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**The Guitar Center Music Foundation wraps up an eventful 2023**

**WESTLAKE VILLAGE, Calif., January 11, 2024 —** The [Guitar Center Music Foundation](http://guitarcenterfoundation.org/) (GCMF), a nonprofit organization that advances the healing, transformative power of music by granting instruments to music education and music therapy programs in need, has continued to grow and expand the scope of its philanthropic efforts throughout 2023. All funds raised for GCMF in 2023 total approximately $700,000, with more than $520,000 provided in instrument grants and support for over 100 organizations, including schools, community programs, music therapy and hospitals. These efforts will continue in earnest in 2024, with activities expanding into new realms.

Key to GCMF’s fundraising efforts is partnering with Guitar Center on the “Round Up” program at Guitar Center stores and online, which allows customers to round up their purchases to the nearest dollar as a donation to GCMF. The “Round Up” program evolved in 2023, with a number of corporate partners and individual sponsors pledging dollar-for-dollar matches for funds generated from the program. (Reach out at <https://guitarcenterfoundation.org/contact/> to get involved in this capacity). Funds generated via the Round Up program in 2023 totaled more than $425,000.

In addition to instrument grants and lessons program, GCMF has established an Instrument Scholarship Fund, in order to provide instruments to promising high school students going on to study music in college. This year, GCMF provided two trombones to students in New Orleans, working closely with the Preservation Hall.

August saw devastating wildfires ravage the island of Maui in Hawaii, and GCMF’s Maui Relief Fund raised close to $100,000, and to date GCMF has helped numerous local musicians get back on their feet. Q1 of 2024 will see a continuation of these efforts, focusing specifically on schools on the island.

Key grant support went to Shakira’s Foundation Pies Descalzos for the development of a new music school in partnership with Playing for Change in Quibdó, Colombia.

GCMF expanded its support to mariachi programs this year, including the development of a new program in Santa Ana, CA, at NOVA Academy. The Foundation was featured on Good Morning America in September supporting three other school-based mariachi programs.

Key partnerships were solidified or expanded with such organizations as Guitars and Ukes in the Classroom, ASCAP Foundation, Music Forward Foundation, and Musically Fed. GCMF also renewed its ongoing relationship with Challenge America, serving veterans through music therapy and songwriting, providing over 100 guitars to veterans throughout the country.

The year also saw the establishment of a new annual tradition in the form of a fundraising gala. Taking place March 30, 2023, at The Canyon in Agoura Hills, CA, the event honored the career of legendary percussionist Pete “Pops” Escovedo as well as the invaluable efforts of local music teachers. A capacity crowd was in attendance, enjoying the evening’s festivities and helping the Foundation raise thousands of dollars in new funds. GCMF Executive Director Myka Miller and GCMF Chairman of the Board David Helfant served as co-hosts for the event. A spring 2024 event is currently in its planning stages.

Finally, GCMF added three new board members this year: Herb Trawick, Fred Croshal and Raul Carrega.

“These are just a few examples of the ways in which GCMF has expanded the scope of our efforts in 2023,” stated Myka Miller, The Guitar Center Music Foundation Executive Director. “Our yearly goal is to continue to grow, and we hit our marks in 2023 and then some. We thank everyone who has supported our efforts in 2023, and we look forward to an even bigger 2024!”

To learn more, visit <http://www.GuitarCenterFoundation.org>, or follow [@GiveMusicLife](https://twitter.com/GiveMusicLife) on Twitter for more news or to discover ways to support The Guitar Center Music Foundation. Also, follow GCMF on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/guitarcenterfoundation/) and [Instagram](https://www.instagram.com/guitarcenterfoundation/?hl=en).

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Photo file 1: LincolnGuitarClub.JPG

Photo caption 1: Members of the Lincoln High School Guitar Club in San Diego show instruments acquired via a grant from The Guitar Center Music Foundation, partnering with Guitars and Ukes in the Classroom.

Photo file 2: Santos.JPG

Photo caption 2: Pictured L-R: Kyra Santos and Larry Santos (chairman at Ukulele Project Hawaii), pictured with new ukuleles acquired via a grant from The Guitar Center Music Foundation as part of the efforts to help musicians in the wake of the 2023 Maui wildfires.

Photo file 3: Ledet\_Miller.JPG

Photo caption 3: Pictured L-R: trombonist Emily Ledet and Myka Miller, The Guitar Center Music Foundation Executive Director. Ledet was one of the inaugural recipients of an instrument through GCMF’s new Instrument Scholarship Fund, which provides instruments to promising high school students going on to study music in college.

ABOUT THE GUITAR CENTER MUSIC FOUNDATION

For some, music may be just a hobby. But for others, music serves as a crucial lifeline – a path to healing, an opportunity to nurture untapped talent, an escape from the grim realities of everyday life, a break from generational trauma, or the start of a social revolution. The Guitar Center Music Foundation (GCMF) is an independent non-profit organization dedicated to the healing, transformative power of music. Thousands of individuals nationwide benefit yearly from GCMF’s grants and other efforts aiding veterans, hospital patients, the unhoused, and those affected by natural disasters, as well as youth in both schools and after-school programs. By providing these programs with all types of instruments and advocating for the benefits of music education and music therapy, GCMF furthers its mission of giving people the chance to create and express themselves through music. For more information about The Guitar Center Music Foundation, please visit <http://guitarcenterfoundation.org/>.

ABOUT GUITAR CENTER INC

Guitar Center is the leading retailer of musical instruments, lessons, repairs and rentals in the U.S. With more than 300 stores across the U.S. and one of the top direct sales websites in the industry, Guitar Center has helped people make music for more than 50 years. Guitar Center also provides customers with various musician-based services, including Guitar Center Lessons, where musicians of all ages and skill levels can learn to play a variety of instruments in many music genres, GC Repairs, an on-site maintenance and repairs service, and GC Rentals, a program offering easy rentals of instruments and other sound reinforcement gear. Additionally, Guitar Center’s sister brands include Music & Arts, which operates more than 250 stores specializing in band & orchestral instruments for sale and rental, serving teachers, band directors, college professors, parents and students, and Musician’s Friend, a leading direct marketer of musical instruments in the United States. For more information about Guitar Center, please visit [guitarcenter.com](http://www.guitarcenter.com/).

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