.

RC: Like tens of thousands of views on YouTube of these songs. And they are so well done. It is insane.

KS: We were I was just asked if I could go to Arizona and San Diego and another location the other day if I could clear the deck to go and spend two days as the band's been booked at these places, I just it is. It has a life of its own. It's taken off. I mean, that's maybe the cool thing about social media. Maybe there's a cool thing, but it people from all over the world are commenting on these songs. They are really, really well done. Mike, Mike, Mike Vandermark. If he's going to do something in music, it's not going to be halfway. It's going to be it's he's going to bring his notepad. He's going to chart it out. These things are so, so well done. And it's really, really cool to be a part of, of of a group like that. I yeah. If you haven't seen it, I'm not saying if I don't get anything from it other than just scratching the musical itch, but please check it out because I think there's there's songs on there for everybody.

We do R&B tunes that have heavy metal, like hard rock and classic rock tunes. And it's. Yeah, it's just at at my age and doing that. Wow. I mean, pretty, pretty special. Be honest with you.

RC: So you're going to be going on tour with it. Are you going to be going to these.

KS: Yeah, there is a there is a I wish I knew the specifics, but there is a the band has been booked in Tucson, Arizona in November. For a special like it's like former military first responders, a big event that they put on in that community. And the band is the headlining band that evening, one of the evenings. And so.

BC: Okay.

KS: Yeah, it's really cool. So if you're if you're in the Tucson area, I don't know when the November something, but but that's really neat to travel into to again, like I mentioned, to interact and connect with people through song is is really, really cool.

RC: And the live show in September and the live.

KS: Yeah, the live show is honestly I'm just probably is a self-promoting. I'm sorry.

BC: No, this is this is good.

RC: This actually my job, man.

BC: We should make like a graphic and put it on the TV screens.

KS: It's Sunday. Well, you can look you can go the Lexington Lab Band and look it up, and they'll start to promote it. But it's Sunday, September 6th, out at a farm in Wilmore. Yeah.

RC: So it's a little farm in Wilmore Sunday, September 6th. Yeah. Lexington. And I'm there. Definitely.

KS: There's like food trucks. And I mean, honestly, honestly, you show up and you're like, That's LED Zeppelin. Like, holy smokes. That's that's the Rolling Stones. Holy smokes is Bruce Hornsby. You know like it's wild.

BC: I love that.

RC: So so we've already been going 40 minutes. This is I mean this is such an enjoyable conversation. I feel like we are keeping you longer than what we said. But just to kind of, to wrap this up, I mean, this is such an interesting, a mix of, of, of science and the arts here and humanities, and it's actually a topic that we got into recently with another student of ours who is a sophomore researcher who also just won one of our big humanities awards here, because she wants to lean more that way and expand her her knowledge.

And, you know, I just think this is so cool that we can offer professors who are kind of preaching this idea. And so, Kev, one of the things that we always ask at the end is when you hear of someone who is maybe interested in something like this, you know, they're like, I'm going to go the PA route. But I'm concerned that maybe I might have to give up some of this other kind of creative stuff that I love to do, but then they can look at somebody like you who has not done that. What do you say to somebody who has that concern?

KS: Yeah, I think Bernadette said it a bit ago is I mean, there's, there's room enough for you to, for a student who is interested in PA school for you to get an undergrad degree and something that you really enjoy, like we've had, we've had all kinds of people have asked

me, and I get it. I totally understand what what degree do I need to be competitive in PA or medical school?

RC: Right.

KS: And that is to me, that is sort of what I heard, what I was focused in on. It's not to say that I chose the wrong major, but that's, you know, biology and chemistry majors go into medicine, period. Physics period. You know, that's it. I think the world is so, so big. You can explore all kinds of all kinds of things. You should choose a degree that you find infinitely fascinating. And we've had music majors. We've had concert cellist. Take all the prereqs. I mean, he was a music major, but he took all the prereqs to get into PA school and and knocked him out. But he's a concert cellist and a PA now which is which is so cool. Yeah. So I think that is it's back to this whole thing. Like what I love the scratching your your it's like what scratches your itch.

