



News Release

Contact: Sandra Soliz
713-906-7912
solizs@stthom.edu

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

University of St. Thomas Launches Music Preparatory School

HOUSTON (Jan 7, 2009) Building on the University of St. Thomas Music Department's commitment to excellence in music education and community outreach, the University will offer private instruction to pre-college music students and non-traditional hobbyists by launching the Music Preparatory School.

The inaugural Theory, Music History and Performance class will be taught in late January 2009. The Music Preparatory School is a non-degree granting program that offers courses to students who are not seeking college credit for private lessons. However, pre-college lessons are available upon request.

Paul Krystofiak, adjunct professor of music at UST, will serve as director of the Music Preparatory School. Krystofiak has served on the faculty of the University of St. Thomas since 1986, and holds degrees in piano performance and piano pedagogy on the graduate level. Krystofiak has served seven terms as president of the Houston Music Teachers Association and was honored by HMTA, receiving its Service Award and "Teacher of the Year" in 1993. He was also recognized as "Faculty Advisor of the Year" for his guidance with the UST chapter of the music fraternity. Every summer for the past 20 years, Krystofiak has hosted a UST piano camp for grades three extending through high school.

"These classes are affordable and students will receive a high level of instruction," said Krystofiak. "I cannot think of a better investment than nurturing our young people. What better way to incite their intellect and sense of beauty than to support an inspiring music education."

Walter Suhr, band leader of the successful Latin band Mango Punch!, graduated from the University of St. Thomas in 1989 with degrees in music and computer science.

"The knowledge that I acquired from the Music Department at the University of St. Thomas is the single most important element that I credit for a successful musical career," Suhr said. "Receiving personalized attention from my professors (including Paul Krystofiak) allowed me to acquire the skills that I have applied to leading a band. If you are serious about getting an opportunity in the extremely competitive music business, I suggest that you consider the challenging and rewarding musical education from the University of St. Thomas."

Mango Punch! is a five-time winner of "Best Latin Band" in the Houston Press Music Awards and they performed in prominent concerts and events, including the pre-game show of the Super Bowl XXXVIII, along with Willie Nelson, Toby Keith, Aerosmith and Beyoncé. Mango Punch! has shared the stage with a number of international artists including: Elvis Crespo, Kumbia Kings, Jennifer Peña,

Gloria Trevi and others. Mango Punch! was also chosen to perform at an intimate after-concert gathering for Latin superstar Luis Miguel.

Music Preparatory private lessons available to third to 12th grade students.

For additional requirements and information on private lesson fees, contact Paul Krystofiak at 713-525-3566 or e-mail krystop@stthom.edu or call 713-525-6981.

###