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EHTHS MUSIC TEACHER RECEIVES NATIONAL AWARD

EGG HARBOR TOWNSHIP - David C. Milnes, Piano and AP Music Theory Teacher and Jazz Band Director at Egg Harbor Township High School, will be honored with the Music Education Innovator Award given by the *Give A Note Foundation* in November.

Prior to the Covid-19 outbreak, awardees were scheduled to be honored in May in Nashville, TN, where they would also have had the opportunity to network with local studios in the area and tour the city -- home of legendary country music venues including the Grand Ole Opry. Instead, Milnes and the other recipients will receive their awards at the National Association for Music Educators (NAfME) National Conference in Florida.

Milnes, one of 15 to be honored across the country, was recognized for 'Eagle Records,' an EHTHS record label that was founded in 2017 with the goal of providing an avenue for students to create and produce their own original music in a program other than band or chorus. "Eagle Records is going to run as a year-round class next year and I'm super excited!" said Milnes. "The student interest has been through the roof!"

Locally, Milnes was awarded \$22,000 in 2019 by the Community Partnership for Egg Harbor Township Schools, Inc. non-profit foundation to build a professional-level digital recording studio and two satellite studios for students to learn to produce, engineer, and mix original music, while also developing the skill of enhancing video projects with high-quality, studio-recorded audio. Milnes was also awarded the \$1,500 "Dina Award" from the Schultz-Hill foundation in 2019 to further develop the recording program.

The *Give A Note Foundation's* Music Education Innovator Award is given to school music programs led by creative music educators utilizing innovative and sustainable strategies in non-traditional or traditional K-12 music classes in public schools across America that attract students not typically enrolled in music education courses, in efforts to increase access to music education through diversity in curriculum and approach.

Sponsored by the Country Music Association (CMA) Foundation, awards are granted to

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schools with programs that have significant potential for utilizing \$4,000 in grants to build upon programmatic successes in effort to create lasting change; and to encourage other schools and districts to learn from model programs created by the music educators who serve as Innovative Ambassadors in the field.

Awardees were selected based on the following award criteria: Community Benefit, Innovation and Program Capacity. More specifically, honorees were chosen for their ability to meaningfully engage their students, parents, the school and members of the geographic area where the school is located; create a quality music program that inspires and challenges students outside the traditional music curriculum; and successfully plan for, manage, and inspire other teachers around the country through his program.

A graduate from the Berklee College of Music in Boston, Milnes also holds a degree in Songwriting. Formerly the choral director at Orange High School, Dave is a master educator. His Orange choirs won numerous national awards and competitions. He was awarded a Berklee Alumni grant to start the "Orange Juice Records" program where the students produced their own original music under his direction. He also created a Music Theory and AP Music Theory program and brought significant notoriety to the Orange Performing Arts department. Milnes was also the Orange Board of Education's nomination for the Princeton Distinguished Teacher of the year award.

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