



West Haven Community House

227 Elm Street, West Haven, CT 06516

Ph: 203-934-5221 fax: 203-937-9052

www.whcommunityhouse.org

Youth Open Mic Night Brings Many Families to the Community House



West Haven, CT—(January 23, 2017) Nearly 60 youth and their families rocked out at a Youth Open Mic Night hosted by The West Haven Community House on Friday, January 13th. The free open mic events, presented by The Rock House School of Music, began about a year ago and are held about once a month at the Community House. “The event provides an outlet for kids to perform and interact together creatively.” said John McCarthy owner of The Rock House School of Music.

During the three-hour event, Doug Wimbish, the legendary bassist of Living Colour, jammed and mingled with aspiring young musicians. John McCarthy works with Wimbish’s charity, The WimBash Music Festival Series, which includes the festival and related fundraising events, which have collected \$15,000 to date for West Haven music education. A portion of the proceeds from WimBash benefit music festival, held in West Haven this summer, were used to purchase music equipment for the Community House. In late spring, the Community House is planning to implement a pilot program for self-paced individual and group instruction through the use of computers in the classrooms with the donated instruments.

The Community House collaborates with McCarthy to bring his “Clap, Tap, Sing” program to the preschoolers at the Community House’s Head Start preschool, which serves children aged 3 or 4 from low income families. The interactive program starts little ones on their way to learning rhythm, timing and melody. McCarthy works with groups of 18-20 children at a time to teach them rhythms, rhyming and also provides them with an opportunity to explore the use of musical instruments, including keyboard, drums and ukuleles. The children learn how to use their bodies as a rhythm keeper and have fun using clapping and tapping techniques to build coordination between hands and feet.

“Developing a sense of how music works early helps children grow intellectually and creatively. It’s proven that kids who have a solid foundation for musical principles learn better at school,” said Community House executive director, Patty Stevens.

“One of the goals of the Open Mic program is to increase community awareness of the great amount of young talent in our city and thus engage financial supporters for future music programming. Continued training in how music works has been proven to help children with their academic learning; can be therapeutic; help with hand/eye coordination and improve concentration.” she continued.

The Open Mic events are free and open to any local youth musician, and features local band Tears Fall Down as the ‘House Band’. This band, consisting of West Haven youth age 13 & 14, has played in many festivals and fairs over the past 5 years and is gaining the attention of many local and international musicians. All youth musicians are welcome to come and perform either as an individual with the House Band or as part of a band.

“The hope is to give local children, who are interested in music, a chance to come show their talents. Many kids play music and there is a great amount of talent in our town but they don’t have an outlet to perform.” said McCarthy. “Giving these kids a positive activity will help inspire them to continue their musical journey and hopefully get the ‘Music Bug’.”

###

The West Haven Community House is a not-for-profit agency whose programs include a Head Start school readiness program, before and after school and summer child care programs, and day and residential programs for adults with intellectual disabilities. For more information, visit the web site at: www.whcommunityhouse.org.