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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Piano Cleveland Launches New Program Aimed to Provide Access to the Arts

The Organization to Place Pianos in New Spaces for Students and Communities in Need

CLEVELAND, OH – JANUARY 21, 2021 Piano Cleveland launches a Piano and Keyboard Donation Program that will significantly impact the lives of piano students and listeners across Northeast Ohio, allowing individuals who otherwise would not have access to the instrument to follow their passion for music without the burden of cost or maintenance. The program will rehome high-quality donated pianos and digital keyboards to spaces that need them, including student homes, community centers, schools, and senior living facilities.

As part of Piano Cleveland’s vision to invest in the community and cultivate the future of piano music, the organization is committed to moving at least 20 pianos into new environments within its three-year pilot. During this time, Piano Cleveland will fund the cost of moving expenses, maintenance fees, and tuning for each instrument. To serve the needs of students who live in smaller apartments or move regularly, the program is thoughtfully designed to offer full-size (88-key) weighted digital keyboards that are donated and new portable Casio keyboards purchased by Piano Cleveland. To ensure families and spaces are not taking on an undue burden when accepting a piano donation, they may choose at the end of the three-year term to keep the instrument or return it to Piano Cleveland to be recirculated in the donation program.

The Piano Keyboard Donation program is a twofold initiative to help serve the needs of the community; not only are Clevelanders able to request a piano, but they can donate underutilized pianos to the program. Rather than letting these unused instruments fall to the wayside, the program will match instruments that need homes to those who need access to pianos. Finding new homes for the pianos to begin again will allow access for individuals to follow their passion for music as individual players or communities of listeners. Donors will receive tax benefits by making an in-kind donation of an instrument to Piano Cleveland, a 501(c)(3) organization.

“The piano is one of the most musically-accessible instruments. Without a single lesson, almost everyone can play a melody on the piano. However, the piano is simultaneously one of the least accessible instruments, due to its size and expense,” said Yaron Kohlberg, President of Piano Cleveland. “We believe putting pianos in the hands of those who have a difficult time accessing them will have a transformative impact on the

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individual's artistry, in addition to enriching their lives and those of the community members for years to come.”

Due to the pandemic, many students who may have had access to a piano through a communal space are now shut out of those spaces, leaving them with no way to practice. Access to the arts is an urgent issue for all, regardless of age, culture, or background. The disappearance of art programs is accelerating, leaving many students without access to musical engagement. Additionally, the cost of buying and maintaining a piano can be prohibitive for those who are able to secure lessons. This program ensures that students can fall in love with music through the piano and continue to be supported on their musical journey.

To be eligible for the Piano and Keyboard Donation Program, you must be a student who is currently taking piano lessons or an institution such as a community center, school, senior living facility, or rehabilitation center. Plans are underway to expand the eligibility requirements as the program develops. For those interested in receiving or donating an instrument through the Piano and Keyboard Donation program, please fill out the online forms on the Piano Cleveland website at pianocleveland.org or contact Emily Shelley, Education and Outreach Coordinator, at emily.shelley@pianocleveland.org.

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About Piano Cleveland

Established in 1974, Piano Cleveland promotes Cleveland as a premier piano destination by presenting world-class programming and community engagement and education initiatives. The organization's four major programs and events include the quadrennial Cleveland International Piano Competition, CIPC for Young Artists, Concert Series, and year-round education and community outreach programming. For more information, visit pianocleveland.org.