



*Nutrition for the Mind
and Soul*



2016 Annual Report



PROUD MEMBER OF
United Way
United Way
of the National Capital Area
Member #9319

Music for Life, PO Box 1141, Springfield VA 22151
www.musicforlife.org


Member #40878

President's Message



2016 was significant for us in that we achieved milestones we have been pursuing for years. In May we were awarded our first major two year grant from the Fairfax County Consolidate Community Funding Pool. In August we hired our first full time employee to oversee our Band & Orchestra Program. In September Deloitte Consulting awarded us pro-bono services to develop a relational database to store our student and performance measurement data. Collectively these achievements made it possible for us to further enhance our programs and better serve our clients.

We are a prevention program that serves low income middle and high school age youth. We help them stay on track as they progress through puberty and those difficult teen years. Young children rarely realize the economic and social challenges they'll face growing up in a low income family; that awareness develops during their middle and high school years. Without age appropriate programs to support them through this difficult phase of development much of what they may have gained in early childhood programs can be lost; they can be overwhelmed by their challenges, lose faith in their ability to overcome them, and end up perpetuating the circumstances into which they were born.

Our purpose is to help these low income youth overcome the barriers they face so they move into a self sustaining, independent life style. This means providing them programs they cannot otherwise afford as well as access to opportunities from which they're precluded. We use music to achieve our purpose because of its inherent value and widespread appeal to youth. Our purpose is to help disadvantaged youth become successful; if they become musicians in the process that's a bonus.

In 2016 we initiated the STEM Guitar Program. This program was developed over several years under a National Science Foundation grant by faculty at Sinclair Community College in Dayton Ohio. It is an applied learning program wherein students learn the STEM principles behind the design and operation of an electric guitar and then go into the workshop to build their own instrument. It's intended to be integrated into a high school's Career & Technical Education curriculum. Public schools are not producing enough students interested in skill labor careers to keep pace with the growing need; the focus remains on college preparation. Part of the problem is the perception of skill labor jobs; part is the lack of exposure to maintaining and fixing things. This is particularly true in urban areas. We facilitate the implementation of this program by providing teacher training, equipment and luthier support.

As stated last year, 2015 revenue was an anomaly we experience every few years due to timing of grant awards. Our 2016 revenue rebounded to the upward trend we've enjoyed since our beginning in 2006. We protect ourselves against revenue swings by maintaining a two year operating reserve thus ensuring that revenue fluctuations do not impact our ability to deliver our programs.

Music for Life values those who financially support us; it our foremost obligation to use their support wisely as part of a viable and lasting solution. We continually look for ways to improve our programs and the way in which they are delivered. We are an outspoken advocate for putting more emphasis on prevention. Serving needs and solving problems are separate issues that should not be confused. Programs providing services to people in need are not the same as programs that prevent that person from needing those services; both are necessary. To this end we will continue to actively participate in open dialog about needs and solutions with government, the private sector, the nonprofit community, funders and the people we serve.

Shy Charles

Year in Review



2016 got off to a rapid start. During the first few months we received grants from Fairfax County, United Way and Kiwanis; funding that enabled us to hire our first employee and move forward with the Band & Orchestra Program. At NAMM in January we were introduced to the STEM Guitar Program; in the subsequent months we formed a partnership with them and began soliciting potential schools for implementation in Arlington, Fairfax and Prince William Counties. In September we were awarded pro-bono services from Deloitte Consulting and that fall they build us a relational database system to enter, store and query our student and performance measurement information.



Our After-School Guitar Program continued to excel throughout our service area in 2016. We continued our partnership with other music organizations wherein we provide them instruments so they can accommodate their low income students. In May we learned that Thrive DC, a nonprofit serving the homeless, was robbed and among the things stolen were the guitars used by their adult music class. We responded immediately with a shipment of new guitars for their program. We facilitated introduction to music events for NAMM (National Association of Music Merchants), Family4Kids and BefriendAChild. Music for Life is committed to providing quality music education programs to those otherwise being denied access. The benefits include improved academic performance, social skills, confidence, discipline and relief from the stress in their daily lives.



Our first employee started August 1st and immediately began contacting schools with high percentages of students on free or reduced lunch to implement our Band & Orchestra Program. Low income youth are increasingly unable to participate because of the cost. We support them by providing supplemental lessons and help with fees. Agreements were reached with three middle schools and one high school. We are continuing our dialog with other schools in our service area.



In the fall we reached agreement with Mount Vernon High School in Fairfax County to offer our STEM Guitar Program; twenty-eight students were identified for the first class. Under this program the curriculum of one of their CTE classes would be augmented to include the math and physics associated with the design and operation of an electric guitar. The students would also go into the workshop and build their own instrument. We are continuing our dialog with other schools in Fairfax County as well as in Arlington and Prince William Counties.



Engaging the nonprofit community and developing relationships with professional organizations in the field continued as an essential aspect of our success. Through our membership in United Way and collaboration with other Government and nonprofit organizations we stay current on regional needs; gain valuable training on best practices; build relationships with partnering organizations; and find volunteers and sponsors. Through our relationships with national/international organizations like NAMM, GAMA and NAFME (National Association for Music Educators) we have access to their membership's expertise and support which we use to improve our curriculum and grow our program.





