For Immediate Release

East Orange Teen Awarded Four-Year, Full-Tuition Berklee City Music College Scholarship to Attend Berklee College of Music

BOSTON, August 23, 2011 – The Berklee City Music program at Berklee College of Music awarded 16 young musicians a total of $2 million in full-tuition scholarships to support four years of study at the college. Six of the recipients were from Berklee City Music Network sites around the country, the other 10 were from Boston. All of the recipients attended Berklee's Five-Week Summer Performance Program on City Music Summer Scholarships. They are expected to begin classes this fall.

Among the recipients of the Berklee City Music College Scholarship was saxophonist and bassist Darian Bravo of East Orange. Bravo is a graduate of the Cicely Tyson School of Performing and Fine Arts and is also a Student of the NJPAC Jazz For Teens Program that works in collaboration with the Berklee City Music Network at the Rutgers University T.E.E.M. Gateway/Cobblestone Records partner site in Newark, NJ.

Berklee President Roger H. Brown; J. Curtis Warner, Jr., executive director of Berklee City Music; Krystal Banfield, senior director for Berklee City Music; and Lynette Gittens, director for operations and enrollment for Berklee City Music presented the scholarships at the annual Berklee City Music Scholarship Concert in the Berklee Performance Center.

City Music student performers were joined by guests Grammy Award-winning saxophonist Kirk Whalum and Berklee alumnus, saxophonist, composer, and “The King of Nouveau Swing” Donald Harrison, Jr. Harrison serves as the Artistic Director at the Tipitinas Foundation in New Orleans, and Whalum is the President and CEO of the Soulsville Foundation which is home to the Stax Music Academy in Memphis, two of the 32 sites that make up the Berklee City Music Network.

Berklee City Music students were required to meet rigorous scholarship eligibility including admittance to Berklee, completion of the Five-Week Summer Performance Program, submission of a creative artist portfolio, 250 word essay and financial aid qualification. Additionally, students auditioned and interviewed with a panel of judges made up of a cross section of Berklee faculty and staff.

“One of the initiatives of Berklee City Music is to provide our students the opportunity to go to college. We are honored to help these incredibly gifted students achieve their goals by offering these scholarships,” said J. Curtis Warner Jr., executive director of Berklee City Music.

Berklee City Music is a nonprofit program that provides music education to 4th through 12th graders in undeserved communities. With year-round instruction, expert faculty, individualized mentoring, and a comprehensive curriculum, Berklee City Music combines the breadth of Berklee resources, facilities, and curriculum with an environment of attention and encouragement. Kids get the tools and support they need to flourish as students, musicians, and confident and well-rounded individuals ready to shape their world.

These music education goals are achieved using the Berklee PULSE music method, a collection of lessons and materials delivered online that support classroom instruction. PULSE focuses on musical styles that originate in American popular culture and emphasizes the study of instrumental technique, theoretical understanding, and an awareness of historical context.

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From left: J. Curtis Warner, Jr., executive director of Berklee City Music; Berklee President Roger H. Brown; Darian Bravo; and Krystal Banfield, senior director for Berklee City Music.

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