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**MUSICOUNTS CELEBRATES 20th ANNIVERSARY AS CANADA'S LEADING  
MUSIC EDUCATION CHARITY**

*Welcomes new commemorative grants from Eleanor McCain's  
True North: The Canadian Songbook project*

TORONTO, ON - **MusiCounts** is pleased to announce 2017 will mark its 20th Anniversary of keeping music alive in Canada, by ensuring children have access to music programs in their schools and communities. To date, over nine million dollars has been awarded to help support music education in Canada.

"We are very proud of what we have achieved over the past two decades to keep music alive in schools and communities across Canada," said **Kristy Fletcher**, Director,

**MusiCounts**. "Thanks to our incredible partners and generous supporters, we have made significant strides in providing essential programs to ensure that young Canadians have the opportunity to experience the joy of music. We are particularly excited about the True North: Canadian Songbook Commemorative Band Aid Grants, generously provided by Eleanor McCain to mark this special anniversary. This donation will allow us to continue to make a positive impact for years to come."

In 1997, as a result of the Canadian Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences (CARAS)'s share of the proceeds from the sale of the 25th Anniversary JUNO Awards commemorative CD box set "Oh What A Feeling", **MusiCounts** established the Band Aid Program. Since then through a strong mandate and vision, **MusiCounts** has grown to develop new initiatives and essential programs to increase awareness and support for music education in Canada.

**MusiCounts** now achieves its mission through five programs: the **MusiCounts TD Community Music Program**, the **Fred Sheratt Awards** established in partnership with Bell Media, the **MusiCounts Teacher of the Year Award**, the **MusiCounts Band Aid Program** and the **MusiCounts Scholarships**. To date, funds through these programs have supported close to 850 schools and communities; over 350 post-secondary music program graduates and honoured 12 extraordinary music teachers nationwide.

On February 15, 2017 applications open for the **MusiCounts TD Community Music Program**, which provides musical instruments and equipment to after-school programs, community centres and other community nonprofit organizations.

To commemorate the 20th Anniversary, **MusiCounts** is also excited to announce that it will issue five enhanced \$20,000 'True North: The Canadian Songbook Commemorative Band Aid Grants', through the support of singer **Eleanor McCain** in conjunction with her upcoming *True North: Canadian Songbook* CD and book release (Retriever Records/ eOne / Page Two Strategies). In honour of Canada's 150th birthday, the three-time East Coast Music Association Award nominee traveled across Canada recording a collection of 32 of Canada's most iconic pop and folk songs with 10 orchestras. The double CD comes with a bilingual coffee table book featuring landscape photography, song lyrics, commentary by songwriters, behind the scenes photography, and portraits in select Canadian landscapes. McCain will host a private CD and book launch fundraising event on May 9, with a goal to raise over \$100,000 for **MusiCounts**.

"Music has played such an important role in my life and I understand the importance of music education for young people. As I recorded this new album and have started to prepare for the album's release, I wanted to find a way to not only celebrate this unique project, but also to give back," said **McCain**. "I love what MusiCounts stands for, and the incredible work they do to ensure kids have access to music programs and instruments. Creating these new enhanced grants will, I hope, inspire the next generation of young Canadian musicians."



In 2017 **MusiCounts** will highlight some of the wonderful stories and successes from its 20 year history on the newly designed website at [www.musiccounts.ca](http://www.musiccounts.ca). Join the conversation and share how **MusiCounts** impacted your life or moved you to take action. If you have a **MusiCounts** story to share please post it on social media with the hashtag #MusiCounts20 and tag @MusiCounts.

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For additional information on MusiCounts please contact:

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#### **About MusiCounts**

MusiCounts, Canada's music education charity associated with CARAS and the JUNO Awards is keeping music alive in schools and communities across Canada by putting musical instruments into the hands of children that need them most. MusiCounts' mission is to ensure that children in Canada have access to music programs through their schools and communities. MusiCounts achieves its mission through its Band Aid Program, the MusiCounts TD Community Music Program, the MusiCounts Teacher of the Year Award, Scholarships and other music education initiatives. MusiCounts is funded by many of Canada's most dedicated corporate citizens including and especially TD Bank Group, Bell Media, SiriusXM Canada, the Slight Family Foundation, Music Canada, Vista Radio, and The Hot Topic Foundation. MusiCounts has been supported since inception by Sony Music Entertainment Canada Inc., Universal Music Canada, Warner Music Canada Ltd., JUNO Songwriters' Circle and JUNO Cup. Since MusiCounts' establishment in 1997, over \$9,000,000 has been awarded in support of music education in Canada. These funds have benefitted over 850 school and communities from coast to coast, supported over 350 post-secondary music program graduates and honoured 12 extraordinary music teachers through the MusiCounts Teacher of the Year Award. [www.musiccounts.ca](http://www.musiccounts.ca)

For additional information on *True North: The Canadian Songbook* and Eleanor McCain please contact:

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#### **About True North: The Canadian Songbook**

Showcasing 32 of Canada's most beloved pop and folk songs, *True North: The Canadian Songbook* is Eleanor McCain's sixth studio album. Produced by Don Breithaupt and featuring the creations of 14 arrangers, 28 guest artists, and 10 symphony orchestras from across the country, *True North: The Canadian Songbook* was developed to celebrate Canada's 150th birthday. In addition to the recording, there is an accompanying English/French hardcover coffee table book featuring fashion portraits in select Canadian locations by V. Tony Hauser (who is also its co-curator), sumptuous full-colour landscape photography by 23 photographers from across Canada, complementary song lyrics, songwriter commentary, and behind-the-scenes shots by Greg Locke, along with a double CD insert. This epic, multi-year passion project is a touching tribute to the people, musicians, photographers and landscape of Canada. Eleanor is joined on this project by a talented team of artists, performers, and industry experts all of whom worked passionately to bring this to fruition. An accompanying documentary film will also be released. *True North: The Canadian Songbook* will be released on May 12, 2017, and will also be available digitally through her website ([www.eleanormccain.ca](http://www.eleanormccain.ca)) and on iTunes. For more information visit [www.eleanormccain.ca](http://www.eleanormccain.ca).