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**ANNE MURRAY COMES HOME TO PRESENT  
MUSICOUNTS TEACHER OF THE YEAR AWARD**

***First Nova Scotia Music Teacher to receive the Award***

TORONTO, November 2, 2009 - MusiCounts, Canada's music education charity associated with CARAS, has named Scott Leonard of Bridgewater's Park View Education Centre (PVEC) the fifth annual winner of the MusiCounts Teacher of the Year Award. JUNO Award-winning artist and Nova Scotia native, Anne Murray, presented Leonard with this prestigious award today.

Leonard has been a devoted mentor to music students for 24 years, 21 of which he has spent at Park View. Leonard epitomizes the spirit of the MusiCounts Teacher of the Year Award as his commitment to music education extends far beyond the classroom. He was the director of Park View's first school musical and also teaches at Lunenburg County Band Camp where he frequently coaches former graduates. In recognition of his commitment to enhancing his students' learning experience through music education and his contributions to the cultural life of the community, Leonard will receive a \$10,000 cash award, plus an additional \$10,000 for his school's music program, a hand-crafted statuette created by JUNO Award statuette designer, Shirley Elford, plus an all-expenses paid trip to the 2010 JUNO Awards in St. John's.

Leonard teaches guitar, band, and embraces innovative new ideas, having created his own class – Recording Arts Technology. His talent and charisma led to numerous opportunities to join bands, but Scott chose to channel his skills and energy through teaching and mentorship, for which PVEC students are extremely grateful. When PVEC was unable to hire a new music teacher, Leonard added more classes to his already demanding schedule. His commitment to the music program and to providing the more than 175 students he teaches with a range of skills and values they'll use throughout their lives are just some of the reasons he has been recognized as Nova Scotia's first MusiCounts Teacher of the Year.

"Scott is an inspiration to us all," said Charles Williamson, Principal of Park View Education Centre. "He is a terrific role model for his students and is someone who has gone beyond his professional expectations to ensure that music programming is sustained and is successful. His enthusiasm for music is contagious, and he has instilled passion in both his students and the community at large."

Leonard's passion for teaching and love of music has been an inspiration to his students who, under his leadership, have been able to explore different styles of music and to grow artistically. Whatever their career choices, they will carry the skills and values that Leonard has stressed in his teaching: teamwork, commitment and community spirit.

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"I am so grateful to everyone who played a role in my journey here today. Teaching music is an extremely rewarding career and one that has afforded me the opportunity to work with exceptionally talented and passionate individuals," Leonard said. "Through music, one can have a real impact on people's lives, and through them, the broader community."

The MusicCounts Teacher of the Year Award has been presented annually since 2005. It acknowledges the achievements of outstanding music teachers who have had significant impact on students' lives, and who have made a noteworthy contribution to music education within their community.

### **About Anne Murray:**

Anne Murray's most recent album, *Duets: Friends & Legends*, is a collection of her hits re-recorded as duets with some of her favourite women of song, including Shania Twain, Martina McBride, Nelly Furtado, Jann Arden, Sarah Brightman, k.d. lang, and Anne's daughter, Dawn Langstroth. *Duets: Friends & Legends*, Anne's 35th album to date, went double platinum in just six weeks and debuted at No. 4 on the Top 200 Soundscan Chart in Canada, making it her highest debut in over 20 years.

Recognized worldwide as one of Canada's most enduring national treasures, Anne's signature voice has graced the airwaves with a catalogue of hits, such as "A Little Good News," "You Needed Me," "Love Song," "Could I Have This Dance" and of course, "Snowbird." Anne Murray has garnered countless accolades and awards over the course of her illustrious career, including four Grammy Awards and numerous Country Music Association Awards. With 24 JUNO Awards, Anne still holds the record for the most JUNO Awards presented to one artist. Over her 40-year career, Anne has sold in excess of 50 million albums.

### **About MusiCounts**

MusiCounts, Canada's music education charity associated with The Canadian Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences, 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 platinum-selling 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, The Keg Spirit Foundation, Rogers Broadcasting Ltd., and SIRIUS Canada Inc. Since the Program's establishment in 1997, over three and a half million dollars will have been donated impacting 214 post secondary music program graduates and over 250,000 individual students, their schools and communities, from coast to coast. MusiCounts will have also honoured five extraordinary music teachers through the MusiCounts Teacher of the Year Award. For more information, please visit: [www.musiccounts.ca](http://www.musiccounts.ca)