

An Investigation of Support for Community Bands:
A Sample Second Draft Assignment Response for
ENGL 135 at DeVry University in San Antonio

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Far more tenable is the idea of soliciting grants and donations from local non-profits, government agencies, and individual donors. Hebert (2008) offered one example of the success of such measures. His article's focus is a community-based band in Auckland, one with a history spanning decades and that enjoys broad popular support. Its funding, by report, comes from "various philanthropic organizations and community trusts" (Hebert, 2008, p. 184). The band is not affiliated with a single other organization, but rather serves its community at large. More, social circumstances had imperiled its continued operation (Hebert, 2008, 170); it was from robust community support that the band was able to continue, offering a compelling example of the value of local support for local community bands.

For further justification, Winton and Evans (2016) remarked on ways in which community organizations can work to their own advantage. Their work treated a series of case studies and suggests one effective means community organizations have for gathering support is conducting their own research and presenting it to policymakers such as local governments. Though they only treated three individual cases, they laid out a useful guideline that seems broadly applicable. A community organization will do well to look at the research that has been done in line with its immediate purpose, make the overall results accessible to a non-expert audience, and work to promote the research of others in presenting it to local policymakers. The last component is key; the local must be the focus. That is, support for community bands should be solicited from the communities out of which they emerge.

In addition, Mcleod et al. (2016) have noted that even in a field so far removed from community music as environmental conservation, removal from local conditions has a decidedly unhelpful effect. That is, while the expertise of those far away from those places being served can be valuable and the support of outside agencies is helpful, not having local input and support effectively dooms any efforts to assist in addressing even the largest problems. Conversely, explicitly involving the local public in addressing local issues makes the address of those issues work far better than trying to impose a from-outside view of how things ought to be. Since the local is necessary in addressing larger issues that attract regional, national, and international support and attention, it follows that local support is likely to be vital in those smaller-scale matters that, while important to those engaging in them and the communities of which they are part, do not attract wider attention. Most community bands are of such sort, so it seems fitting that soliciting local support would be the best means of securing support for community bands.

Further argument comes from the information provided by community bands themselves. An admittedly small sample of 22 such organizations in the Dallas / Ft. Worth and San Antonio, Texas, areas (found from the first page of results from a Google search for “community band” and setting aside *Wikipedia* entries and duplicate results) noted several broad classes of support for community bands: corporate sponsorships and advertising, foundation support, local government support, affiliate club support (e.g. local branches of Lions Clubs), churches, local schools, and individuals. (See Figure 1, below.) Notably, most reported receiving support in the form of rehearsal space, with 11 of the school-supported bands, two of the church-supported, and two of the government-supported bands noting such support. One band also reported formal endorsement by its municipality as the official city band. It is clear, then, that there is abundant support available for community bands, and from sources including local governments.

