



JOEL PLASKETT HELPS CELEBRATE MUSICOUNTS BAND AID GRANT AWARDED TO SACKVILLE HIGH



Friday December 16, 2011 (Halifax, NS) MusiCounts, Canada's music education charity associated with The Canadian Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences, along with the help of JUNO Award winning special guest singer-songwriter Joel Plaskett, celebrated the \$10,000 Band Aid Grant awarded to Sackville High School. The event featured East Coast favourite, Joel Plaskett, who talked about the importance of music education and performed for those in attendance. Performances were also given by the Sackville High School Concert Band, Jazz Band and Vocal Ensemble.

Music Teacher Lara MacKenzie is thrilled that her musicians are being rewarded for their hard work and dedication to the school's music program. "The music students at Sackville High are very committed, attending rehearsals before school, after school and on their lunch hours." Some rehearsals start as early as 7:30 am and a number of MacKenzie's students are practicing music outside of school in community bands, choirs and their own rock bands. "I am very grateful for this generous gift and was happy that Joel Plaskett could help us to celebrate our grant today. I suspect this grant and celebration will have a lasting impact on our school and community." said MacKenzie.

In the 2011-2012 school year, MusiCounts awarded \$600,000 through 69 grants, in both \$5,000 and \$10,000 increments, to 85 schools across Canada. In this year alone, over 18,000 Canadian children will have their lives impacted through these grants.

Allan Reid of MusiCounts said, "The instruments purchased with this grant money will last dozens of years, impacting not only the students attending our grant recipient schools today, but also positively shaping the educational path of children for generations to come. That is something that everyone involved with MusiCounts should be proud of."

-more-

Sackville High School is located in an area with mixed income levels and a significant number of single parent families. When Music Instructor, Lara MacKenzie, started at Sackville High, there were only 21 students enrolled in the music program. In three years, the enrollment has tripled. To promote music in the school, Lara and her students produced three annual workshops for the junior high schools, three family of school concerts, a school musical and have visited the junior high feeder schools to promote the vocal and band program. They have a great relationship with the Sackville Community Band, their musical mentors. Together, Sackville High School and the Sackville Community Band have commissioned well known Canadian composer, Scott Macmillan, to write a piece for their community music project called "Sackville Peaks". Most of their instruments were over 30 years old and needed this MusiCounts grant to sustain their growing program. The students count on this program at Sackville High School to prepare them for a future in professional, community or recreational music making. With their grant, they chose various brass instruments including: a tenor sax, a baritone sax, a trumpet and a trombone, as well as a string bass and various percussion instruments.

The Band Aid Grants impact young Canadians and support diverse music programs that include concert and jazz bands as well as drum and guitar ensembles. The grants are given to schools with grade ranges of pre-kindergarten to grade 12 in elementary, junior high, and high schools in urban, rural, remote and First Nations communities from coast to coast. They are awarded to elementary, secondary and separate schools in Canada and are selected based on economic need: inventory and condition of instruments; number of students; dedication of school staff and the overall impact of the grant would make within the school community are factors taken into consideration in choosing the grant recipient schools.

About MusiCounts

MusiCounts, Canada's music education charity associated with The Canadian Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences (CARAS) is helping to keep music alive in schools across Canada. MusiCounts' mission is to ensure that children in Canada, regardless of socio-economic circumstances, have access to music programs through their schools. MusiCounts includes Band Aid musical instrument grants, the MusiCounts Teacher of the Year Award, Scholarships and other music education initiatives. MusiCounts is funded by various initiatives such as the JUNO Awards nominee compilation CDs; annual contributions by Bell Media; The Shore 104 FM; SiriusXM Canada Inc.; Astral Media; the Slight Family Foundation; Rogers Broadcasting Ltd.; Corus Entertainment, and Vista Radio, and supported since inception by EMI Music Canada Inc.; Sony Music Entertainment Canada Inc.; Universal Music Canada and Warner Music Canada Ltd.; as well as JUNO Songwriters' Circle presented by CMPA and SOCAN; JUNO Cup presented by The Keg Steakhouse and Bar. To date, MusiCounts has donated nearly 5 million dollars to help keep music alive, impacting 262 Post-Secondary graduates and an estimated 400,000 students, their schools and communities.

-30-

For more information please contact:

[Indoor Recess Inc.](#)

Joanne Setterington - ph. 416.703.5217 / e. joanne@indoorrecess.com