

Introduction

Dear Michigan Drum Corps Scholarship Fund Board, donors, scholarship recipients, and the wider drum corps community,

I am proud to submit the first annual report for the Michigan Drum Corps Scholarship Fund.

The Michigan Drum Corps Scholarship Fund was born out of a confluence of two factors. First, the cofounders felt, and continue to feel, a deep gratitude for how our drum corps experience helped us grow as people and shaped us as educators. The bonds we made through drum corps continue to support and enrich our lives, even as our time on the field grows more distant. Out of this rises a sense of duty: to support the activity and to provide new generations of young students the opportunity to benefit from the same experience we did.

The second factor is that we found it difficult to provide support only through ad-hoc sponsorships and donations based on who we know, who we heard about, or who we stumbled across on GoFundMe, as did our fellow alumni. Instead, we felt the community would be better served with a more systematic, community-driven model to making drum corps more financially accessible.

So we got together over dinners, drafted some bylaws, submitted some paperwork, and the Michigan Drum Corps Scholarship Fund was born. Our mission statement continues to be the anchor of everything we do:

To strengthen and support the Michigan band community by lowering the financial barrier for Michigan students to march drum corps participating in Drum Corps International.

We didn't really know what to expect from our first year at the time, which may have actually been a good thing, in hindsight. The abrupt cancellation of the 2020 DCI season in March was both shocking and gut-wrenching. We're still at a loss for words for the students who had their drum corps season so suddenly taken away from them. For many students, the 2020 season was a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity, and they won't get it back. But the primary lesson we learned through drum corps is how to be resilient in the face of adversity, so we persevered and pushed on - as individuals, as an organization, and as a community.

Despite the pandemic, I'm proud of our accomplishments this year. We raised over \$4500 and awarded scholarships to eight outstanding students, representing five different DCI drum corps (in both World Class and Open Class). Thanks to the commitment of our donors, we built a strong foundation which will sustain our scholarship fund well into the future. And most importantly, we learned a lot and will be able to draw on this hard-won wisdom the next time we face adversity.

But more than any individual achievement or highlight over the past year, what I will remember about this year is the response we got from the community. The generosity of our donors was a clear statement that the drum corps community cares, and is as dedicated to making the experience accessible as we are. I am humbled by the trust our donors have invested in the Board of Directors and I, and we, in turn, are inspired by our young and talented scholarship recipients.

I have little doubt that the 2021 season will be another challenge for our community. But the Michigan Drum Corps Scholarship Fund will remain steadfast in our commitment to making the drum corps experience more accessible for all Michigan students. I look forward to seeing what we, the entire Michigan band community, can accomplish together next year.

Sincerely,

Evan Murray
Chairperson of the Board of Directors
Michigan Drum Corps Scholarship Fund

Financial Summary

The Board of Directors is committed to being transparent, so all of our monthly financial statements can be found [on our website](#). This section will therefore only contain a high-level overview of our financial information, and focus on providing context for our more detailed monthly reports.

Item	Amount
Total Contributions	4,584.00
<i>Net Program Expenses</i>	<i>-1,340.00</i>
<i>Administrative Expenses</i>	<i>-825.92</i>
Net Assets for 2021	2,418.08

We only show \$1340 in program expenses, but we actually awarded a total of \$2930 in scholarships. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, about half of our awarded scholarships are being applied in 2021, and are therefore still considered a net asset. We are still in dialogue \$430 and we expect these funds will be rolled over to 2021 as well, but this is not yet reflected in our financial statements.

In total, we expect to begin the 2021 scholarship season with \$2848.08 in total assets.

Responding to COVID-19

The cancellation of the 2020 DCI season was unprecedented, and we still feel deeply for the students who lost out on a season of drum corps. However, the job of the Board of Directors in the event of a season cancellation is to ensure that the resources of the Michigan Drum Corps Scholarship Fund are protected and continue to fulfill its mission.

Beyond the mission statement itself, our website also contains more detail about *why* we feel our mission is important:

The Michigan band community is stronger for having as many students march drum corps as possible. Students that march drum corps come back to their programs better performers, better leaders, and better people. Many continue on to become educators, where they help grow the activity and promote excellence based on their drum corps experience.

