

## Band recreates DMB experience

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Wednesday, November 16, 2005

Fans of The Dave Matthews Band will be able to enjoy some of their favorite tunes from the group, as The Dave Matthews Tribute Band performs at Blue Cats tonight.

Hailing from Buffalo, N.Y., the five-piece group began forming in September 2004. Ironically, the group formed after the dismemberment of another major Dave Matthews cover band from Georgia. Lead singer Ryan Clifford saw this as an opportunity to form his own cover band and began recruiting members shortly after that group disbanded.

"I got everyone together last October," Clifford said. "I put this band together so that we could play music that we love.

At the age of 18, Clifford probably never pictured himself as a future musician, or even a Matthews fan. His musical tastes never really expanded beyond the Beatles — they are still his favorite band of all time — R&B and Hip Hop. However, a friend of his introduced him to "Live at Luther College," a live acoustic album that featured Dave Matthews with Tim Reynolds. From that point, Clifford was forever converted into a Matthews fan, and the next year he bought his first guitar.

Two years after his guitar purchase, Clifford began covering the acoustic album with his friend which soon led to open mic performance opportunities. He had the chance to perform songs that he loved. And at first, this was the initial basis for Clifford playing in a cover band. But what kept him playing and still keeps him playing today are the chances that playing in a cover has afforded him.

"I'm getting to see new places and having so much fun," Clifford said. "I feel so fortunate."

Plus, Clifford does get the chance to play material from a band that has heavily influenced and impressed the lead singer. After all, Dave Matthews Band does a great job pulling from unique musical sources and exploring musical dynamics Clifford said.

But playing in a cover band hasn't stopped Clifford from writing his own material. In fact, he actually hopes to push it someday he said.

Clifford worked hard trying to recreate the sound and energy of the Dave Matthews Band.

He tried to make it as real as possible by finding the right people to play the same style and provide the same energy the real counterpart may have.

"The whole basis of the band is to put on a musical play," Clifford said. "We try to recreate the experience you may get from the real band."

But audience members should keep in mind that this doesn't mean they should expect the band to play an evening of straight hit singles. Clifford's team likes to venture away from the radio friendly material.

"We play a bit more radio stuff for the crowd, but we still try to mix it up," Clifford said.

Clifford's bandmates include drummer Maurice Jones, bassist Bill Furlong, saxophonist Kyle Henderson and violin player Nate DeMaria. Two of his bandmates — Jones and Henderson — were actually in another Midwest Dave Matthews cover band known as Crash.

The Dave Matthews Tribute Band feels honored to be playing at Blue Cats again Clifford said. As he described it, the last show at the venue was real good, but he is hoping that this time they will fill up the place.

The Dave Matthews Tribute Band will be playing with the Chris McCarty Band. Doors open at 8 p.m. and tickets are \$8 or \$6 with a college ID.