

## **So, you want a Music Scholarship? Read these thoughts by music alumni, SDSMT faculty, and scholarship donors.**

### **Music Scholarships are a vehicle and an incentive for improvement**

Definition of *Scholarship*: "Knowledge resulting from study and research in a particular field.

A music scholarship should provide you the means of improving your personal knowledge and skill. The money awarded should allow you to not take a job so you have the time to practice your voice or instrument or maybe allow you to take some private lessons.

A scholarship award, therefore, means that you are recognized as having the **potential** for improvement – NOT that you are already where you ought to be. It is not a reward or acknowledgement of past involvement or effort.

### **Audition Preparation provides one clue as to who will meet or exceed expectations**

In the early years of the music program, if a student showed enough interest to prepare a piece, that was good enough to obtain a scholarship. No longer is that the case. Now the quality of performance and difficulty level of the music matters. The judges will attempt to determine the effort that went into preparing for the audition. But they also attempt to determine whether their preparation is an indicator of what kind of scholarship student you will be. It avails you little to prepare a tremendously difficult piece and present it poorly.

A Music Scholarship is an investment by the Music program. **It is a job.** You get paid for this - pre-paid, in fact - for your work performance and the accomplishment of the goals you and your director set. You need to carefully consider the following:

- Do you understand the time investment that will be required?
- Do you have the capacity to commit the time and effort that will be required?
- Do you have the willingness to improve musically and as an individual?
- Will your commitment to the welfare of the music program come before your personal desires?

If you answered positively to all these, then the issue of leadership comes into play.

### **It's not just the music, it's Leadership, Effort, and Attitude**

What is Leadership?

- Setting an example to others. Be the first to arrive, the first to master one's music and instrument. Are on the same page as the director? If not, why not? Have you displayed support in and out of class?
- Being in the forefront of doing things to make the program better now. Show initiative in generating new ideas and efforts, recruit others to the music program, do things to promote your ensembles or music in general. These are not only options for a leader, they are what they do.
- Creating a legacy that will make the program excellent after you are gone. You want people to be talking about you after you have moved on. What can you do to make that happen?

The faculty will consider your past performance in their ensemble as part of the formula that predicts leadership quality and potential.

**One or two great leaders can completely change the culture of a program. Awarding scholarship dollars to someone who will be a positive influence is the best use for the money given over the years by SDSM&T music supporters.**