With this in mind, we quickly established contact with each drum corps to determine the status of our 2020 scholarships on a case by case basis. In general, our approach was based on the following statements:

1. The purpose of our scholarships was to provide a 2020 drum corps experience to our scholarship recipients. However, given these unprecedented circumstances, the Board felt that a drum corps with a robust remote learning program in place, especially one that focuses on show design and teaching pedagogy, is in line with our goals and a good use of our resources. In this case, we did not seek to roll over or get refunded for our scholarship.
2. If a corps did not have such a program in place, and most didn't given the abruptness of the season cancellation, the Board investigated options with each corps to make sure we retain our resources and make them available in 2021. The best way to do this is to get a refund for the scholarships, but the Board also recognized that the season cancellation put all DCI drum corps in extremely difficult circumstances. Expecting a refund from drum corps in financially difficult situations was not the best solution for the broader community.
3. Therefore, if a student elected to carry their 2020 contract to 2021, the Board asked that their 2020 scholarship be applied to 2021 dues without the need for a refund. If the student does not return, the Board offered a compromise with the corps. Instead of a refund, they could make a scholarship available in 2021, of the same amount, to another Michigan student.

Item	Amount
Scholarships Awarded for 2020	2930.00
Scholarships Rolled Over to 2021	1590.00
Scholarships Pending Resolution	430.00

The Michigan Drum Corps Scholarship Fund had six scholarships for students who were intending to march the 2020 season, worth a total of \$2480. Of that, \$460 was allocated to corps with robust summer education programs that the Board felt fulfilled the Fund's mission. The Fund has reached agreements to roll \$1590, across many scholarships, over to 2021. We are still in dialogue over the last \$430, but we expect these funds will be rolled over to 2021 as well. As noted earlier, this expected \$430 is not reflected in our financial statements.

Diversity and Inclusion

In addition to the COVID-19 pandemic, the events in 2020 have raised awareness of racial disparities in the United States and their systemic causes. The Board of Directors is aware of these issues, and would like to echo the sentiments of other organizations across the band community:

Black Lives Matter

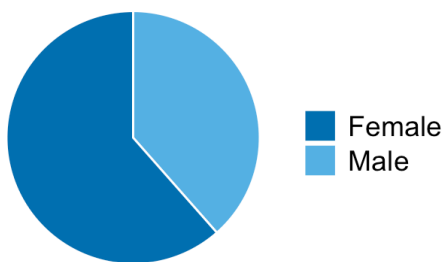
We are committed to making the drum corps experience more accessible to students of all backgrounds and financial positions. We know that the greatest structural bias in drum corps is that introduced by rising audition fees and tuition, which disproportionately lock minority communities out of the drum corps experience. We are committed to lowering this barrier for all communities, especially those of color, and will hold ourselves accountable for doing so.

Our application has optional fields for students to be able to provide basic demographic information, so that we can evaluate how well we are supporting all segments of our community. We do not consider demographic information in awarding scholarships (the disbursement committee doesn't even have access to this demographic information) but we will use it each year to evaluate how well we are supporting all segments of our community. In the interest of accountability, we feel it is right to publish some basic statistics on the demographics of our 2020 scholarship recipients.

All prompts in our application are open to any text - we have grouped them here based on the content of their responses, and only consider funds awarded to applicants who responded to the demographic questions. This data is based on all scholarships that were awarded in 2020, including those rolled over to 2021.

