



Note Worthy Kids helps young people make beautiful music

BY ALISON STUCKE

IF YOU KNOW a child or teen who expresses interest in playing a musical instrument or in learning more about how to sing, you probably encourage them to take private lessons from an expert, and to practice every day. You're probably excited about the child's interest in music, since music is wonderful, and playing an instrument can open all kinds of doors for a child. But what happens if the child's family can't afford the cost of lessons, or the rental fee for the instrument? Note Worthy

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Kids to the rescue.

Note Worthy Kids is a local nonprofit organization that helps connect musical instruments and accredited instructors with kids who want to make music, but don't have the financial resources to do so. For each young person in the program an instrument is provided and a teacher is assigned. Then the lessons begin.

"The benefits of music are huge," says Doug Maguire, President of Note Worthy Kids. "The student learns discipline, how to be more productive, how to get along with others, how to be a team player, and more."

Three years ago, a group of educators and musicians came together to create Note Worthy Kids. A small group of people dedicated to music make up the nonprofit's board of directors. They are Doug, Amy Swensen, RaeAnn Hamlin, Jerry Salvesson and Randy Lee.

"Arts programming is often one of the first things cut in the schools, and a large segment of the population can't afford music lessons on their own," Doug explains. "The founders of Note Worthy Kids saw a need. We can really do a lot of good. We're ready to work with kids who want to learn voice, an instrument, the drums—whatever music they want to make."

Doug is quick to point out that experiencing the fun of making music

is high on the list of this non-profit's objectives for kids.

"It's not our goal to make sure that they get to the concert pianist level," he says. "Kids want to have fun and we want them to have fun with music. We also hope that, in developing their interest, their music skills will transfer into other areas of their lives."

The nonprofit operates with funding from grants as well as donations. Donations of all amounts are welcome



and all funds go directly to securing instruments and lessons for children. A year of 30 lessons for one child costs about \$1,200, Doug says. Donors can totally fund or be a co-sponsor of a student.

"We've also received donations of instruments that aren't being used by their owners," Doug explains.

One instrument donation, a keyboard, was given by a man whose wife played it for many years. She had passed away, so the keyboard wasn't being used. The man was happy to have it used again and Doug was happy to

drive half an hour to pick it up.

Note Worthy Kids is accepting applications from young people ages 6-18 who want to take music lessons for an instrument or for voice and who need help with funding. To apply, to go <http://noteworthykids.org/get-involved/#students> and download the applications. If you'd like to donate with a credit or debit card or with Paypal, go to that web page and click on the "Donate" button. For additional information, visit noteworthykids.org/ or call Doug at 218-340-3825.

Doug knows firsthand the value of making music, since he's been a musician for most of his life. He started playing the piano as a child and he's been in bands and performing groups throughout his adult years. Today, he plays the keyboard and sings in the easy-listening band *2 Dug Nite* which performs at venues in our area. He also performs with several church bands. Plus, he's a composer and a teacher of private lessons, so music is a huge part of his life.

"Music has done so much for me and for others on the Note Worthy Kids board," he says. "We want to help share the joy of music with these kids who are so eager to play an instrument or to sing." — MDT

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