



HAMILTON SPECTATOR

Duo from Arkells, Davey students have a blast at new home of inner-city music program

Graham Rockingham

Hamilton Spectator Oct 22, 2014



MusiCounts, the charitable arm of the Junos, presented An Instrument for Every Child with \$20,000 worth of instruments. Grade 3 Davey student Deana Pereira 8, tries her chops on a trumpet with some instruction from Long & McQuade music rep Sherilyn Delves.



Mike DeAngelis, left, and Max Kerman, two-time Juno winners with the Arkells, perform an acoustic concert for the Davey students.

About 30 students from Dr. Edgar Davey Elementary School got to be the first to try out \$20,000 worth of new donated fiddles, ukuleles, drums and keyboards at the new home of An Instrument for Every Child (AIFEC).

But first, they got a free guitar lesson from Max Kerman of the Arkells, who stopped by on Tuesday with bandmate Mike DeAngelis to show the Hamilton rock band's support for the inner-city music instruction program.

"The great thing about music, especially when you're starting out, is that you can learn a song pretty quick," Kerman told the children from the stage of the Gasworks, a new venue on Park Street North that also provides a home for AIFEC.

"See, watch," he said as he carefully strummed "Shake It Off" by Taylor Swift. "It's only three little notes and you can play them."

The instruments, which the children banged away on after a brief concert by Kerman and DeAngelis, were donated by MusiCounts, the charitable wing of the Juno Awards. This was done through a cash grant from TD Bank's community music grants program.

The instruments will be distributed to Dr. Davey and seven other schools served by AIFEC.

"This is the best part of my job," beamed Allan Reid, president of the Canadian Academy of Recording Arts and Science, which sponsors the Juno Awards. "We help keep music alive and in the community by putting instruments into the hands of children."

Reid told got a round of applause when he informed his young audience that the Juno Awards will be held in Hamilton on March 15.

Also receiving a \$20,000 MusiCounts/TD grant for instruments was Culture for Kids in the Arts, a music program run by the Hamilton Conservatory for the Arts. The program works out of 15 locations in the Hamilton-Burlington area.

"We've always had problems transporting the instruments to the sites," said HCA artistic director Vitek Wincza. "Now each site will have their own instruments. It's going to have a huge effect."

Before the formal presentations got underway, Deana Pereira, an 8-year-old Grade 3 student at Dr. Davey, got involved with a shiny trumpet at the brass table of the AIFEC "petting zoo."

Pereira picked it up, put it to her lips and gave the trumpet a prolonged blast.

She was shocked by the sonic vibration. "My lips are shaking," she exclaimed.

An Instrument for Every Child, founded by local musician Astrid Hepner, has been bringing musical instruments and instructors to inner city elementary schools since 2009 and serves more than 400 students.

The program moved into the Gasworks this summer with the help of the John and Ellie Voortman Foundation, which bought the building earlier this year.

"We like to say that music is food for a child's soul," Hepner said.

grockingham@thespec.com

905-526-3331 | @RockatTheSpec