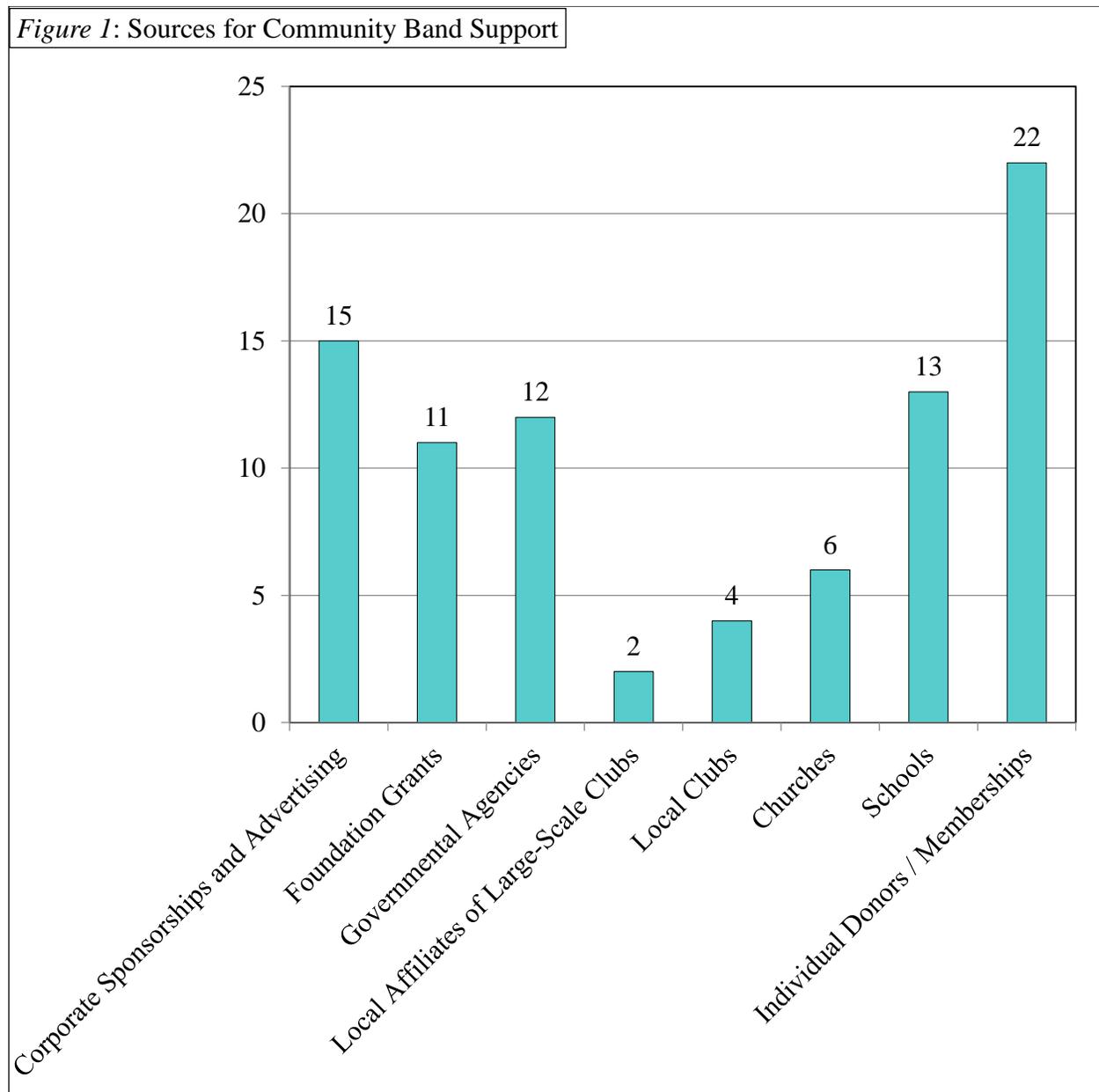


Figure 1: The figure shows the number of the bands reviewed reporting support from various sources. Information derives from Allen Community Band (2018), Arlington Community Band (2018), Carrollton Wind Symphony (2018), Denton Community Band (2010), Frisco Community Band (2017), Helotes Area Community Band (2018), Hill Country Community Band (2018), Irving Symphonic Band (2018), Lone Star Wind Orchestra (2018), Mansfield Wind Symphony (2018), McKinney Community Band (2018), Mesquite Community Band

(2018), Metropolitan Winds (2018), Montrose Community Band (2018), New Horizons Band Dallas (2018), Oak Lawn Band (2018), Plano Community Band (2018), Richardson Community Band (2018), Rockwall Community Band (2018), Southlake Community Band (2018), Town North Concert Band (2018), and Wylie Community Band (2018).

Only one source of support was reported uniformly among the bands reviewed, however: individual donors and memberships. Most of the bands' webpages made some remark or another about accepting donations from individuals, and most made a point of listing those donors who had given and had not asked to remain anonymous. As such, while other sources of support should be sought, the prevailing practice among community bands appears to be soliciting money from individuals, whether in the form of donations from those outside the organization or membership dues from those who would participate in it. Working with local agencies appears to be next most helpful, far more so in the aggregate than other sources.

Knowing that seeking support from local individuals and agencies, rather than looking to regional, national, or international groups, is both a best practice observed among community bands and suggested as necessary in other endeavors, I mean to work in my own local community to find support for the jazz band I am happy to play with. I know, too, that other groups are likely to compete for similar resources. Fortunately, it appears to be the case that people are willing to give of their time and resources to aid community bands of several stripes, not only in exotic locales, but in places close to where I live, work, and play my horn. Given how much good a community band can do, and for how many people it can do that good, supporting such an organization surely has to read as a worthy thing for people to do, something that makes lives better now and, it is to be hoped, in years and decades to come.

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