



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**FIRST-EVER MUSICCOUNTS BALDWIN PIANO PRIZE
AWARDED TO WESTVIEW CENTENNIAL SECONDARY SCHOOL**

*North York area's largest high school treated to special performance by
multiple JUNO Award nominee, **DENZAL SINCLAIRE**,
in celebration of new Artist Grand Piano*

Toronto, ON (September 16, 2010) – It was a 'Grand' occasion today, as more than 400 students of **Westview Centennial Secondary School** packed an auditorium to celebrate the arrival of a new Baldwin Artist Grand piano. The piano comes courtesy of MusiCounts, Canada's music education charity associated with The Canadian Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences (CARAS), and partner Baldwin Pianos. Westview Centennial, located in Toronto's North York community, is the first-ever recipient of a new education initiative, the **MusiCounts Baldwin Piano Prize**, valued at \$40,000, to be bestowed annually to a deserving Canadian school in support of music education.

The celebration was highlighted by a special performance by JUNO Award-nominated pianist/vocalist, **Denzal Sinclair**, hailed as one of the finest Canadian jazz singers of our generation, who wowed students with his piano flair.

"MusiCounts is thrilled to present this inaugural Baldwin Piano Prize to Westview Centennial, a school that has seen first-hand the positive impacts of music education. With the addition of this new piano, Westview's music program is sure to soar to new heights," said Melanie Berry, President & CEO of CARAS and MusiCounts. "Our partnership with Baldwin speaks to the commitment of enabling quality music education by providing these students with a high quality instrument."

MusiCounts received more than 80 applications from schools that had previously received a MusiCounts Band Aid grant, yet were in need of a new piano for their music programs. Westview Centennial Secondary School was selected for the MusiCounts Baldwin Piano Prize due to the dire state of its deteriorating pianos, many of which were non-functioning, with no pedals, missing piano keys, and wear and tear beyond salvage.

Westview Centennial is one of the largest schools in the Toronto District School Board, with more than 200 students ranging from Grades 9 to 12 participating in an extensive music program. After receiving a MusiCounts Band Aid grant in 2002, the school expanded their music program to double its original size, and has since performed at community events such as the Wonderland School Music Festival, at the Toronto Centre for the Arts as well as the Humber River Hospital.

.../MORE

About MusiCounts

MusiCounts, Canada's music education charity associated with The Canadian Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences (CARAS), is helping to keep music alive in schools across Canada. MusiCounts' mission is to ensure that children in Canada have access to a comprehensive music program through their school. MusiCounts includes Band Aid musical instrument grants, the MusiCounts Teacher of the Year Award, Scholarships and other music education initiatives. 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, Baldwin Pianos, Bob FM, Corus Entertainment, The RBC Foundation, Rogers Broadcasting Ltd., The Shore 104 FM, and SIRIUS Canada Inc. Since the Program's establishment in 1997, over \$3.5 million has been donated impacting 214 post secondary music program graduates and over 250,000 individual students, their schools and communities, from coast to coast. MusiCounts has also honoured 5 extraordinary music teachers through the MusiCounts Teacher of the Year Award. For more information, please visit: **www.musiccounts.ca**

-30-

Media Contact:

Tran Nguyen
Holmes Creative Communications
(416) 628-5607
tnguyen@hccink.com