Providing Opportunity

Who we are

Music for Life serves Washington DC and the neighboring counties in Virginia and Maryland. We provide music education and mentoring program for youth living under adverse circumstances - poverty, dysfunctional families and challenged neighborhoods. Studies show that those with limited means are less likely to succeed; they have fewer opportunities; family and friends have limited ability to support them. Yet the fastest growing segment of our population is youth in poverty; the school dropout rate for these youth, particularly minorities is high. We believe every child should have equal opportunity to succeed; we help them by leveling the playing field.

What we do

Music for Life provides free music education programs to youth, and some adults, who otherwise cannot afford them. Music is particularly effective in our diverse society because it appeals to any age, gender, race, religion or cultural background; there are no stereotypes associated with who can learn to play. Research shows a strong correlation between music education and a person's success in life. Those involved in quality programs tend to do better in school; score higher on standardized tests; be less inclined to engage in risky behavior; and be more socially adept. Learning music is also a release for stressful emotions that can't otherwise be expressed. We also provide career and life mentoring by giving them access to experienced, successful adults who can share their perspective.



Understanding the benefits of a music program



Kids with nowhere to go, end up ... going nowhere

Why it's important

Youth born into poverty or with limited opportunities are affected both physically and mentally. Without intervention today these youth will become society's burden tomorrow. Our music education programs teach discipline, build self esteem, develop self confidence and social skills. Our mentors provide these youth the skills and guidance necessary to overcome the limitations inherent to the environment into which they were born and become successful in life.

We are community based; bringing quality programs into the communities where our student's reside is the most effective way to improve the community and reduce risky behavior. We provide students, their family and friends something tangible in their community around which they can develop a sense of pride and ownership.

Building confidence, self esteem and social skills in the youth we serve is a major goal of our program. Research has shown that youth who feel good about themselves and experience success are much more likely to avoid risky behavior, stay in school, make good decisions and succeed in life.



Building Confidence

Our students learn the discipline required to play an instrument; they're taught basic guitar skills, basic music theory and how to read music; they experience positive relationship/role-modeling with adults and older youth. These are disciplines and interpersonal experiences common to any academic or career path one may choose. These positive experiences improve their academic performance; inspire them to engage in the opportunities available to them; and removes those barriers that lead them toward participating in risky behaviors.



Developing Understanding

Sustained participation in our program strengthens our student's relationships with other youth, especially those from different ethnic, social or racial backgrounds. Music is enjoyed by everyone and can be performed by anyone regardless of their gender, race, religion, national origin, intellectual accomplishments or physical size. With music serving as the common interest that brought them together, our students engage one another; they learn more about what they have in common; and they gain understanding of their differences.



Improving Academics

Parents and teachers tell us that their child's/student's academic performance has improved as a result of their participation in our programs. While music is an art form it is also mathematically based and thus also exercises the part of the brain that is used for math and science; it truly is nutrition for the mind. When children are able to indulge their passion, in our case music, it lifts their spirits and makes it easier for them to focus on other tasks which are important but perhaps less interesting to them.

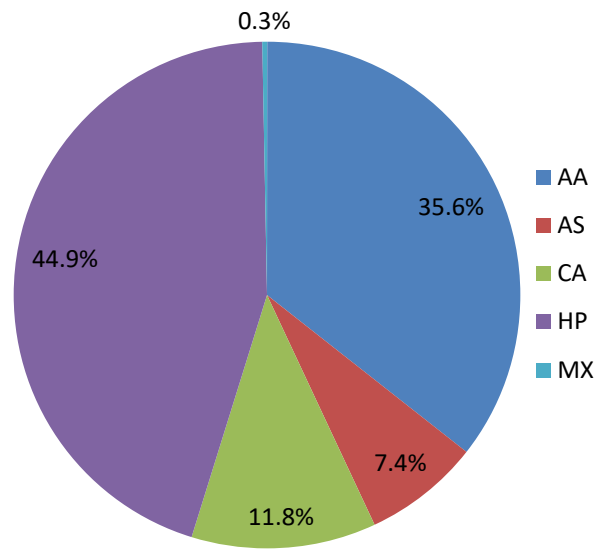
We began volunteering with after school music programs in the metropolitan Washington DC area in 2006; the number served has grown substantially each year since. We incorporated in 2010 and became Music for Life in 2013. We strive to improve ourselves each year and are most proud of the results we're achieving.

Assimilating the diversity in our society is a major challenge and one of the goals of our program. Music embraces our diversity; its appeal easily crosses gender, age, race, national origin, religion and physical attributes boundaries. Our program is attracting that diversity and our students are developing important social skills as they learn together in our classrooms.

