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A day in the life of a Music Professor

The morning of February 25th was the start of a special day. All my life I've always wondered what it was like to be a Music Professor and on that day I would get an answer. Weeks prior I had contacted Dr. Kevin Cooper about the possibility of shadowing him. He, of course agreed to the idea and we had a date scheduled. My only concern was transportation, Dr. Cooper teaches at Fresno City College and I was having a hard time getting transportation due to the fact that my mother was sick at the time and wasn't able to drive. I felt about giving up and canceling, but it turns out that 2 other friends of mine had also talked to Dr. Cooper about shadowing him. We decided to shadow him together, and that made our transportation much easier. I, along with Jose Castro, Ernesto Torres, and his mom went up to Fresno City and began our day with Dr. Cooper.

When we first got there, we were amazed by the beautiful campus. We quickly found Dr. Cooper's class and our job shadow officially began. His first class was "Beginning Guitar 1". We were smart enough to bring our guitars so we could follow along with the rest of his class. I was intrigued by the fact that he was teaching a "Blues" piece, it was interesting because it was something I had never played before. He handed us a copy of the piece they were playing and we quickly got to work. His first reaction of us was that we were very "quick learners". We had learned the piece in 15 minutes and that piece was the midterm piece for his class. We had mentioned that we were "Advance" students at our school and he was amazed by our level of skill. He later asked if we wanted to play a piece for the class and I was given the opportunity. I

played for his class and him, along with his class were really impressed, which made me feel really good.

His second class of the day was his “Intermediate-Advance” class and they were awesome. They were working on an ensemble piece and it was a “Jazz” piece which I really loved. In his second class we didn’t do much playing, we really focused on the way he led his class as a conductor. It was interesting to see how much his class respected him and it showed in their playing, they were really tight as a group which brought the piece to life. He mentioned that we were from Lindsay High and how great we were at guitar. Overall, I really enjoyed his class and it was interesting listening to the different styles that he incorporates in his classes.

After the class, he mentioned he had a 2 hour lunch break and we mentioned that we had to conduct an interview. He suggested that we go to the cafeteria, grab lunch and conduct the interview. As we got our food and prepared to pay, he said he would pay for our food which was really kind and caring, we thanked him and then made our way to our seats. We enjoyed our food and proceeded with the interview. He was very generous and answered all our questions and also offered some tips to practice, which we will take into consideration. In the end we decided to head back home and we said our goodbye's and thank you's and heading back home.

From this experience I've learned that even Music Professors have it tough in the field and no career is easy. I've been determine to follow the same route and hope to one day have a teaching career of my own. Dr. Cooper has given me loads of advice and I learned a lot from him in just one day. Before we left we mentioned that we will attending Fresno City in the fall and he was totally excited and says he can't wait for next year to begin. Being a Music teacher is no easy task, infact no career is an easy task. Dr. Cooper stated that he'd been bashed so many times for pursuing his career and that many people told him he wouldn't succeed, now he has no regrets and is proud of what he does and that is really inspiring to me and I've been motivated. I don't think I could've chosen a better person to shadow and I am very thankful for the opportunity

Dr. Cooper presented me and with his advice, I will continue to strive forward. In the end, this day was filled with a lot of learning, motivation, and of course music. I'm very much looking forward to my next two years where I will be under the guidance of Dr. Kevin Cooper.