

OKLAHOMA CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY



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OC ALUMNA
MARINA
PENDLETON

I DON'T WANT MONEY

REKINDLES
HER LOVE
OF MUSIC



Marina Pendleton's ('17) decision to follow where she felt called was not an easy one. However, it was one that profoundly impacted her life.

Pendleton graduated from Oklahoma Christian University with a Mechanical Engineering degree and pieces of what was once a music double major turned minor turned hobby. Originally planning to graduate college with a double major in mechanical engineering and music, she quickly realized both were too demanding to finish well in a reasonable amount of time.

Thus, she continued playing in the chamber orchestra, but made the difficult decision to put her full academic focus into mechanical engineering as an honors student.

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CHANGE IS
NOT VIRTUOUS
FOR ITS OWN
SAKE. DO WHAT
YOU FEEL
CALLED TO DO.”

Little did Pendleton know that years later, one brave decision would lead her to release her first EP after a year as a full-time musician.

After graduating from OC, Pendleton moved to Pennsylvania to pursue her career in engineering. By this point, her once competitive music career had solidly landed on the back burner.

"I never thought of music as a full-time career," Pendleton said. "I always planned to keep it as a hobby. Engineering was my analytical, financially secure career path that I [assumed] would take me to retirement."

Not long after moving to Pennsylvania, she found a way to exercise her hobby, stumbling across a bluegrass jam in a rural park.

"My fiddle playing experience growing up was incredibly competitive," Pendleton said. "I'm grateful for that experience, but being in competitions made me feel like I wasn't all that good. Seeing the joy on the faces of those at the bluegrass jam re-inspired me. I found a community, and the experience sparked my musical career post-college."

From then on, the community and her reputation continued to grow. Pendleton felt a revived sense of purpose when playing and creating music.

Then, in a not-so-subtle act of God, an old friend from Nashville called and asked Pendleton to join their country band as the full-time fiddle player.

Pendleton had already settled into life as an engineer in Pennsylvania; however, she realized she was riding high on musical endorphins, and this was going to be the most flexibility she would have for a long time.

She said yes.

"Nashville had a profound impact on my life," Pendleton said. "I rented an apartment sight unseen. I thought I would be scrounging for gigs, but I played 25 shows in 30 days. It was such an unexpected experience."

It didn't take long for the experience to inspire Pendleton to make music of her own.

Out of Nashville, the *I Don't Want Money* EP was born.

"I thought, while I'm here, I may as well make an album as a memory," Pendleton said. "One song is about quitting my job and leaving behind that security, taking a chance, pursuing something for the joy of it, trusting things would fall into place ...



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EVERYONE
REFLECTS
CREATIVITY
FROM THE
UNIVERSAL
CREATOR.”

These aren't meant to be radio hits, but they are meant to speak a truth that is gentle, joyful and faithful."

Pendleton wanted her album to reflect

the joy in the western swing genre while also exploring the depths of human emotion. After months of hard work, and producing help from CMA Musician of the Year Jenee Fleenor, the EP became a reality in October 2022.

"I want to be someone who, when I play music, people feel something," Pendleton said. "I had always approached music analytically, but I've always been impressed by people who made me feel something. I found a little taste of that in Nashville, and I now work to draw that into my everyday life."

While Pendleton's time in Nashville has

come to an end, her passion for music is at an all time high. She now lives in Nevada with her husband, working as a full-time engineering consultant for the Southern Nevada Water Authority. When she isn't working, Pendleton plans to continue working on her next, full album, which she hopes to release in the next few years.

"Everyone reflects creativity from the Universal Creator," Pendleton said. "Everyone is an artist, but some of us reject that label. Everyone has something unique to contribute in a unique way. Don't let fear hold you back. Don't worry about what the world or other people tell us we can

do. Don't worry about it not working out... Do what you feel called to do."

If you want to learn more about Pendleton's music, visit her website marinapendletonmusic.com or scan the QR code. You can also find her EP, *I Don't Want Money*, on all streaming platforms. 

