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

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
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!

“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
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!

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
“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

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
“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 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
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 program 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

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Christian Johnson, guitar, fiddle, mandolin, electric bass
Don Rees, guitar, banjo
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Amy Hammond, violin
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