

# NORTH VALLEY MUSIC SCHOOL

## ANNUAL REPORT



# MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD AND STAFF

Dear Friends of NVMS,

The golden leaves and larch have fallen and the snow begins to blanket our magical valley as I reflect on my first year as the Executive Director at North Valley Music School. What a grand opportunity and extraordinary experience it has been so far. I love working with our incredibly talented group of teachers, I've a deep appreciation for our Board of Directors who give countless hours to our community music school, I'm grateful for the wise guidance from our Advisory Group, I am humbled by the generosity of our donors, community sponsors, and corporate partners, and I am so inspired by the talent and passion of our amazing students and families.

As a friend of the Music School you are well aware music education has a powerful and lasting impact on our community. Music students not only receive deep and sustained music education and appreciation for the arts, they also gain the skills necessary to imagine and achieve a fulfilling future, to grow academically and socially, to develop into accomplished individuals – the list goes on and the proof is evident. Music unquestionably changes lives and our community.

We are so grateful to everyone who help support music education and the arts in the Flathead Valley. Many thanks to those who contributed to our success in 2016-17, and to the success of our students who share their love of music with all of you!

As a musician, music teacher, and lover of music, I am honored to serve as the Executive Director at North Valley Music School and enthusiastically look forward to working with you all in furthering our mission by adding more music programs, setting new musical goals and dreams, and ultimately enriching our community through music education, appreciation, and performance.

Thank you for your dedication and commitment to NVMS.

Sincerely,  
Deidre Corson  
Executive Director

Cover Art  
by Kate,  
NVMS  
scholarship  
recipient

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On behalf of the North Valley Music School Board of Directors, I would like to take this opportunity to express our deepest appreciation to everyone who has contributed to the successful operation of the North Valley Music School during this past year.

We are so fortunate to have within our resources, a very dedicated group of teachers who possess outstanding skills and experience in providing musical instruction to a diverse group of students. In addition, our administrative staff continues to provide strong and effective leadership and organization in the operation of the school. Dynamic direction has been provided by the Board of Directors, along with tremendous support from the advisory group, corporate and events sponsors, and individual donors.

Through the collaborative efforts of these resources, the North Valley Music School continues to enrich and enhance the quality of life within our community. We honor the investments made to our mission, and look forward to our future growth and development.

I, along with my fellow Board members, encourage you to listen to the joyful sounds as we change lives forever!

Sincerely,  
Karl Cozad  
President  
Board of Directors

# 2016-2017 IN REVIEW

The past year started with a tremendous performance by our very talented faculty at their annual concert at the O’Shaughnessy Center for the Arts. We were moved by classical, rock, bluegrass, folk, blues. The faculty at NVMS continues to grow and expand while the waiting lists never disappear. Our students filled the NVMS Great Room, senior centers, churches, and public venues to showcase their newly-gained talents during their recitals and performances. Children’s voices from the NVMS Glee Club filled the air during the 2016 Christmas Stroll. In 2017, we were able to push our endowment over \$100,000 through a successful guitar raffle made possible by Gibson Acoustic Guitars in Bozeman. The 2nd Annual Montana Music Event was a sell-out show celebrating 20 years of North Valley Music School showcasing NVMS faculty, students, alumni (including a shout out by alumni and current pop star, Ethan Thompson) and a stand up performance by renowned tenor, Mike Eldred! We closed the fiscal year with a grand slam in the Whitefish Community Foundation’s Great Fish Challenge surpassing our goals and having a blast friend-raising and fundraising!

## NVMS by the Numbers 2016-2017

Students Enrolled in  
Private lessons:

**220**

Students in Group Classes:

**over 200**

(Glee 75, Music Together 98, Music Lingua  
30, Open Jam 4+/week)

Students in Summer Camps:

**99**

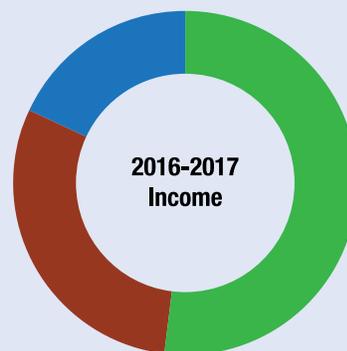
Number of Faculty:

**16**

Staff:

**2**

## Annual Operating Budget: \$246,000



**“Music is not only an art or a part of education; it is something that can be taken anywhere and used in anything (even algebra!) Music is something that will be with me for the rest of my life and will always be, for me, a source of pride, enjoyment, relaxation, and many happy memories.”**

M.D., NVMS scholarship recipient

# YOUR DONATIONS HELP US CHANGE LIVES AND OUR COMMUNITY THROUGH MUSIC!

At NVMS we love to spread the joy of music! This past year we set up our Instrument Petting Zoo at several events so people, both young and old, can experience the joy of picking up and playing, or attempting to play, an instrument. We offer a wide variety of instruments at our Petting Zoo, at least one from each instrument family including violin, cello, ukulele, guitar, flute, recorder, clarinet (for holding only), trumpet, trombone, and several percussion instruments. Some of these are not currently taught at NVMS, but our future goals include private instruction on all these instruments.

