

Waukesha native finishes fourth in VH1 competition

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WAUKESHA– Waukesha North graduate and city native Tony Memmel took fourth place in a national VH1 competition with his wife, Lesleigh, Thursday night.

Out of more than 2,700 entries, the Memmels were invited with 23 other bands to compete in New York City for VH1's Make a Band Famous competition. The Memmels give a lot of credit to their fans for their success in the competition.

"We were leading in votes for a while, even from people we don't really know were voting on our behalf," Tony Memmel said. "It was so cool and fueled us for the rest of the competition."

The couple made it to the top four and they received praise from the judges, including Grammy-Award nominee Natasha Bedingfield and co-writer for Katy Perry's top chart hits Bonnie McKee.

One thing the couple is happy to take away from the competition is an original song they wrote as part of a challenge overnight.

The song titled "I Know We'll Get There" the Memmels wrote about the journey of musicians on the road. The couple plans to record the song on their return to Nashville.

The Memmels are grateful for the chance to participate in the competition.

"It was a wonderful experience," Tony Memmel said. "We had a huge window with a view of the Statue of Liberty. Being there and writing music with my wife was just great."

They also enjoyed the company of their competitors.

"We got to know each other very well," said Tony Memmel. "As in any competition, we were a bit worried for the other bands to be diva-ish, but everyone was very genuine."

After two long days of little sleep and a lot of hard work, it was sad for the two to return without the title, but they are positive.

"I would have loved to come home as the winner," Tony Memmel said. "However, for getting that far we are really proud."

– **Jordyn Noennig** , Special to The Freeman