

# UW Madison: UW marching band welcomes toddler, courtesy of make-a-wish

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Badger Band superfans come in all ages and sizes — including the toddler variety. Thursday evening, 2½-year-old Ila Hellgren from Madison got a sneak peek of this weekend's UW Varsity Band Spring Concert during a rehearsal at the Kohl Center.

The special moment was made possible by Make-A-Wish Wisconsin, which learned of Ila's enthusiasm for the UW Marching Band and reached out to director Corey Pompey, who eagerly made it happen. Ila is a liver transplant recipient who loves to "play marching band," according to her parents, Jadon Scullion and Dana Hellgren.

During Ila's medical treatments, her father would take her for morning bike rides. They would park and watch the band practice — and Ila would pretend to march along. Thursday's sneak peek of the band rehearsal is what Make-A-Wish calls a "Make-A-Wish boost" while Ila awaits her wish for a pontoon boat to come true.

Pronunciation guide: Ila (EYE-lah)