What is it. And and go do you not don't go do you on Snapchat like go do you. And whatever is interesting to you my son is is is graduating high school tomorrow and he's getting into forestry. And I love this kid. I mean, I love all my kids, but I love this kid because who does that? Who goes to school saying, I want to go and get a degree in forestry and it may change for him. And if it does support him, you know, it's so. But I would say do what? Do what you feel like is infinitely curious. What you're curious in, what you enjoy. And that's probably a mantra for life. Like not not be selfish and just do you all the time. That's not what I'm saying. But like, take risks, don't fear messing up and I hope you do mess up, at least in school is such a safe place to do that. Learn and grow.

And so yeah, that's that's what I would that's that's what I'm doing. Exactly what I need to be doing. I really is not. This is the truth. I really enjoy coming in here and doing what I do. I work with some amazing human beings in in our department. Amazing. Our students are incredible too. And so, yeah, it's it's just a wonderful thing. But yeah, you need to you need to pick something that you're interested in and don't do a chemistry biology major just because you feel like that's that's the route to go, that's going to make you more highly sought after. It's just not not true.

RC: If anything, just come in and do a human health sciences major. That's all. That's all we'll say. So. All right. Thank you so much, Dr. Schuer, for this. This is a real pleasure. And I think if we have any prospective students who are going to listen to that, I just think it's still beneficial to hear something like this. So thank you so much, sir. We appreciate it.

KS: Thank you guys. You guys are you guys are the best. Appreciate you.

BC: If he hasn't said everything that we have been trying to tell students like you can do things that are interesting to you. And the fact that he is like, I play the drums. You know what? I just picked up the guitar. Oh, you know what? I sing now? It's like, wait, what?

RC: That's really good.

BC: One man band.

RC: That's really, really good. You're right. The the thing that is so cool is that I love the idea of, I think I think you actually got the title of this one because it's what we're doing is we're scratching the itch with Dr. Schuer. And the idea is that you don't have to lose yourself in your career. Your career is part of who you are. It is not who you are. There are of these other things that you can be right. And it's that to me that is so cool because that doesn't minimize what you're doing.

BC: No.

RC: It just you just add to it.

BC: It just makes it better. And I wish we could have an hour podcast with him to find out all the other exciting things that he does or, you know, hobbies he has. I do think that it's really nice to see somebody who is successful and loves what he does kind of talk about. Yeah, well, when I was in my undergrad, I was like traveling and I was doing this. I really wasn't, you know, school wasn't my first priority for students who might be doing that and thinking they can't do anything else. You can. And it's really nice to see somebody that you know is future PAs or PAs that you trust and admire to see yourself in them. I think I'm there, relatable.

RC: I like the other theme of this. I think, too, that he touched on, which is there is nothing that he has accomplished by himself. It's always mentors, peers, other people who are in our atmosphere who help us along the way. And I just that's another that's another thing. And it's not just, by the way, you know, an older person that you look up to who helps lead you to wherever. You know, I like him talking about his friend who, you know, comes up with his, you know, with all of his tablature, of all of his music later on starts this really famous, popular Lexington band that he's a part of now and that it's so cool.

BC: So I love that.

RC: And then, of course, also, if we can take one thing away from any of this, is that if you want to meet your significant other, get in a band.

BC: Yep. It's the only way to do it.

RC: Get in a band. You're going to meet your husband or your wife and you're going to live happily ever after.

BC: And he could be possible available for your wedding if you reach out.

RC: Very good, very good. Your wedding. You're possibly bar mitzvah.

BC: I was just going to say that.

RC: Yeah, bar mitzvah. You can. You're good.

BC: I just want to hire him to put on a porch concert, you know?

RC: Do it. Your quinceanera.

BC: Love it.

RC: Look at me being multicultural.

BC: I know, look at you. All these parties.

RC: I love it, I love this, I love the interview, I love I love everything he's doing. And I just think that's a really, really fun one. Thank you to Dr. Kevin Schuer making time. We know there's a lot going on in his life. Thank you to you, Bernadette.

BC: Thank you to you.

RC: Right. Thank you to all of those listeners out there who get to join us and celebrate all the great people that we have here in the College of Health Sciences. Until next month, when we will have another great subject for y'all. This has been the way podcast from the College of Health Sciences at the University of Kentucky.

BC: Bye.

This has been the Way Podcast, the official podcast of the University of Kentucky's College of Health Sciences. The way is written and produced by Ryan Clark, Bernadette Cortez, Sam Reynolds and Will. Join us next month for another episode of The Way. Brought to you by UK's College of Health Sciences, your gateway to the health professions.