



## **Tallahassee Youth Orchestras: GAP Program**

### **Gradus ad Parnassum: Music as a Stairway to Success**

The TYO's "*Gradus ad Parnassum*" (GAP) Project will provide private instrument lessons and participation in a TYO orchestral ensemble to select young students from underserved communities within Tallahassee. GAP stands for the Latin phrase "*Gradus ad Parnassum*," which translates as "Steps to Parnassus." According to Greek mythology, Mount Parnassus was the home of the Muses – the nine goddesses of the arts. Throughout

history, the phrase has been used to refer to books of instruction, or guides to making progress in music. With this reference in mind, the GAP Program's aim is to provide a "stairway to success" for students who show a gift for music and who have the desire to excel in it. Also, the word "gap" is defined as "a significant difference between two things, attitudes, or perceptions." The TYO GAP Program seeks to bridge the *gap* between underprivileged childrens' desire and ability to excel in music and their *inability* to afford the necessary tools to do so.

#### Background

It is no secret that music education has a tremendously positive impact on young people's intellectual development. The American College Board has found that students of the arts consistently outperform their non-arts peers on the SAT; Harvard's "Project Zero" has found that notational skills in music correlate positively with achievement in math and reading; and a 2004 Stanford University study showed that mastering a musical instrument improves the way the human brain processes parts of spoken language.<sup>1</sup> These are but a few of many studies proving that students participating in music have advantages over those who do not.

Part of the TYO's mission is to strengthen the Tallahassee community through outreach projects and the TYO strongly desires to serve budding young musicians from economically disadvantaged families. We feel that each child should have the opportunity to experience the benefits of music study. In short, music study can save lives; it could be the one area in which a child excels, finds his or her own inner voice, and experiences a sense of accomplishment.

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<sup>1</sup> A thorough catalog of studies proving the benefits of music study can be found at the National Association for Music Educators website:  
[www.menc.org/information/advocate/facts.html](http://www.menc.org/information/advocate/facts.html)

### The TYO GAP Program

In order for students to truly excel in instrument playing, it is necessary for them to begin training during their elementary-school years. Because private lessons are not offered in the public school arena, any student wishing to study an instrument must have the ability and resources to seek this training on his/her own. This is where the TYO GAP Program steps in: the mission of the project is to provide talented students who otherwise could not afford to study music the ability to do so.

We are looking for individuals to sponsor children in the GAP Program on a year-to-year basis. The cost is \$620.00 annually and is outlined below.

### **I. STRUCTURE OF PROGRAM**

- 1) students will receive private lessons with a highly-qualified TYO Coach
- 2) students will be provided with music and an instrument
- 3) students will participate in one of the TYO ensembles

### **II: COSTS PER STUDENT EDUCATION**

Basic costs per student:

- |  |                               |
|--|-------------------------------|
| 1) 16 hours of lessons per year at \$20/hour | = \$320/yearly                |
| 2) music for private lessons                 | = \$20/ yearly                |
| 3) TYO tuition                               | = \$300/yearly                |
| 4) <i>instrument maintenance</i>             | = <i>approx. \$50/yearly*</i> |

<b>Cost per child, per year</b>	<b>= \$690.00</b>
<b>Instrument maintenance fee</b>	<b><u>- 50.00</u></b>
<b>TOTAL COST TO SPONSOR</b>	<b>\$640.00</b>

*\*Participants will be responsible for the \$50.00 instrument maintenance fee.*

### **III. TYO's CONTRIBUTION**

- 1) all costs associated with administering the program
- 2) provide instruments, if necessary