

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

HALIFAX HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS HIT THE RIGHT NOTES WITH MUSICOUNTS

Local music hero Joel Plaskett speaks and performs

HALIFAX, September 14, 2009 - MusiCounts, Canada's music education charity, together with more than 800 students and staff at J.L. IIsley High School celebrated their MusiCounts Band Aid grant today at a special presentation. The \$10,000 grant has helped students realize their musical abilities by increasing the school's inventory and quality of musical instruments.

Halifax-native and four-time JUNO Award nominee, Joel Plaskett, spoke at the event about his passion for music and, thrilled the students with a special performance.

Melanie Berry, President, CARAS and MusiCounts also spoke at the presentation. "It is schools such as J.L. IIsley that exemplify MusiCounts' belief in the importance of music education. Students here have countless opportunities to explore the power of music. As well, you have the outstanding support of talented teachers who inspire and encourage you each day."

Over 100 students are involved in the J.L. IIsley High School music program with more than 50 members in the jazz band. The school and community are known for fostering the arts, especially music.

About Joel Plaskett

Since his early beginnings in the '90s with the Halifax indie band, Thrush Hermit, Plaskett has earned his reputation as a consistently exciting, dynamic live performer. He has also garnered increased critical respect and commercial success in his recording career with his stellar band, The Emergency, for the indie albums *In Need of Medical Attention* (1999) and *Down at the Khyber* (2001) through to *La De Da* (2005) his first solo effort.

Since 2006, Plaskett has toured extensively both solo and with The Emergency. In 2007, his catchy hit single, "Nowhere With You," landed Plaskett on the Top 10 on Adult Contemporary radio as well as being honoured with JUNO Award nominations (Including Songwriter of the Year alongside Neil Young), and was the first place winner in the 2008 Great American Song Contest and the Billboard World Song Contest, for "Fashionable People" in the Pop Category. His latest release, *Three*, is a three-disc album that's earned Plaskett high praise. This past July, Paul McCartney hand-picked Plaskett to open for him at his only Canadian concert stop in Halifax.

About MusiCounts

MusiCounts, the music education charity of Canada associated with The Canadian Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences, is helping to keep music alive in schools across Canada. MusiCounts continues to inspire young Canadians through its mandate to ensure that every student has the opportunity to receive quality music education, develop their talent and build self-esteem. MusiCounts provides grants, fosters music programs and awards scholarships. Since the Program's establishment in 1997, over \$3 million has been donated impacting close to 200,000 students, their schools and communities from coast to coast. MusiCounts has also honoured four extraordinary music teachers through the MusiCounts Teacher of the Year Award. MusiCounts is supported by various initiatives such as the JUNO Award nominee compilation CD; annual contributions by CTVglobemedia; EMI Music Canada Inc.; Sony Music Entertainment Canada Inc.; Universal Music Canada and Warner Music Canada Ltd.; as well as Songwriters' Circle sponsored by CMPA and SOCAN; Juno Cup sponsored by The Keg Steakhouse and Bar; and individual and corporate contributions, including Astral Media, and SIRIUS Canada Inc.

For more information, please visit: www.musiccounts.ca

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