

Sophie Meinhardt Memorial Scholarship 2021

Charlie Pille

Our Lady of Visitation

“Which song do you want to play next?” I said to my Uncle Ron. Every few weekends, my Uncle Ron and I get together to jam. In case you didn’t know, jamming is like a mini-concert. My Uncle Ron is a breathtaking guitar player and has been since I met him on the day I was born. He inspired me to start playing. I followed in his footsteps and started playing guitar and drums when I was three years old. Unfortunately, in 2020 Uncle Ron was diagnosed with esophageal cancer.

I was devastated when I heard the news. Not only was this sad because he had cancer, but we also had to stop jamming. I was contemplating about what I should do to cheer him up. My Uncle Ron and I are obsessed with Rush. My Uncle Ron might be the greatest Rush fan ever. He owns all of their records and knows every song. I am so happy when I get to play these songs with him. Suddenly, it hit me. I could help him by giving him a dose of his favorite medicine, music.

Later that weekend, I performed a tribute to him online while doing a cover of a Rush song called “Limelight.” He loved this. I went on to perform more of these songs for him each weekend. He treasured these performances and I think it helped lift his spirits. He has been feeling considerably better every day. We recently recorded a song together (virtually) called “The Spirit of Radio” by the band Rush...obviously. This experience has affected me significantly because it made me realize that through music, my gift from God, you can change someone’s attitude and accomplish a lot through spirit and song.