

Largest summer music camp picks Ball State

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The nation's largest summer camp for instrumental music students and teachers will move to Ball State University starting in 2011, representatives of both organizations announced Aug. 18 at the university's Indianapolis Center.

The Music for All (MFA) Summer Symposium will bring an estimated 1,600 students and teachers to the east central Indiana campus. The inaugural symposium is scheduled for June 18-25, 2011. Succeeding annual events are planned through at least 2015.

Ball State becomes only the third location to host the camp since its inception in 1976. Previously, the weeklong gathering took place at the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater (1976-1991) and Illinois State University (1992-2010). Music for All relocated its national headquarters to Indianapolis from Chicago in January 2003.

"Music for All's mission is to create, provide and expand positively life-changing experiences through music for all," says Scott McCormick, Music for All president and CEO. "Ball State was selected from among numerous proposals - by institutions across the country - to host the symposium, because we believe that it is perfectly positioned to partner with MFA to provide just such an experience for high-achieving students and their teachers. The university's forward-thinking approach to higher education as well as the commitment and cooperation of the institution from President Jo Ann Gora to the College of Fine Arts and School of Music, the Conferences and Special Events Office, housing and dining. All were key to the decision to bring the summer symposium to Ball State."

Music magnet

The move of the camp will mean an estimated \$2.2 million annual economic impact on Muncie and east central Indiana, predicts Michael Hicks, director of the [Center for Business and Economic Research](#) (CBER). Symposium participants are expected to travel to the region from more than 30 states and several countries.

The relocation also represents the arrival of the third of three MFA national programs now being conducted in central Indiana, fulfilling a promise the organization and its subdivision, Bands of America, made along with their 2003 headquarters move to Indianapolis. The Indianapolis Convention and Visitors Association reports that the Bands of America Grand National Marching Band Championship held each November in Lucas Oil Stadium (previously in the RCA Dome) was the city's sixth largest tourism event in 2009, based on visitor spending. Total economic impact to the Hoosier capital was estimated at \$16.1 million. Together with the summer symposium's move to Ball State and other Music for All events already occurring, the regional economy is expected to gain more than \$22 million annually.

Participating in the announcement on behalf of the state was Mitch Roob, Indiana secretary of commerce and chief executive officer of the Indiana Economic Development Corporation, who

welcomed news of MFA's expanded presence in Indiana.

"Math and music both start with 'M' and both develop the quantitative capacity essential for competing in a 21st century economy," he said.

The Music for All Summer Symposium, presented by Yamaha Corporation of America, is one of 25 annual programs presented by the nonprofit educational organization, explained McCormick. High school students attend the yearly gathering with options to focus on music divisions including concert band, marching band, jazz, percussion, orchestra, color guard and drum majors. High school and middle school teachers, meanwhile, come for professional development and to learn the latest trends and techniques for teaching music in an environment that stresses a commitment to teaching leadership skills and character building throughout.

"With its outstanding opportunities in composing, conducting, music technology, music history and education as well as first-class facilities such as Sursa Performance Hall, Ball State and the [School of Music](#) have long attracted students with a passion for the musical arts," said Randall Howard, Ball State vice president for business affairs and treasurer. He noted that for two years running the School of Music has earned a place beside such other notables as Juilliard, Oberlin and the New England Conservatory of Music on In Tune magazine's annual and influential ranking of the nation's best college and university music programs.

"This new partnership with the summer symposium presents us a special opportunity to introduce Ball State and its many resources to an even greater number of prospective students, even as it enables us to continue our commitment to being an economic driver for the city of Muncie and the entire state. We're delighted to welcome Music for All to campus and look forward to hosting next year's camp," said Howard.

The broader central Indiana region also will have an opportunity to enjoy the symposium through its evening concert series, which presents a variety of music genres - often featuring world-class artists - for the campers as well as the general public, added McCormick.

About MFA

Music for All is one of the nation's largest organizations in support of active music-making. Headquartered in Indianapolis, it combines regional and national music event programming with awareness campaigns and advocacy aimed at expanding access to music in schools and communities.

The group's efforts have been supported through many successful sponsorships including current partnerships with the Yamaha Corporation of America, as national presenting sponsor; Fred J. Miller, Inc., official uniform sponsor; Wenger Corporation, official corporate sponsor; and SmartMusic®, NAMM, and Remo, Inc., corporate sponsors. MFA also is supported by the Arts Council of Indianapolis, the City of Indianapolis, the Indiana Arts Commission and the National Endowment for the Arts, a federal agency.