

Students united by music

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Cesar Morales knows nothing brings the world together like music.

Now he's hoping he can get instruments donated so young people who come from around the world can perfect the music they're making right here in Fredericton.

Morales is teaching music to about two dozen young people aged 11 to 19 at the Multicultural Association of Fredericton this summer.

They're a dedicated bunch with roots from around the globe, he said.

Three times a week members make their way to music classes, even giving up their Saturdays for four hours of music.

"I see a lot of talent here and it would be nice for these kids to have their own instruments at home," Morales said.

But many of them don't have an instrument of their own to practice on.

The centre has some instruments it can lend, but not enough for every one of the budding musicians.

Morales said donations of guitars and keyboards would be particularly welcome as his students strive to hit the right notes.

"If you think your instru-

ment could have a little bit more life, we'd appreciate it."

"You just need to see the face of a kid when you say, 'Here, you can take this instrument home,'" he said, describing their wide-eyed, gape-mouthed responses.

Morales, who moved to Fredericton from El Salvador 18 years ago, is well known for his performances at the Harvest Jazz and Blues Festival.

Maya Dehbozrgi, a 19-year-old from Iran, is among those who would benefit from more donated instruments.

"Yes, it would be very help-

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USED INSTRUMENTS NEEDED: Student Garam Kim, left, looks on as music teacher Cesar Morales demonstrates how to play a melody on guitar recently. The music program needs more instruments.

Dedicated: Class members enthused

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ful. I don't have a keyboard at home. Right now I can only practice when I come here," she said from the music classroom at the centre.

She said the music program is a great opportunity.

"It's fun. You get to learn to play a new instrument," she said.

Miguel De Gante, a 14-year-old from Mexico who loves the guitar and moved to Fredericton three months ago, appreciates the program.

He's among those who have an instrument to practice on at home.

Being able to play any time you want makes all the difference, he said.

"They are bringing something unique," Morales said.

Lisa Bamford, director of new-

comer programs at the Multicultural Association of Fredericton, said the music program offers a tremendous opportunity for young newcomers to get involved in their new community.

"Sometimes, they're not yet able to express themselves fully in English, but they can express themselves with music and it offers them a way to get involved and interact with other people."

Bamford said the program got off the ground thanks in part to a donation of instruments by UPS.

Morales said the students are bringing plenty of talent and he hopes they will bring their music to the community.

"It's beautiful, they're all bringing something unique," he said.