



**SMARTS, Students Motivated by the Arts, Your community art school**  
**SMARTS PRESS RELEASE/For Immediate Release**  
**December 9, 2014**

### **THE HINE MEMORIAL FUND SUPPORTS SMARTS TO BEGIN PROGRAMMING THIS YEAR**

SMARTS, Students Motivated by the Arts announced today that that programming has begun—less than one year after Youngstown State University closed the program due to budget cuts. SMARTS Beats is an educational drumming program for students (PK to the age of 21) with developmental and behavioral challenges, and physical and cognitive disabilities. SMARTS Beats uses hand drums and other percussion instruments to engage students by promoting academic learning, increasing musical knowledge, fostering a sense of community, and developing pride, confidence and satisfaction.

Becky Keck, SMARTS Executive Director, “This is one of ‘those moments’ in SMARTS history to really celebrate. The community told us this time last year that SMARTS Mission was more relevant than ever before and they would support our transition to the community. SMARTS Beats programming in our partner schools is proof of their generosity and continued support of SMARTS. With the decline of arts education in our schools, SMARTS work is critical to the quality of our lives and our economic vitality in the future.”

Through the support of the Hine Memorial Fund of the Youngstown Foundation SMARTS Beats is able to work with 7 different partner schools including Potential Development, Easter Seals, ACLD, Robinwood Lane Elementary, the Rich Center, Leonard Kirtz, and Jackson-Milton MCECSC Preschool Inclusion Class. SMARTS Beats takes place 15 hours a week for the entire school year with 11 classes and 120 students.

Funding for SMARTS Beats has been generously provided by the Hine Memorial Fund of the Youngstown Foundation with more than 500 students participating since 2011. With their support this year, SMARTS is able to provide these classes free of charge to each of the schools valued at \$4,914 per class. The Hine Memorial Fund at the Youngstown Foundation was started when Elizabeth Hine Cates developed empathy for children with disabilities due to her experience with Polio as a young child and a fractured hip suffered as an adult. Mrs. Cates’ desire to provide assistance to disabled children combined with a tradition of giving instilled by her parents, led her to establish The Cecil Dwight and Elizabeth Woodruff Hine Memorial Fund in tribute to them. In her will, she directed that the income from her estate be used for “treatment of, care for and assistance to...” disabled children “in and around the City of Youngstown.” Since 1976, more than \$40 million dollars has been invested in nonprofit agencies in the community who share this mission.

Please see the SMARTS Beats video with students, staff and teachers from Potential Development and Robinwood Elementary at <http://smartsartschool.org/smarts-beats/>. Jet Creative Productions has created SMARTS new brand, website, logos, videos and has overseen our social media. Sarra Mohn, Jet Creative partner and SMARTS advocate, says this about their commitment to SMARTS success; “Creating honest relationships and maintaining a high level of social responsibility is the fabric of Jet Creative. We are able to fulfill both by partnering with such an impactful organization like SMARTS. Becky’s passion for

developing and perfecting programming for over two decades, reaches children through unique applications of age-old fine arts is a remarkable achievement making it an honor to be a part of.”

Ed Davis, has been a SMARTS Beats teacher/trainer since its inception in 2011 and has helped to create the curriculum and drive the success of the program. Ed Davis, “I have seen many amazing things happen during our interactions with students. One of the most rewarding things for me is seeing a student do something that surprises their classroom teacher. Just recently I saw a student spell his name using the drum, very clearly and confidently, and every teacher in the room dropped their jaws and raised their eyebrows. I also enjoy seeing a student come out of their shell. Many of the students I interact with start out very shy, and reluctant to participate or even speak. I’ve seen these students blossom during our program and go from not participating at all to taking the reins and leading the group on their own. There are currently some students that have participated for two or three years now and I’ve seen dramatic improvements in their ability to take turns and behave in a group setting. It’s amazing to watching the students change week to week as they learn the routine of our program. In general, I’m working with students on their learning and behavior skills, but the overriding factor is that we’re making music together and having a fun positive experience in their day.”

SMARTS transition to the community has been possible through the help and support of many individuals and organizations including Jet Creative Productions, the Legal Creative, the Ohio One Corporation, Compco Industries, and the following foundations; The Thomases Family Endowment of the Youngstown Area Jewish Federation, The Walter E. and Caroline H. Watson Foundation, the Zita M. and Joseph DiYorio Charitable Foundation, the Frances Schermer Charitable Trust & Lillian Schermer Charitable Trust, the Senator Maurice and Florence Lipsher Charitable Fund, the Youngstown Foundation, the Raymond John Wean Foundation, the Hine Memorial Fund and Youngstown Rotary. Funding is continuously being solicited from foundations and individuals donors.

SMARTS Circle members include Christine Rhoades (President), Dan DeSalvo (Vice-President), Robert G. Bindas (Treasurer), Nikki Carter (Secretary), Ron Faniro, Angela McCoy, and Joy White.

For more information contact SMARTS Executive Director, Becky Keck, [rlkeck1@gmail.com](mailto:rlkeck1@gmail.com), Cell: 330-507-0688, SMARTS, City Centre One, 100 East Federal Plaza, Suite 415, Youngstown, OH 44503. Check out the SMARTS website @ [www.smartsartschool.org](http://www.smartsartschool.org).

**SMARTS Mission 2014**—SMARTS community art school will provide access and early training in the arts for our region's K-12 youth with a focus on underserved populations. SMARTS will engage public and private organizations, schools, and artists in cooperative projects designed to enrich our community, promote student achievement, inspire self-discovery, and impact cultural and academic literacy through fine and performing arts.

**SMARTS Vision 2014**—SMARTS community art school will continue to be the leader in quality arts education in our region, state, and nation by serving our community's youth. SMARTS will provide quality arts education, and promote our region's arts and culture by establishing partnerships, working with public and private organizations, and representing the diversity of our community.



#####