

M&T Bank teams up with Rochester Education Foundation to collect musical instruments at Jazz Fest

Used musical instruments will be donated to Rochester City Schools students

M&T Bank, the presenting sponsor of the Xerox Rochester International Jazz Festival, is teaming up with the Rochester Education Foundation (REF) to again collect musical instruments for Rochester City School District students at this year's Jazz Fest.

"At M&T Bank, we firmly believe in the importance of inspiring our community's youth to study hard, dream big and pursue their passions," said M&T Bank's Rochester Regional President Dan Burns. "This partnership with the Rochester Education Foundation will allow us to provide students with not just musical instruments, but also the opportunity to explore their talents and potentially identify a gift that will help drive their future success. One day, we hope to see a student who received an instrument through this initiative as a headlining act at Jazz Fest."

M&T Bank will be donating high-visibility booth space that it receives as a sponsor of Jazz Fest to REF, where it will collect the musical instruments. The space will be located inside the merchandise tent.

"We're thrilled to have a partner like M&T Bank that has provided us with such a fantastic opportunity to help inspire students to become Rochester's next great musicians," said REF Executive Director Patricia Braus. "This community is passionate about its Jazz Festival, and there truly is no better opportunity to encourage our neighbors to give back to student musicians than when they're listening to some of the nation's greatest jazz artists."

All musical instruments that are collected will be donated to the Rochester City School District where they are lent to students. These used instruments become key tools to help get students started, and they also help gifted students who may not have their own instruments continue on their path toward success in music. Donating an instrument is a tax-deductible contribution.

REF is also encouraging the community to donate supplies, such as mouth pieces and strings, even if they don't have an instrument to share.

Since REF began the initiative in 2005, they have collected over 1,300 instruments for students. This will be the seventh year the organization has worked with M&T to gather instruments at Jazz Fest.

With ongoing reductions in funding for music programs, the supply of musical instruments gathered through this initiative has made a big difference in what can be offered to city schools students—and it has a track record of inspiring students.

"We've worked with one young man, who is now in ninth grade and has been with us since he was in fourth grade. He really wanted to play the flute, and through this program, he received the instrument he needed to pursue his talents. Unfortunately, it otherwise may not have been available to him. He now attends the School of the Arts and takes lessons at Eastman School of Music," Braus said. "He is one of the many students we're proud to have helped through our efforts."

About M&T Bank

M&T is a financial holding company headquartered in Buffalo, New York. M&T's principal banking subsidiary, M&T Bank, operates banking offices in New York, Maryland, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Connecticut, Virginia, West Virginia and the District of Columbia. Trust-related services are provided by M&T's Wilmington Trust-affiliated companies and by M&T Bank.

About Rochester Education Foundation

The Rochester Education Foundation is an independent organization whose mission is to provide programs and resources to improve learning and success for all Rochester city public school students through partnerships with educators, business and the community. For more information, visit <http://www.rochestereducation.org/>.

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