



DISCOVER THE POWER OF IDEAS

*Vice President for University Relations,
Communications and Marketing*

Mr. Michael Clay
Executive Director
Texas Music Project
1009 Woodbriar Drive
Grapevine, Texas 76051

Dear Michael:

Wow! The Battle of the Bands was a wonderful event, and the University of North Texas was proud to act as one of its major sponsors. The musical talent of the high school students who participated in the event was outstanding, and it was easy to imagine many of them to be outstanding student-musicians in their high school band or orchestra programs. It also was easy to see how competitions like the Battle of the Bands builds their self-esteem and sense of responsibility – they all arrived early for the event and were respectful and supportive of one another.

I can think of few opportunities for high school students to perform in a world-class facility, such as UNT's Murchison Performing Arts Center, and I heard as much from the students and their parents at the event. I heard other feedback from parents that night, too, including the parents who told me they had no affiliation with the university and the bands, they just wanted their students to experience first-hand what they can achieve if they excel as musicians. Another parent told me that his two sons, both musicians in public schools, are planning to attend UNT – one of the kids is the talented 12 ½ -year-old drummer who demanded the double-base pedal for his performance. Another parent wrote to me yesterday requesting that I "Please tell everyone associated with the contest that you guys put on a first-class show!" Another parent said, "Great venue, big stage and great sound. The event was very organized. We appreciate everyone's efforts who put this together."

An important outcome of the Battle of the Bands was spreading the word about the importance of music education throughout the 16-county North Texas region. The students who participated in the event were from Azle, Fort Worth, Forney, Frisco, Plano, Dallas, McKinney and Richardson, and students entered from other parts of the region, as well. And, they and their peers went to the *Denton Record-Chronicle* web site to learn about the contest and vote for their favorite band, which had the educational benefit of exposing them to news in an online format.

You can see the outcomes of the event – the winning music video – produced by the winning band, The J Walkers, in the John Lennon Educational Tour Bus at www.unt.edu (see J Walkers in upper right corner).

P.O. Box 311070
Denton, Texas
76203-1070

940.565.2108 TEL
940.369.8763 FAX
817.267.0651 METRO

940.369.8652 TTY
www.unt.edu

Beyond the Battle of the Bands event, which we hope to sponsor on UNT's campus again next year, was the John Lennon Educational Tour Bus' visit to our campus and the opportunity for our students to learn more about the latest recording technologies. The student-alumni band, Snarky Puppy, really enjoyed their opportunity to record in the bus. You'll soon be able to see their video from UNT's web site.

One of the highlights of the evening was the announcement that UNT will, with the help of the Texas Music Project, re-launch of *Start Up the Band*. UNT is especially grateful to the Texas Music Project and Lone Star Attitude for providing \$10,000 to help economically disadvantaged and at-risk public school children learn music one year earlier than their peers and in an extra-curricular activity. *Start Up the Band* will help to grow the participating students' self esteem and prepare them to be leaders among their peers when their formal public school band program begins a year later.

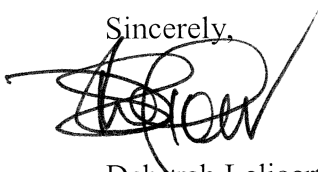
I've heard stories about the success of the original program and about the number of instrument donations received by the university, even about one student who is now in a high school band program using the instrument that was originally given her through *Start Up the Band*.

Our work now, Michael, is to grow available funding for *Start Up the Band* programs – in Denton and beyond. And, to work with the John Lennon Educational Tour Bus program to develop a Battle of the Bands at UNT next year.

As a student-centered public research university UNT is the perfect partner for such endeavors. While we're growing as a research institution, especially in science, technology and engineering, we don't lose sight of the fact that the arts are the very heart of our university.

Thank you, again, for all you have done and are doing to make these initiatives possible at UNT.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Deborah Leliaert', with a large, sweeping flourish extending upwards and to the right.

Deborah Leliaert