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**The Guitar Center Music Foundation embarks on an eventful 2023, building on the expanded scope of its philanthropic efforts in 2022**

— Among the foundation’s 2023 activities will be a high-profile fundraiser concert on March 30 —

**WESTLAKE VILLAGE, Calif., February 22, 2023 —** The [Guitar Center Music Foundation](http://guitarcenterfoundation.org/) (GCMF), a nonprofit organization focused on granting instruments to music education and music therapy organizations, continues to grow and expand the scope of its philanthropic efforts, wrapping a successful 2022 and undertaking a jam-packed 2023. The 2022 calendar year included support for over 200 schools or community music programs in 41 states (including music therapy and hospitals) with free musical instruments and gear, many in underserved communities or those affected by natural disasters. These efforts are continuing in earnest in 2023, with the lives of more than 6,000 individuals impacted already this year, with activities expanding into new realms.

Excitement is growing for a high-profile GCMF fundraiser concert, taking place March 30, 2023, at The Canyon Club in Agoura Hills, CA (6:00 to 10:00 p.m. PDT). Tickets go on sale March 1 and are available [here](https://www.eventbrite.com/e/guitar-center-music-foundation-annual-benefit-concert-fundraiser-tickets-546647075117). GCMF will be presenting a Lifetime Achievement Award to GRAMMY® Award winner [Pete Escovedo](https://peteescovedo.com/), the Latin jazz legend and father of Sheila E., as he is retiring from touring this year. Pete and other members of the Escovedo family will also perform at the event, along with several other special guests. [John “JR” Robinson](https://www.johnjrrobinson.com/), one of the most recorded drummers in the world and the musical director for David Foster, will serve as musical director for the evening, leading an ensemble of world-class musicians. Aside from amazing live music, the evening will include an open buffet and live and silent auctions. Looking forward, plans are underway to make this fundraiser concert a yearly event in 2024 and beyond, giving GCMF an opportunity to foster strengthened connections with both legendary musicians and the wider public.

GCMF is also excited to announce The Playing for Change Foundation (PFCF) as one key grantee in the first half of 2023. GCMF has partnered with PFCF to provide instruments for a new music school in Quibdo, Colombia, along with Fundación Pies Descalzos (a non-profit organization founded by global superstar Shakira). The school is opening in March, and GCMF is providing several dozen instruments and other music gear to help launch the program.

Additionally, GCMF has pledged an ongoing monthly commitment to Challenge America, an organization that leverages technology and the creative arts to improve the lives of veterans and their families. GCMF will be providing 10 veterans each month with guitars for their workshops and music therapy.

Looking back at 2022, the growth and success of The Guitar Center Music Foundation are apparent when looking at both the data and the individual stories of the lives reached by GCMF’s efforts. No fewer than 86 schools were served in 2022, which is up from 59 in 2021 and 17 in 2020. Overall in 2022, 200 music programs were provided with aid (which includes schools, community centers, music therapy programs and more). The Foundation raised nearly $700,000 of new funds – 100% of which was put back into communities. GCMF also partnered 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 is evolving 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).

Here are a few of the numerous examples of the diverse scope of programs served by GCMF in 2022:

Elmhurst Middle School in Oakland operates in a severely underfunded school district where music programs have consistently been subject to budget cuts. GCMF was able to partner with Elevate Oakland to provide such assets as drums, violins and a state-of-the-art soundproof “whisper room,” used for both recording and rehearsal. The legendary Sheila E. was on hand to present the instruments to the program at a special ceremony in February 2022.

Marrero Middle School, located in Jefferson Parish in New Orleans, was severely impacted by Hurricane Ida in 2021 and saw many of its instruments destroyed, damaged or lost. GCMF, alongside Music Rising (the natural relief fund of Mr. Holland’s Opus Foundation) and Save The Music Foundation, was able to help the program replace these instruments with a large donation of instruments and other gear. In a special ceremony on Friday, September 30, 2022, the organizations teamed up at the school and presented the program with the entire haul – while enjoying a rousing performance from the Preservation Hall Jazz Band and remarks from school officials and representatives from the organizations.

Furthermore, GCMF aid is ongoing in Whitesburg, Kentucky, a community that experienced severe flood damage in April 2022.

“These are just a few examples of the programs that we have served in 2022 and continue to serve in 2023,” stated Myka Miller, The Guitar Center Music Foundation Executive Director. “Our overarching goal is to provide those in need with instruments and to advocate for the benefits of music education and music therapy, and we continued to accomplish that goal in 2022. But our yearly goal is growth in those endeavors, and in that regard, 2022 was a banner year, and 2023 is looking to be even bigger. We thank everyone who supports our efforts, and we look forward to great things to come.”

To learn more, visit <http://www.GuitarCenterFoundation.org>, or follow @GiveMusicLife on Twitter for more news or to discover ways to support The Guitar Center Music Foundation.

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Photo file 1: GCMF\_MarreroMS\_Group.JPG

Photo caption 1: Individuals involved in the ceremony at Marrero Middle School, in Jefferson Parish in New Orleans, on Friday, September 30, 2022, presenting the school’s music program with musical instruments to replace those destroyed, damaged or lost due to Hurricane Ida. Pictured L-R: Pamela Blackmon (Preservation Hall Foundation Programming & Development Associate); Greg Lambousy (New Orleans Jazz Museum Director); Chiho Feindler (Save The Music Foundation Chief Program Officer); Bryan Kerlec (Guitar Center Store Manager); Ryan Salinas (Guitar Center District Manager); Ryan Merritt (donor); Myka Miller (Guitar Center Music Foundation Executive Director); Jeremy Williams (Marrero MS Band Director); and Josh Wingerter (New Orleans-based artist).

ABOUT THE GUITAR CENTER MUSIC FOUNDATION

The Guitar Center Music Foundation was founded as a 501(c)(3) in 2005. Since its inception, the foundation has placed instruments in the hands of over 300,000 people nationwide through grants to qualifying music education and music therapy programs. The foundation’s mission is to support music education programs nationally by providing those in need with instruments and by advocating for the benefits of music education and music therapy. For more information about The Guitar Center Music Foundation, please visit <http://guitarcenterfoundation.org/>.

ABOUT GUITAR CENTER INC

Guitar Center is a leading retailer of musical instruments, lessons, repairs and rentals in the United States. With 300 stores across the country and as 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 musician-based services, including lessons where musicians of all ages and skill levels can learn to play instruments in many musical genres. Guitar Center also offers an on-site maintenance and repairs service called GC Repairs and GC Rentals, a program offering easy rentals of instruments and other sound reinforcement gear. Guitar Center’s sister brands include Music & Arts, which operates more than 200 stores specializing in band and orchestral instruments for sale and rental, serving teachers, band directors, college professors and students. Another sister company, Musician’s Friend, is a leading direct marketer of musical instruments in the United States. For more information about Guitar Center, please visit [www.guitarcenter.com](http://www.guitarcenter.com).

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