

## **Guitar Center Returns to The Hill to Present the Benefits of Music Education During The NAMM Music Education Advocacy D.C. Fly-In**

*Guitar Center joins NAMM again to advocate for school-level music programs across the nation*

**Washington D.C.** (May 23, 2019) – For a second year, Donny Gruendler, Ed.D., Guitar Center Vice President of Music Education, along with members of the National Association of Music Merchants (NAMM), gathered in Washington, D.C., to meet with Senators, Representatives and other elected officials to advocate for school-level music programs across the nation as part of the annual National Association of Music Merchants (NAMM) Music Education Advocacy D.C. Fly-In, held May 20-23, 2019.

In a series of meetings with these officials, Gruendler and his colleague Stacey Spencer discussed the multitude of benefits that music education espouses, such as increased brain function, focus and language development. They reinforced the importance of music as part of a well-rounded education and urged funding of the Title IV program at its authorized level of \$1.65 billion in fiscal year 2020 to ensure that the goals of the “Every Student Succeeds Act” are realized for every child.

Gruendler secured one-on-one meetings with the following members of Congress:

- Senator Maggie Hassan (D-NH), HELP committee (Health, Education, Labor and Pension)
- Senator James Lankford (R-OK), Appropriations committee; Edu-Sub-Committee
- Senator Jack Reed, (D-RI), Appropriations committee; Edu-Sub-Committee
- Senator Jeanne Shaheen (D-NH), Appropriations committee; Edu-Sub-Committee
- Senator Brian Schatz (D-HI), Appropriations committee
- Senator Sheldon Whitehouse (D-RI), HELP committee (Health, Education, Labor and Pension)
- Representative Tom Cole (R-OK, 4th District), Appropriations committee; Edu-Sub-Committee
- Representative Mark Takano (D-CA, 41st District), Education and Labor Committee

Additionally, Gruendler shared new research from the Kennedy Center’s Turnaround Arts program and The NAMM Foundation, in which researchers explored music education instruction, specialists and curriculum at Turnaround Arts schools, finding that as schools invested in music education, the quality of and access to music education increased from 27.8% to 75%, and the average number of minutes of music instruction per week increased from 17 to 33, nearing the national average of 40 minutes per week.

“Beyond the intrinsic value of music to students nationwide, education in music has benefits for young people that transcend the musical domain. Thus, it is very important that we allow today’s youth to study music regularly,” stated Donny Gruendler, Ed.D, Vice President of Education at Guitar Center.

As one of the largest supplementary music education providers in the country, Guitar Center Inc. has an additional reach into education legislation and connections that helped NAMM in reaching other key representatives, particularly those that reside on the HELP committees (Health, Education, Labor and Pension), as well as the Appropriations committees and Edu-sub-committees related thereto.

Guitar Center and its sister brand Music & Arts are in nearly every U.S. state, with nearly 300 Guitar Center stores and more than 200 Music and Arts stores.

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**About Guitar Center:**

Guitar Center is a leading retailer of musical instruments, lessons, repairs and rentals in the U.S. With nearly 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 200 stores specializing in band & orchestral instruments for sale and rental, serving teachers, band directors, college professors 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 [www.guitarcenter.com](http://www.guitarcenter.com).

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