

## **Girls (Still) Rock at Dixon Hall Music School**

TORONTO (December 6<sup>th</sup>) – On Wednesday, December 6, at 6:00pm, Dixon Hall Music School hosts its annual fundraising gala, Music For Life at the Daniels Spectrum (585 Dundas St. East). Presented by the Slight Family Foundation and RBC, Music For Life is an evening of dinner and musical entertainment in support of Dixon Hall Music School. This year's musical performances will feature music by Canadian artists only, in celebration of Canada 150. Canadian singer Kim Stockwood is the featured performer for the evening.

Music for Life has already raised over \$200,000 in support of Dixon Hall Music School. Funds from the event make it possible for Dixon Hall Music School to continue to offer subsidized music lessons so that children from low-income families have access to music education. Dixon Hall Music School provides lessons to 350 students each week. At present, 68% of families with a child attending Dixon Hall Music School have an annual household income of \$29,000 or less. Dixon Hall Music School offers 12,500 lessons a year, in 21 subject areas, including both individual and ensemble disciplines. Students also have the opportunity to attend free music and arts camps, both in Toronto and outside the city, and receive free tickets to attend cultural events.

For the last 38 years, Dixon Hall Music School has been providing high-quality music education to children from low-income families in Regent Park. In recent years, the Music School has seen an increase in the number of more girls and young women who are registering for music lessons. Of the 350 students who attend the Music School weekly, 103 students are adolescent women, aged 11-19. These young women are becoming increasingly accomplished within Dixon Hall Music School and their communities, showing the positive impact of music education on young people, and the power of the arts to champion young women on their paths to further success.

"The young women in our Music School have really stepped on the stage to shine this year more than ever," said Bob McKittrick, Director, Dixon Hall Music School. "These girls have been eager learners, and their music studies have resulted in a ripple effect of successes in their lives. Half of our graduating students who go on to post-secondary education are girls. During March Break, we offer Girls Rock Camp, an incredibly popular program, and we are consistently awed by the talent of the girls who come to Girls Rock Camp. We see the young women in our programs increase their confidence as they progress through their lessons, and grow into successful women. Music education helps young women find their voices, pursue their dreams, and become leaders in their communities."

Adolescence is a transitional and challenging time for youth, and studies have shown that during this time, gender disparities become more pronounced, and girls face a number of challenges, including significant decreases in self-esteem and self-confidence. For the young women at Dixon Hall Music School, music education is helping change this narrative. Music education is opening doors to increased academic success, development of strong peer networks, and community engagement for the young women at Dixon Hall Music School.

For more information on Music For Life and how Dixon Hall Music School works with young women in Regent Park, please contact:

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