Each year we highlight our faculty and staff at the Annual NVMS Faculty Concert. Your donations allow the concert to be free and open to the public. Last year we had an incredible line-up that included music from Bach to the Beatles and soaring arias to sing-along gospels. This year we held the Faculty Concert at the new Lasalle Grange Theater. The evening was full of great performances by NVMS faculty and friends!

**“I love music. Music makes me feel relaxed. I feel accomplished when I play. I love to be able to sit down and play. It is so nice to be able to make a beautiful sound.”**

-C. C. age 12, NVMS scholarship recipient

**“Music has a lot of meaning in my life. It is really fun and gives me an escape. It is a big stress reliever for me and ends the monotony of life. I really enjoy the challenge. It’s stimulating and there is no end to it which I enjoy.”**

S.C. age 8, NVMS scholarship recipient

## Scholarship Spotlight

“In 2006, I began my relationship with North Valley Music School. I was a musically illiterate five year old girl with a nonsensical passion for all things art, who now attends an art school in Denver. NVMS has given me the opportunity to play music in front of crowds of people, earn over \$15,000 in scholarships towards Crown of the Continent Guitar Festival, and given me support to continue with my art even when our financial situation was much less supportive. Thanks to the incredible teaching at NVMS, I have been able to make money as a performer and be accepted into a prestigious art high school. This of course could not have been possible without the compassion of the faculty and the aide of the incredible scholarship program. This scholarship program enabled me to continue with my passion when circumstances were not so understanding, and continue to grow my ability and interest in the arts. I would not be the artist I am today, nor the person without the unimaginable grace of NVMS and all their donors. The opportunities they provided have opened doors I never knew existed and cultivated a passion for music which would not have been possible otherwise. A million thanks.”

- Emily Freudenberger, Scholarship Recipient



Camp Festival Amadeus is our summer chamber camp for young musicians

## Donor Spotlight

Ross and Sandy Anderson began their involvement with North Valley Music School when their children were toddlers and began taking the Music Together Class. This class sparked an interest in music for all four of their children at an early age, each of whom went on to take individual music lessons on piano and guitar. Sandy also joined them and took piano lessons for a few years.

“Throughout almost 20 years of living in Whitefish our family has been involved with NVMS. We have supported this school with volunteer hours, financial support and serving as an Advisory Board member. We feel incredibly fortunate to have a music school of this caliber in our small town bringing in very talented musicians and instructors. Personally, we have enjoyed all that NVMS has to offer; classes, concerts, recitals, and workshops. Each of our children have continued with music through High School and beyond NVMS. They learned more than just how to play an instrument. They have an appreciation and knowledge of music, composers, performing in front of people and various genres of music. Our family has benefited beyond words from our many years of involvement at NVMS, but best of all they all have a life long love of music.”

– Ross and Sandy Anderson

**“Music helps me with love and passion. I am also getting smarter because of music. Music means more to me than just notes. I want to go to music school because I want to learn.”**

K.S. age 11, NVMS scholarship recipient

# CELEBRATING 20 YEARS AT NORTH VALLEY MUSIC SCHOOL VOICES FROM THE PAST AND PRESENT

“Since the first germ of an idea to create a music school, transpired in the lobby of the post office in the mid 90s, it has been a joy to watch North Valley Music School grow through the years. As I walk around town, it is hard to believe how the desire for music education in Whitefish has spread throughout the community. A large percentage of the town has been affected by NVMS – either as a student, as a parent of a student, or as someone who has attended an event.

I grew up in a musical town and had the opportunity to learn about music in a place that encouraged me to thrive. A group of kids my age all grew as musicians together. We now have that in Whitefish. Children start out as babes on laps learning in Music Together® Classes, continue in private lessons at the music school, and then transition to be active musicians in our schools and community. Meanwhile, adults who did not get enough music as children, are finding NVMS and enjoying the process of learning music at any age. A community of musicians is well-established in Whitefish and NVMS is at the center of it.

This year, upon retiring from my career, I’ve found one a day a week to come to NVMS to volunteer. I am planning to take lessons once again. Joy happens when one is surrounded by others doing something you love. I encourage all of you – whether you’re just finding us or have known about the school for years – to find a way to become actively involved again. Become a student, parent a student, or become a volunteer. Find the joy in music that North Valley Music School can offer you!”

- Betsy Kohnstamm, Founding Board Member

Daughter of Co-Founder Betty Lou Wambeke, Jennifer Wickland has been involved with North Valley Music School since it’s inception 20 years ago. Along with her mother, Jennifer was the first NVMS faculty. Today she continues to bless the school with her warm “Sweet Jenny” smile as the Office Manager and member of the piano faculty.

