



## **BILLY TALENT HELPS MUSICCOUNTS ANNOUNCE THE 2010 TEACHER OF THE YEAR AWARD RECIPIENT MARIAN CHENEY OF TORONTO'S QUEEN VICTORIA PUBLIC SCHOOL**

**Toronto, ON – December 16, 2010** – Warner Music Canada recording artists, Billy Talent, were on hand this morning to help MusiCounts present the 2010 Teacher of the Year Award to well deserving recipient, Marian Cheney. The celebration took place at The Hard Rock Cafe in Toronto. Now in its sixth year, the MusiCounts Teacher of the Year Award recognizes the incredible, dedicated and hard-working music teachers who help keep music alive for so many young Canadians. The event was capped off with a performance by one of the Queen Victoria Public School ensembles taught by Ms. Cheney.

*"We are proud to bestow the 6<sup>th</sup> annual MusiCounts Teacher of the Year Award to Marian Cheney,"* said Steve Cranwell, Executive Director, MusiCounts. *"Her dedication to enhancing the lives of her students and the devotion she has shown to both her school and her community for the last two decades is more than exceptional. When you combine this kind of hard work and commitment with a flourishing music program, the students in that school are able to realize a wealth of potential within themselves, both inside the classroom and out."*

*"Music has the power to change lives,"* said Marian. The past twenty years of Ms. Cheney's twenty-three year teaching career have been spent at the Queen Victoria Public School. While at the Parkdale area school in Toronto, she has welcomed many new students from immigrant and low-income families to her classes. Her policy is that no child is turned away from band or choir based on his / her ability or family financial situation. She is very involved in the school's vocal and choir programs as well as guitar ensemble and concert band. An excellent songwriter, Ms. Cheney is credited with co-writing the current school theme song. It is her goal to have visibility for the school's music groups, seeking as many opportunities as possible for them to perform publicly. She prides herself on the academic achievement of her students, watching them graduate as well rounded musically literate pupils and performers. Ms. Cheney also oversees the school's running club.

*"We are honoured to be part of this years' MusiCounts program! Having lived in the west end of Toronto, Aaron and myself both in Parkdale, this is extra special,"* says Ben Kowalewicz of Billy Talent. *"Having teachers like Marian gives us all hope that the kids of tomorrow are in good hands. Our music class in high school (where we met 17 years ago) had a huge impact on the band as we got to meet like-minded people and start the creative process of learning our instruments. We hope that with the continued dedication from Marian and the donation we're providing, that the same opportunities and doors will open for some other lucky people. To Marian and everyone at the Queen Victoria Public School...Let the music fill your hearts and hallways."*

Ms. Cheney was presented with a \$10,000 cheque, along with a \$10,000 contribution that was presented to David Finkelstein, Principal of Queen Victoria Public School, to go toward their school music program. She will also receive a ticket package for the 2011 JUNO Awards and a handcrafted award commissioned by Canadian glass artist Shirley Elford, past designer of the JUNO Award statuettes.

#### **About Billy Talent**

Since the 2003 release of their self-titled debut album, Billy Talent have become one of Canada's biggest rock groups winning 7 JUNO Awards - twice as Group Of The Year. The band also won two of Germany's 2007 Echo Awards for Best Newcomer International and Best Rock / Alternative International. Billy Talent have headlined a number of Canadian arena tours as well as major Rock Festivals throughout Europe. Their second album debuted at #1 in both Canada and Germany and they have sold more than two million records worldwide. Over the course of their first three albums, the band have scored sixteen Top 10 singles at Rock Radio in Canada.

#### **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 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 presented by CMPA and SOCAN; Juno Cup presented 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, SIRIUS Canada Inc., and the Slight Family Foundation. Since the Program's establishment in 1997, more than four million has been donated impacting 238 post secondary music program graduates and over 325,000 individual students, their schools and communities, from coast to coast. MusiCounts has also honoured 6 extraordinary music teachers through the MusiCounts Teacher of the Year Award. For more information, please visit: [www.musiccounts.ca](http://www.musiccounts.ca)

**For more information or to attend please contact:**

**Indoor Recess Inc.**

**Joanne Settrington – ph. 416.703.5217 / e. [joanne@indoorrecess.com](mailto:joanne@indoorrecess.com)**

**[www.indoorrecess.com](http://www.indoorrecess.com)**