

In recent events, the MSU College of Music has proposed to put a moratorium on the Music Therapy (MT) degree programs.

This means that the College of Music would NO LONGER be ACCEPTING ANY NEW UNDERGRADUATE or GRADUATE students to the program, ultimately dissolving this historic MSU program once the current students have graduated.

The MSU Music Therapy Program was the FIRST curriculum and degree to be offered anywhere in the world. It was established in 1944 at the university level. In 1956 Bob Unkefer was hired to direct the program and his 33-year career at MSU led the development of many of the basic principles, beliefs, and foundations in the music therapy profession and curriculum. This served as an impetus for other colleges across the country to open their own programs, develop more music therapy techniques (Neurologic MT, Guided Imagery and MT, Orff Music Therapy, etc), and design advanced degrees to be attained by those in this profession.

Unkefer also developed the MSU Student Music Therapy Clinic in 1969 to help create practicum experiences for the music therapy students. Throughout its years of development, it has grown to provide treatment to a wide variety of populations. This clinic has given MSU a unique training setting for our program and helped establish a lasting relationship with the surrounding community through outreach to those who otherwise would not have had access to the health benefits music therapy.

Among the programs that have benefited directly from the MSU Student Music Therapy program are Community Mental Health, Autism Foundation of Ingham County, Eric 'Ric Star' Winter Music Therapy Camp, MSU Community Music School, Lansing Parkinson's Disease Support Group, a number of mental health and DD residential group homes, Transitions North and South vocational programs for persons with disabilities, several nursing homes, and many special needs school programs surrounding the Greater Lansing Area.

This program has helped many families advocate for their special needs child's right to have school funding for music therapy services. The student program has offered free services to those experiencing financial struggles, and students have helped, through volunteer work and presentations in many community establishments (nursing homes, hospices, hospitals, schools, etc.), to show the benefits of music therapy, our profession, and our services here at MSU.

To have a program such as this removed from the community would be a tremendous loss to the populations we serve as therapists, those who have very little voice, control, or power.

We are asking for your support to help us keep this program alive. We need letters, emails and phone calls to the following people to tell them how important this program is within the Greater Lansing Community and within the music therapy profession itself.