

# HITTING A HIGH NOTE



The North Valley Music School groundbreaking ceremony on April 19, 2024. (Julie Engler/Whitefish Pilot)

## North Valley Music School celebrates groundbreaking ceremony

By **JULIE ENGLER**  
Whitefish Pilot

The mood was upbeat when more than 50 people, some with shiny hard hats and golden shovels, gathered on April 19 at the Smith Fields Sports Complex to celebrate the groundbreaking ceremony for the North Valley Music School's new building.

Under clear spring skies, North Valley Music School's board chair Christine Rossi and executive director Deidre Corson said a few words to the crowd before turning over

the first few clumps of sod.

"We are so excited to see this 17-year dream finally come to fruition," Corson said. "The project is a result of thoughtful and strategic planning, mindful action and a deep love for music education. It has taken a village, a committed, philanthropic, and passionate community."

Corson thanked everyone involved in the Be Instrumental capital campaign: the students, faculty and staff, board, advisors, sponsors, donors, architects, and builders.

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Deidre Corson, executive director of the North Valley Music School throws a shovel of soil at the groundbreaking ceremony April 19, 2024. (Julie Engler/Whitefish Pilot)

# MUSIC

from A1

Prior to proposing a toast, Whitefish Mayor John Muhlfeld emphasized the importance of private-public partnerships because they have led to the most successful community assets that Whitefish enjoys, including the Stumptown Ice Den, O'Shaughnessy Center, Performing Arts Center, the WAVE and Smith Fields.

"We're really here today to do this for the children," Muhlfeld said. "Music and arts in our community are a huge gift to the culture and create the fabric of our community. This is going to be a huge addition to Whitefish and to the entire county."

The new North Valley Music School building, 8,100 square feet of flexible, multi-use space, will be situated on the approximately 2-acre parcel of land that was donated by Project Whitefish Kids and the City of Whitefish.

The building comprises 15 studios, two practice rooms, a 100-seat mul-



**A rendering of the new North Valley Music School building. (Photo provided)**

tipurpose performance space and a large group classroom. The facility will feature safe drop-off zones, ample parking, a welcoming waiting area and acoustical treatments for improved sound quality.

"The overwhelming demand for music education simply cannot be met in the current space," said Rossi. "Engineered to cater to our recent and projected growth in student enrollment, the new facility will provide ample space for expanded program offerings and

also eliminate the need to rent off-campus studios and performance spaces.

"Furthermore, the Smith Fields location offers a unique benefit, allowing for seamless coordination of music lessons and sports activities," Rossi added.

The new facility will also be available to community groups and nonprofit organizations, as part of North Valley Music School's commitment to serving the broader community.

The music school's capital campaign began

in 2022, and raised a total of \$5.2 million of the \$7.5 million goal.

"North Valley Music School has seen widespread community support for the capital campaign with more than 500 donors validating the project as worthwhile and merited," Rossi said.

She said North Valley Music School engaged 434 unduplicated donors in last year's Great Fish Community Challenge and won Whitefish Community Foundation's Biggest Catch award. She added the music school

raised a record-breaking \$366,962, the largest amount ever raised by any single nonprofit in the campaign's history.

"This remarkable achievement speaks to the unwavering support and dedication of our community to the mission of North Valley Music School," Rossi said.

**NORTH VALLEY Music School** has been providing the gift of music to the community for 26 years. This year, they are serving 696 registered students of all ages and abilities and have granted almost \$27,000 in scholarships to 44 students.

The school offers private and group music instruction, as well as summer camps and the Flathead Youth Symphony.

Rossi said the school offers partial and full scholarships, hosts concerts, welcomes guest artists, and organizes workshops, all at no cost.

"The majority of our students are from Whitefish, however, about 40% are from other towns in the valley," Rossi said. "The new location will make it a lot easier for

people from other areas to access the school."

Now in its final phase of fundraising, the music school requires \$2.3 million in additional funding. They welcome the community's continued support of their efforts to build on their success and provide even more music education opportunities in the new, state-of-the-art facility.

There are many ways individuals can contribute to the Be Instrumental campaign. Naming opportunities and studio sponsorship are still up for grabs for those interested in leaving a lasting legacy.

For those seeking a more creative way to support the school, donors can purchase a music note for the North Valley Music School Music Tree, a future art installation inspired by the traditional brick campaign concept.

For more information and to donate to the Be Instrumental campaign, visit [www.NVMS.me](http://www.NVMS.me) or contact Christine Rossi at 214-215-8703 or at [christine@rossi1.com](mailto:christine@rossi1.com)