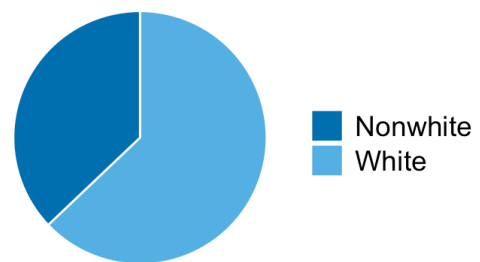
Scholarship Award Demographics

Gender Identity



Gender Identity*	Funds Allocated
Female	61.5%
Male	38.5%

Racial Identity



Racial Category**	Funds Allocated
Nonwhite	37.1%
White	62.9%

*No students entered other or non-binary genders

**Answers are aggregated for privacy

Outlook for 2021

Overall, we are in a strong position heading into our second year. We carry \$2418 in net assets, \$1590 of which represent already awarded scholarships. Moreover, we expect our administrative expenses to drop by roughly 80%, because most administrative expenses in our first year were startup costs, such as registration fees and purchasing accounting software. Collectively, the Board of Directors have put in 2021 donations that will cover our 2021 administrative expenses completely, meaning **100% of all donations received in 2021 will go towards program expenses.**

We anticipate a successful 2021 season, even in the case that it proves to be a weak fundraising year. Even so, we have two reservations about the upcoming year.

The first is that the ongoing pandemic, unfortunately, has put the 2021 drum corps season in jeopardy. While the fate of the 2021 season remains unknown, the Board continues to be committed to maintaining an open dialogue with all DCI drum corps and will work to secure agreements that ensure all of our resources support both our mission and the wider drum corps community. We deeply, sincerely hope that the 2021 season is not cancelled, but we are prepared.

Second, the COVID-19 pandemic has had broad, harsh economic impacts, especially on low to medium income households dependent on in-person employment. This lost income, paired with a very real possibility of corps needing to increase audition and tuition costs in 2021, means that we expect to see a much larger pool of scholarship applicants once auditions begin for the 2021 season. As of right now, we do not have the funds on hand to support this larger demand for scholarships, as a large portion of our net assets are already committed to 2021 tuition scholarships.

Fundraising

While we know that we don't have the funds on hand to handle the demand we expect to see for the 2021 audition season, we have chosen, for now, not to pursue active fundraising. Some corps have opened up interest forms for auditions and a few may have virtual auditions planned, but many have not. When the status of the 2021 season becomes more clear, we will again begin fundraising, reaching out to the community more broadly, and more earnestly, than we did in our first year.

We recognize that many of our existing and potential donors are seeing increased financial hardship due to the COVID-19 pandemic. So we ask that those who are able to consider donating not only to the Michigan Drum Corps Scholarship Fund, but to DCI drum corps and other band community nonprofits across the state. Please, if you can, pay it forward. We will get through this pandemic as a community, but it will require an increased level of support from those who are financially able. a

Acknowledgements

First, I would like to recognize our 2020 scholarship recipients. We continue to be impressed by their dedication to music and performance despite the pandemic. This has deepened our belief in the Fund's mission and will inspire us to make the Fund stronger in 2021. Thank you Jeme, Joshua, Echo, Emily, Jaden, Lauren, Mallory, and Abbey.

Thank you to the volunteers on the Board of Directors, who's guidance and wisdom has been invaluable, and who's dedication to the Fund's mission will mean the Fund is going to remain in good hands moving forward. Thank you Alex, Tyler, Jason, and Alyson.

I would like to thank my cofounders, Alex Murray and Tyler Ray White. While I must admit I don't remember who came up with the idea of creating the Fund first, creating it has deepened our friendship and I look forward to seeing what we can accomplish together in the future.

In particular, I would like to thank Tyler Ray White, our secretary and treasurer, for all that he's done. His experience, thoughtfulness, and work ethic have been the primary forces driving our Fund forward, and I look forward to seeing where they take us in 2021 and beyond.

I would also like to thank the staff of the DCI drum corps, who have gone above and beyond in being open and accessible during this challenging year. Thanks to Erik, Lori, Dann, Beau, and Ibe from Crossmen, Phantom Regiment, Madison Scouts, River City Rhythm, and Legends, respectively.

Finally, I would like to thank the Michigan Drum Corps Scholarship Fund members and donors, without whom none of our achievements this year would be possible. Thank you for your support, and dedication to helping ensure a drum corps experience is accessible to Michigan music students everywhere. Our 2020 donors are:

Erin Graham, Alexander Holland, Gloria Norrie, Alyson Murray, Jason Fritz, Alex Murray, Tyler Ray White, Evan Murray