“As a teacher, student, board member, parent, and now office manager, I am thrilled to be a part of North Valley Music School. NVMS provides a space to learn how to practice music, share teaching ideas, and perform with confidence in our local community and beyond since 1997. This year has been especially fun with the addition of our new Executive Director. Deidre Corson has taken us to a new level of serving our community with her passion for music as a director, fundraiser, teacher, and performer. We are so thankful to our founders, generous volunteers and donors, faculty and staff, who have shown their value of music and education throughout the years. As we are bursting at the seams in our current facility, it will be very exciting to see what the future holds in the next 20 – 100 years for North Valley Music School.”

- Jennifer Wickland,  
NVMS Office Manager, Piano Faculty

2017 Faculty Concert.  
Diane Dickerson &  
Jennifer Wickland  
perform at the LaSalle  
Grange Theatre



# LOOKING TO THE FUTURE. GUIDED BY OUR PAST.

## In 2016-2017 NVMS:

Taught 220 private lessons

Served over 100 students  
in group classes

Awarded 30 Scholarships and turned  
no student away for financial reasons

Added a Music Lingua program

Offered 12 summer music camps

Established a Corporate Partners pro-  
gram with 27 supportive sponsors

Doubled our endowment fund  
to surpass \$100,000

Raised \$48,000 in the  
2016 Great Fish Challenge  
(almost double from 2015)

Raised \$84,825  
in the 2017 Great Fish  
Challenge and had the  
most donors two years  
in a row!

Established the  
Montana Music Event  
holding the  
2nd Annual  
sell-out show.

## Our goals for 2017-18 include:

Increasing group programs to include:  
Music Theory, Ukulele, Adult Choir,  
and Jazz

Increasing our scholarship fund to over  
35 awards and turn no student away for  
financial reasons.

Updating our scheduling  
and billing system.

Creating a vital Alumni Association

Continuing to build our endowment fund  
to help sustain the music school for  
future generations.

Continuing to explore the  
opportunities for the future  
of North Valley Music School  
to be a safe and accessible  
community music school.

**“Music makes me happy  
because it is entertaining.  
Music makes me think  
better. I like music.”**

- S.C. age 8,  
NVMS scholarship recipient





# THANK YOU TO ALL OUR DONORS FOR YOUR SUPPORT

## \$20,000+

Cindy W. Cameron Scholarship Fund  
Kramer Family Fund

## \$10,000-\$19,999

John Kramer  
Whitefish Community Foundation

## \$5000 - \$9,999

Ken & Byrdie Wessels

## \$2500 - \$4,999

Charles Cameron  
Montana Arts Council  
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Nancy & Jesse Thompson  
Soroptimist International of Whitefish

## \$1,000 - \$2,499

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Whitefish Properties Inc.  
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Kenneth Witte  
Paul Wolfe  
Elizabeth Zullo

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Gibson Guitar

### Studio Sponsors:

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Third Street Market

### Music Maker Sponsors:

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Alpine Village Center  
Beth Sobba PT, MMT  
Browning Creative, Inc.  
First Interstate Bank  
Flathead Electric Co-op  
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Glacier Restaurant Group  
HUB International Insurance  
Mountain Mini Storage  
NXGEN  
Parks & Recreation Consulting, LLC  
River Design Group  
Rockfish Climbing Gym  
Shellinger Construction  
Spinning Cogs, LLC  
State Farm Insurance  
Successful Signs & Awards  
Tupelo Bar & Grill  
Whitefish Animal Hospital  
Whitefish Lake Restaurant  
Wright's Furniture

## 2016-17 Board of Directors

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Terry Nelson - Vice Pres.  
Kay Burg - Secretary  
Katie Morgan - Treasurer  
Matthew Bussard  
David Hunt  
Stephanie Joseph  
Rick Prestbye  
Christine Rossi  
Eric Schmidt  
Kathy Schmidt  
Ann Schoonover

## 2016-17 Advisory Committee

John Kramer - Co Chair  
Steve Lull - Co Chair  
Ruth Ackroyd  
Lin Akey  
Ross Anderson  
Cameron Blake  
Kristin Bodeen  
Paul Conrad  
Heather Davis-Schmidt  
Lynnette Donaldson  
Betsy Kohnstamm  
Carolyn Pitman

Scott Ringer  
Doug Reed  
Alan Satterlee  
Doug Wise

## Administration

Deidre Corson - Executive Director  
Jennifer Wickland - Office Manager

## Music Instructors

Tina Bertram, piano, Suzuki piano, banjo  
Cindy Browne, violin  
Griffin Browne, cello  
Diane Dickerson, piano, flute, harp

Judith Doxtater, piano, Suzuki piano,  
Music Together  
Amy Haymond, violin  
Christian Johnson, guitar, fiddle, mandolin,  
electric bass  
Dan Kohnstamm, piano  
Don Rees, guitar, banjo  
Donny Rifkin, piano  
Jenanne Solberg, violin, viola  
Sandra Vasquez, Music Lingua

## Founders

Betty Lou Wambeke  
Betsy Kohnstamm