Giving to The String Project

This page is to inform you of an extraordinary opportunity to contribute to the cultural life of Montgomery County and the New River Valley region. In July of 2007 the Department of Music at Virginia Tech was awarded a grant from the National String Project Consortium (NSPC) and NAMM, the International Music Products Association, to offer affordable quality string music instruction to elementary students while training future string music educators.

Although Montgomery County has an excellent public school music program, string instruction is not offered as part of the public school music curriculum. Students who wish to study the violin, viola, cello, or bass are restricted to expensive private lessons offered by area private music schools. In contrast, The Virginia Tech String Project (VTSP) offers affordable string lessons to all students as part of a program that also trains string music educators. Modeled after very successful programs at the Universities of Texas, South Carolina and Arizona, the VTSP seeks to develop a string culture and orchestra program for Montgomery County and the surrounding region.

The project began in September 2007 with 38 third and fourth grade students from virtually every elementary school in Montgomery County, as well as home schooled students. For just $50 these students were able to enroll for two lessons per week for the semester, approximately 24 lessons at about $2 per lesson. In the project’s fourth year, over 80 students from throughout the New River Valley studied strings and performed five concerts on the Virginia Tech campus and at area elementary schools. The string project has provided training for nine future string teachers, two of who are already employed in the public schools.

The grant from the NSPC and NAMM has run its course. Virginia Tech is no longer eligible for start up funding. Your help is needed to continue this very successful program. This is a great opportunity for you to be recognized as a contributor to the cultural life of the New River Valley.

For as little as $250 you can provide lessons for five students or the rental of a string bass for the string project orchestra. Gifts of $500 could provide the books and materials for 30 students. Gifts of a $1,000 will provide a scholarship for an undergraduate string music educator to teach in the program. These are only suggested amounts, we will gratefully accept any help you can offer. Gifts will be acknowledged on the Virginia Tech String Project web site, in communications to the parents and the community, and in programs for concert performances. Scholarships funded from gifts will be named after the individual or corporate sponsor.

Please contact the VTSP at (540) 231-8496 or vburnsed@vt.edu for any questions you may have.

All donations go directly to the operation of the string project. None go to the Department of Music or Virginia Tech. The department has graciously provided space for the classes and rehearsals.

For more information about the NSPC please visit: www.nspc.com.