

## Musical Opportunities for All

I waited in the music room, trying to contain my excitement. This was the day that we would start learning how to play our instruments! My teacher stood up and explained to us the importance of caring for them. He then instructed us to open up our cases. I opened mine up and looked down at the violin cradled in its worn velvet lining. This was the beginning of my new life as a musician.

From that day on, I've worked hard to master the basics of the violin. I've attended extra classes, and even joined the Hawaii Youth Symphony. My music teacher and conductor encouraged me to keep playing. I feel so lucky to have been introduced to music in my elementary school. It was free, part of their normal curriculum! If I hadn't been able to attend that special elementary school, I wouldn't ever have had the chance to learn an instrument. Because I was able to learn the violin, I have shared my love for music and life with my community.

I wish that more kids in Hawaii could have the chance to learn an instrument and enrich their lives with music. A study done by Northwestern University shows that there is a connection between learning an instrument and the brain. They found that when someone starts learning music, it improves their attention span, speech fluency, and capacity to explain their feelings. Besides this, music creates Endorphins, a chemical in the brain that lifts people's moods. I have felt this effect of music on both my scholastic abilities and disposition. When I look ahead to college, I hope to apply for music scholarships. These wonderful possibilities should be available to everyone!

I propose free music curriculums and classes at all public elementary schools. This would transform many kid's lives. Mr. Clarence T.C Ching's foundation has and is doing a wonderful job at changing children's futures already! They recently funded the building of a Learning & Technology Center at Saint Louis School. This center includes

a band room, soundproof practice rooms, a recording studio, ceramics room, and all sorts of spaces to be used for the arts.

Mr. Ching's foundation sincerely cares about the arts and sponsors many opportunities for keiki. Mr. Ching inspires me to talk about my dream of creating free music curriculums and classes for all public schools. I believe that in doing this; the children of Hawaii will have the opportunity to reach incredible heights. Perhaps people from each neighborhood could donate used instruments. A room in each public school could be set aside for practice, and high school musicians could volunteer to teach the elementary students. Mr. Ching knew the value of music and he set such a generous example for all of us. If we could all give a little bit, Hawaii's students will certainly have brighter futures.

<http://the-brain-and-music.blogspot.com/2009/07/music-releases-endorphins-in-brain.html>

[http://healingmusicenterprises.com/brain\\_blog/](http://healingmusicenterprises.com/brain_blog/)

<http://www.clarencetcingfoundation.org/march-2011-clarence-t-c-ching-learning-and-technology-center-saint-louis-school>