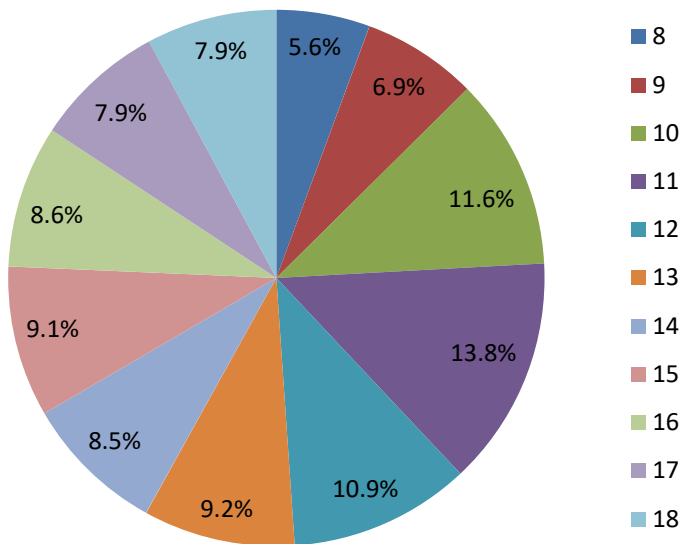
Our racial diversity reflects the low income population distribution in the communities we serve. The percentage of Hispanic youth served continues to increase.

Our age diversity is approximately a 40/60 split between middle and high school age students. The percentage of high school youth served continues to increase.

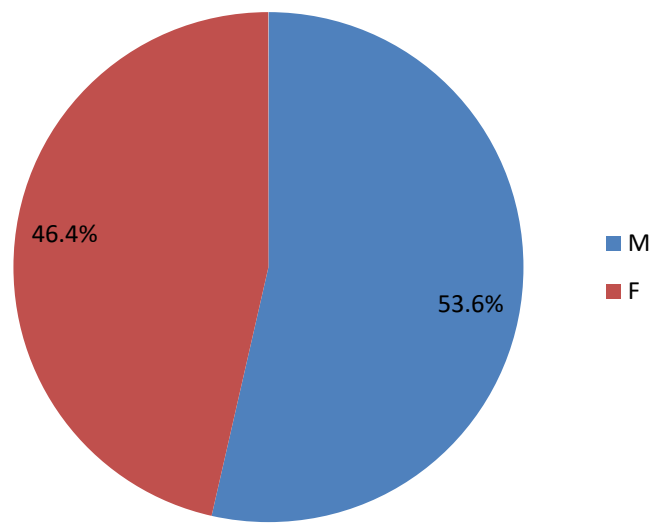
Our gender diversity is slightly more males than females.



Racial Diversity



Age Diversity



Gender Diversity

Overview

Prior year financial data, audit reports and Annual Reports are posted on our website. Annual audits are usually completed by September of the following year.

Following is a summary of our recent financial performance.

	<u>Revenue</u>	<u>Expenses</u>
2011	\$ 47,871	\$ 25,468
2012	\$ 33,026	\$ 22,024
2013	\$ 63,529	\$ 37,665
2014	\$ 81,113	\$ 27,340
2015	\$ 37,923	\$ 23,390
2016	\$206,625	\$176,347

Revenue & Expense Notes

In-Kind Donations and Professional Fees includes pro-bono IT services from Deloitte Consulting.

Expenses for guitars & accessories is up do the addition of the STEM Guitar Program.

Expenses for Salary & Wages reflects the hire of our first full time employee effective August 1, 2016.

Revenue from Contributions and Federated Campaigns continued to rise; all other revenue and expense categories are in line with prior years.

Music for Life Officers & Board

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Diane Ditzler
Irvin Kalugdan
Glen McCarthy
Dixie Mitchell
Curtis Schehr

Balance Sheet

As of December 31, 2016

Unaudited

Cash	
Unrestricted	\$171,259
Temporarily Restricted	\$ 4,294
Pledges Receivable	\$ 0
Grants Receivable	\$ 20,468
Inventories for Sale	\$ 7,325
Inventories for Use	\$ 35,460
Total Assets	\$238,806
Total Liabilities	\$ 10,063
Net Assets	\$228,743

Revenues & Expenses

Period ended December 31, 2016

Unaudited

Revenues:

Contributions	\$ 43,928
Released from restriction	\$ 23,174
Product Sales	\$ 1,607
Raffles	\$ 602
Federated Campaigns	\$ 13,358
In-Kind Donations	\$123,956

Total Revenues

\$206,625

Expenses:

Guitars & Accessories	\$ 16,149
Training & Teaching Supplies	\$ 1,819
Salary & Wages	\$ 21,204
Occupancy	\$ 3,663
Fed & State Fees	\$ 290
Professional Fees	\$126,718
Teacher Insurance	\$ 3,152
Information Technology	\$ 558
Advertising & Promotion	\$ 2,119
Office Supplies	\$ 675

Total Expenses

\$176,347

Change in Net Assets

\$ 30,278

Income Uses

Program	\$169,499	96.1%
Administration	\$ 3,649	2.1%
Fundraising	\$ 3,199	1.8%

To ensure long term sustainability Music for Life retains a two year operating expense reserve as a hedge against economic uncertainty.