



Songbird

Junior Madi Davis sings her way to fame, makes it onto “The Voice”

Story by Alex Walters. Photos by NBC.

The lights are dim and the crowd is silent.

She begins to strum her guitar, singing tentatively at first. But as the music swells, she regains her confidence. Within the first 19 seconds, Pharrell Williams hits the red button and his chair turns. Gwen Stefani hits her button only a half-second later. Junior Madi Davis has made it onto “The Voice.”

Madi Davis auditioned for the ninth season of “The Voice” on Sep. 28, where she will compete for a chance of signing a record deal with Universal Studios and winning \$100,000. Since then, she’s made it to the Top 10.

“It feels like such a huge accomplishment,” Madi Davis said. “Every time I learn a song and every time I perform it, it’s like a sigh of relief.”

Madi Davis has been singing since the moment she could first talk. She knew wanted to be a singer after watching “American Idol.” However, she suffered from a condition known as Serous Otitis Media Syndrome, or more commonly known as Middle Ear Syndrome.

“When I was younger, like one, I had some fluid behind my ears,” Madi Davis said. “It’s something that is really common. I had to get tubes in my ears, which is also something that a lot of people get, but the tubes came out so I had this surgery and it severely damaged my hearing.”

By the time she was in fifth grade, Madi Davis had underwent multiple reconstructive surgeries and her ability to hear improved immensely. She threw herself into music.

“She got to work,” mother Wendy Davis said. “She figured out how to sing by working at it. I’m proud of her.”

Madi Davis joined her school choir in elementary school and was soon nominated for a national children’s choir that she was in for two years.

“She got a taste of singing with really high caliber direction with kids who could really sing well,” Wendy Davis said.

She toured with The Children’s Chorus of Greater Dallas in Paris as a result.

“Music just kind of found a place in my life,” Madi Davis said. “It was kind of irreplaceable and I started thinking, ‘Well, maybe I could sing for myself and play instruments at the same time.’ I started writing my own music and then it kind of became my thing.”

In the sixth grade, Madi Davis joined Dowell’s percussion in the band, but quit so she could take private drum lessons. She began the piano and the guitar. Madi Davis went to Boyd until the end of her freshman year, when she began homeschooling so she could focus on her music.

“I think of myself as a Bronco still,” Madi Davis said. “I had to go because of the show, because music was taking up a lot of my time.”

Madi Davis participated in many school competitions. “The Voice” is the only show she auditioned for.



“She felt like ‘The Voice’ really premiered local talent and wasn’t as silly as some of the other reality shows,” Wendy Davis said. “She wants to be taken seriously.”

Madi Davis went through several auditions before she actually performed in front of the judges at the blind auditions.

“She did an open call and she got a call back,” Wendy Davis said. “Once you make it through those levels, you still have to do an executive audition, which is in front of the producers of the show.”

Out of the 50,000 people who audition, only 100 people make it to the blind auditions. Even then, there’s still a chance of not performing in front of the judges.

“It’s really something that’s kind of hard for a lot of us,” Madi Davis said. “We all think, especially at this point, ‘What if we had been one of those people who had been last on the list and we didn’t get to go?’ It reminds how grateful we are to actually be here and to have gotten this far.”

Before she went into her audition, Madi Davis hoped Adam Levine would choose her for his team because she felt they shared similar, yet unique, music style. Neither Levine nor Blake Shelton turned around, leaving Madi Davis with the decision of choosing between Stefani and Williams.

“I’ve never really had that sort of experience,” Madi Davis said. “Ever. Then, I get up on stage and two of the biggest names in music turn around for me and sitting right in front of me and listening to me sing. I was just scared and overcome with emotion.”

Madi Davis chose Williams and has remained on his team ever since.

“When he turned for me, I realized how much I really wanted to be on his team,” Madi Davis said. “But it’s amazing to see how much I’ve grown. I couldn’t ask for a better mentor.”

According to her mother, Madi Davis has not only enhance her style of music, but she’s also become more confident.

“She’s been working at solo singing and songwriting for the past four years,” Wendy Davis said. “But to have someone say it’s good enough blows my mind. I think it’s exactly what she needed to believe in herself.”

Junior Bridget Lee, who knew Madi Davis from her lacrosse team, said she has grown so much since.

“I was super excited and proud of her because I knew she would make it,” Lee said. “I’ve gone to her talent show that she had at Boyd. I’ve bought all of her EPs that she has on iTunes. She’s really explored the different artists and made the songs her own. I’m so happy about how far she’s gotten.”

Madi Davis applied to Interlochen, a world class music and art school in Michigan, and was accepted. She has not yet decided if she will be attending it if she wins “The Voice.” But, she is certain she will continue to pursue a career in the music industry whether she wins or loses.

“It’s really important to have a commitment to yourself, a commitment to what you want to do,” Madi Davis said. “Because at the end of the day that’s really what’s going to make your dreams happen.”