

Levine Scholars at UNC Charlotte attend the *Hamilton* Tour as an Arts event

Sophomore Levine Scholars Lily Witcher and Avery Taylor attended the downtown Charlotte production of the *Hamilton* North American Tour in January through the Leon Levine Foundation offered at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte (UNCC).

The Levine Scholars Program at UNCC provides students the opportunity to attend various arts and culture events each semester, funded by Senior Program Officer of Healthcare Dr. Mike Richardson of the Leon Levine Foundation. Students typically attend several shows in Charlotte per semester, based on a ranking system.

“[The Leon Levine Foundation] provides us with these opportunities and tickets because they think it’s really important for us to learn to appreciate the wonderful arts programs that are going on at Charlotte,” Witcher said.

The show ran at Belk Theater in Charlotte, N.C. from Jan. 7 to Feb. 2. Levine Scholars attended the Jan. 17 and Jan. 24 showtimes. Taylor, who saw the Jan. 17 show, was a first-time *Hamilton* viewer, and was excited about the performance.

“[Intermission] comes right after a very high point of emotional tension,” Taylor said. “I was feeling anxious about what was to come next, so I didn’t even leave the room. After the show, I went with a couple of my friends to the stagedoor to get our playbills signed, we were so impressed by these actors.”

Viewing arts and culture shows in Charlotte gives the Levine Scholars a chance to grow closer as a community. The students usually eat dinner together before the show and carpool. Witcher, who saw the show Jan. 24, and Taylor both carpooled with other Levine students to the performance.

“It’s a really great way to see people that you might not normally interact with,” Taylor said. “When anyone offers a ride it’s always nice to jump in and be like ‘Hey! Let’s go together and get to know each other!’”

In addition to the arts and culture events, Richardson hosts other gatherings to bring the community together. Witcher and Taylor appreciate Richardson for providing opportunities for the students of the program to bond.

“[Dr. Mike Richardson] is a really cool guy,” Witcher said. “He also throws tailgates for the football games. We get together and play games, eat and enjoy time together. I think it’s the extra special opportunities like the tailgates or shows that really help us get to know each other.”

Sometimes UNCC alumni and staff attend shows with the current Levine Scholars. These events provide a chance to connect with alumni of the program.

“It’s a really cool opportunity to meet some of the alumni of the Levine Scholars Program,” Witcher said. “Every so often you’ll have alumni come to the shows, and it’s always fun to find out what they are doing after graduating from the program.”

Witcher and Taylor are both excited to watch a few more shows with others in the program to finish out this semester.