

Sun Devils earn ASU Online degrees while studying on their tour bus

Texas-based group The Doucettes traveled around the country and the world

By Mary Beth Faller, ASU News
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Story highlights

The Doucettes are a bluegrass group of six siblings, all of whom are Sun Devils.

They've toured the country and the world while studying through ASU Online on their tour bus.

Harlen Doucette is following in his siblings' footsteps by shaping his Arizona State University journey to fit his life — studying on a tour bus while performing with his family and taking a break when he needs one.

Doucette, who is pursuing a degree in industrial and organizational psychology through ASU Online, is part of The Doucettes, a family of bluegrass gospel singers based in Texas.

All six Doucette siblings are Sun Devils through ASU Online. Four have graduated and the youngest two — Harlen and his younger brother, Hansen — are currently students.

The oldest Doucette, Hannah, started the tradition in 2016 when she enrolled in ASU Online, graduating with a degree in organizational leadership in 2020. The next three brothers also

graduated: Holten with a degree in management, in 2021; Hudson, with a degree in marketing, in 2023; and Hayden, with a degree in business, in 2025. Hansen's major is artificial intelligence in business.

"Hannah was looking for an online college because it was right when our travels were really starting to kick off and we were gone more than half of the time, so she really needed something that was flexible. ASU was the best online school for business," Harlen said.

"We as the siblings got familiar with ASU Online just by proximity, watching her go through it. So we knew it worked and we knew it was possible."

The siblings were born in Canada, moved to Texas in 2007 for their father's business and started going to a church in Houston.

"Some musicians from Tennessee came in to teach bluegrass instruments and we all took lessons. Then our pastor wanted us to start playing for the church, and we just kind of started playing together," said Harlen, who was 9 when the family group formed. He is now 21 and plays the guitar.

Pastors from other churches would visit and see The Doucettes perform, giving them exposure.

"Then other pastors started having us in, and it just went from there. Our schedule took off."

The family toured together for 11 years, culminating in a busy 2024, in which they played in Spain, Brazil, Colombia, Mexico, Ukraine and Papua New Guinea.

"We just came off the road last year, but in 2024 alone, we played at 112 different churches," said Harlen, who enrolled in ASU Online in 2023 and continued taking classes during all the touring, working on the family tour bus.

"The great thing about having the bus was your workspace was the same. You didn't have to transfer to a hotel. Service was kind of iffy in some places because you're traveling all over the country, but we had Wi-Fi on the bus," he said.

"Sometimes we didn't know what our day was going to look like, so it was, 'Get as much done as soon as your deadlines come out.' We just kind of juggled things around to make it work."

Harlen credits his success coaches with helping him stay on track.

"I always knew when I called them that we'd be able to figure something out that would work with my schedule. I knew that they cared about my success and cared about me moving forward and getting to where I needed to go," he said.

"I was never alone on the journey."

ASU Online worked for him because he was able to take a break when he needed to. He took off the Summer B and Fall A sessions because he recently got married, traveled and is working full time in his father's business. He's not worried about jumping back into academics when he resumes classes Oct. 14 for the Fall B session.

“It’s personal motivation. I want to have the degree,” said Harlen, who hopes to work in human resources in the tech industry.

“My parents are paying for part of the degree, so that definitely keeps me motivated. I know they're investing in me.”

In honor of [World Bluegrass Day](#) on Oct. 1, listen to some of the most popular songs by The Doucettes on [Spotify](#). Their song “My Lord is Taking Good Care of Me” has more than 122,000 downloads on the platform.

This story originally appeared on [ASU News](#).

Main image



The Doucettes were able to keep up with their studies through ASU Online by studying on the family tour bus. “We just came off the road last year, but in 2024 alone, we played at 112 different churches,” said Harlen Doucette. iStock image

Text image(s)



The Doucettes are a bluegrass gospel group based in Texas who have toured around the country and the world. Four of the siblings have graduated with degrees from ASU Online, and the youngest two, including Harlen Doucette (front row, center with guitar), are current students. Courtesy photo