To Friends of the Folk Scholarship Committee,

Since the fall of 2018, I have been studying at The University of New Mexico to get my bachelor’s degree in Music Education. This past year has been anything but easy, but I am so grateful for the opportunity to further educate myself in the hopes of one day educating the next generations. I just wanted to give the people that made it all possible an update on my life and studies.

I think the one thing I did not quite understand going into this major was how many classes I would be taking each semester in order to graduate at a reasonable time. I think one of my teachers explained perfectly why the music department is so difficult. Unlike other jobs, you are required to not only understand the material but master it. An accountant does not have to master all areas in math in order to effectively do their job, but for a musician, it is a requirement. Because I am mastering my craft, I have been taking about 14 classes each semester. This means that the majority of my time is dedicated to my studies, and because of this, I was able to maintain a 3.72 GPA.

On top of my general studies, I was asked to become the freshman representative on the NAfME board, otherwise known as the National Association for Music Education. My role is to help plan and organize social and educational events for the music majors at my university. Additionally, we maintain a newsletter and blog online that are posted monthly.

Even though a majority of my time has been focused on school, I have had time to also explore New Mexico and all the beauty it holds. I’ve traveled up Sandia’s Peak and visited a national park and Native American reserve to learn about their history and culture. It was amazing to see buildings and religious grounds made so long ago still standing. These experiences are ones that I will never forget and were so honored to be a part of.

I have been so blessed with this opportunity to better myself, and it could not have been possible without your scholarship donation. I can’t thank you enough for how much you have helped support my ambitions. I look forward to how much I will grow as I dive further into my studies, and I can’t wait to share more of my journey with you.

With gratitude,

Jessa Abel