

For Immediate Release

The Hamilton Music Collective invites 450 inner-city elementary school children and participants of the AIFEC (An Instrument for Every Child) program to perform seven End-of-Year concerts at the organization's new home, The Gasworks. Mayor Fred Eisenberger presents the Hamilton Music Collective with a City Enrichment Fund Arts Operating Grant in the amount of \$48,000 for the 2015 year.

June 19th, 2015 During the week of June 8th over 450 elementary school children participating in the AIFEC program were invited to The Gasworks to perform in front of their parents, teachers and peers. Over the course of three days and during seven performances featuring students from all seven partner schools, these young musicians were able to show off their musical accomplishments on a real stage in front of an enthusiastic audience. Buses for transporting the students from the schools to The Gasworks were donated by Attridge Transportation.

Says Program Director, Astrid Hepner: "This is the first time that we are taking the end-of-year concerts out of the schools and into a real-life performance situation, and we are thrilled with the positive response we received from the parents, students, teachers and principals. These concerts mark a milestone in our goal of transforming The Gasworks into an open-door community centre for the AIFEC program."

An Instrument for Every Child provides elementary school aged children in Hamilton's inner-city schools and challenged neighbourhoods with the opportunity to learn to play an instrument, participate in musical ensembles and receive free musical instruction on a weekly basis. The program promotes an interest in music and the arts, builds self-esteem, and makes them less likely to be at-risk when they become teenagers. The AIFEC program was founded in 2009, by the Hamilton Music Collective, with a pilot project at King George elementary school. From that class of 20 students, AIFEC expanded to over 450 children in seven inner-city schools.

The program receives support from within the community as well as on a regional level with major sponsors including: The City of Hamilton, TD Bank, MusiCounts (CARAS), ArcelorMittal Dofasco, PasWord Protection, The Hamilton Community Foundation, The Voortman Foundation, Corus Entertainment, Ontario Trillium Foundation, Ontario Arts Council, Live on Locke, and numerous individual supporters.

This coming fall, the Hamilton Music Collective will form an exciting and promising new partnership with the Hamilton Boys and Girls Club and expand its 'Jambassador' band program into community centres affiliated with the Boys and Girls Club. With TD Bank as a new sponsor, this could become a nationwide model for other communities on how to introduce music education into inner-city schools and community centres by maximizing partnerships between local arts organizations, school boards, the Boys and Girls Club and businesses interested in supporting the arts.

To view images of these concerts, please see [here](#).

Hamilton Music Collective

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For further information, contact: Lainie Tessier: lainie@aninstrumentforeverychild.ca

