

Chandler student makes cut for GCU album

BY DIANA QUINTERO
Contributor

A Chandler musician is one of the featured student artists on the fifth annual album produced by students in Grand Canyon University's worship arts program.

Travis Hathaway submitted two songs and to his disbelief, the one that he wrote "in five minutes" was selected for "Canyon Worship 2020."

Hathaway shared his inspiration to write his song "The Garden."

"I have a strong connection, I believe, with nature," he said. "I feel like it really speaks to how great and amazing God is, and how beautiful He is. And just the idea of creation, I wanted to try to capture that, and how beautiful it was in the garden."

Hathaway was able to get the majority of the recording completed before GCU's campus closed in March, but he had to return to get a few things finalized.

When he performed "The Garden" last year, he told GCU's news center that he doesn't feel nervous about singing but that he needs to work on speaking and ad-libbing before and after his song.

"People who love Jesus, who love music, it's really cool," he said.

Hathaway was one of two East Valley students who are on the album.

Gilbert resident Chandler Kruse made his album debut as well.

He's no stranger to the university's music program. He recorded at GCU while he was in high school and said he that helped him find a great fit in the school's worship arts program.

"This is a really cool opportunity that I don't think a lot of people get – to be part of something like this," said Kruse, who sings "All We Need" with Chris Calderon.

Kruse is a business management major but added worship arts as a minor because of what he saw in the program.

"It's such a high caliber of talent but it's also so extremely personal," he told GCU's campus news service. "I feel like I know half the people here, which is really cool. It doesn't feel like a huge corporate thing."

Kruse met Calderon at Likewise Worship, a collective of worship leaders. They were paired up to work on a song and wrote "All We Need" after discussing how they believe we are all "clueless, and the Lord is faithful in taking care of us."

Kruse also recorded the foundation



Chandler musician Travis Hathaway said his song, "The Garden" was written in five minutes, but it impressed producers of Grand Canyon University's worship arts program to the point where it is one of the cuts on its fifth annual "Canyon Worship" albums.
(Special to SanTan Sun News)

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of the song before the shutdown, but had to return for two sessions. He said that amid the chaos of the pandemic, recording the album was uncomfortable because of social distancing concerns.

"On the other hand, in a time of craziness, it was relaxing because it was music," he said. "It was something we were passionate about, something we were excited about and something that

we loved."

Despite the obstacles COVID-19 brought to the album's production, students were able to write and perform all 10 original songs. The greater part of the album was recorded in GCU's state-of-the-art recording studio before the pandemic forced a campus shut-down.

Students still had to adjust to the changes that the pandemic brought to

the completion of the album.

Recording studio manager Eric Johnson said that working with the students was beneficial as it allowed them to work more closely in comparison to the students who had to leave the state.

Every year students submit around 130-135 songs, hoping that theirs will be selected to be featured in the annual album.

"I've grown musically, spiritually, crazily just by the people I've been around," Kruse said. "Even just writing that song with Chris, he was showing me things that I was like, 'Oh, that was awesome, I never would have thought to do that.' It's affected how I play the piano and how I sing."

"Canyon Worship 2020" is available for streaming on iTunes, Google Play, Spotify, and Shazam, and can be purchased in the Lope Shop and other locations on GCU's campus for \$9.90. STSN

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