

'The Long And Winding Road' Leads To Global Collaboration With Universities For Students' Mental Healing

MTSU and LIPA collaborate with TUFF Earth to provide students with free counseling from psychologists and professional life coaches

NASHVILLE, TN, UNITED STATES, September 1, 2022 /EINPresswire.com/ -- TUFF Earth is pleased to announce the alliance of Middle Tennessee State University (MTSU) and the Liverpool Institute for Performing Arts (LIPA) with TUFF (The Unity of Faiths Foundation) Earth for the upcoming global music project promoting mental health titled The Road to Nashville – Liverpool International Song Contest 2022.

The project officially launched May 9, 2022. To date, 14,411 artists have submitted nearly 15,500 songs representing talent from 29 countries. Of those who have submitted a song, over 16% have applied for the complimentary mental health services and counseling provided by professionals. An astounding 2,300 lives are being extraordinarily changed thus far.

MTSU College of Media and Entertainment and LIPA support TUFF Earth to locate student musicians and songwriters in need of mental health services and make them aware of the opportunity The Road to Nashville presents. Submissions closed Aug. 31 and the top ten finalists will perform live before judges in Nashville at the renowned EXIT/IN on John Lennon's birthday Oct. 9, 2022.

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Beverly Keel, Dean of the College of Music and Entertainment at MTSU

MTSU is an accredited professional college that reaches students nationally and internationally for a comprehensive education, preparing students to handle diverse challenges of the job market. As the #1 producer of graduates for the Greater Nashville economy, MTSU has been recognized on the Princeton Review's list of "The Best 388 Colleges" in the U.S., which is the fourth straight year making this list.

"It was important to me that Middle Tennessee State University become a partner in Road to Nashville because the internationally acclaimed program shares our values. Of course, MTSU has one of the world's best music business programs, so we embrace the contest that encourages songwriters to share their music with the world. But it's the mental health component that sets Road to Nashville apart from other competitions. We help students become whole, healthy and happy adults, no matter what their desired careers are, and mental health is certainly a vital component of that. I am proud that MTSU is affiliated with a program that puts mental health first and creates a sense of community." - Beverly Keel, Dean of the College of Music and Entertainment at MTSU

LIPA is a world leading center of excellence for the training of those who make performance possible. An international community of performers, creatives, technicians, filmmakers and business people who learn by working together with industry partners on fully realized productions and projects. LIPA is world renowned as a leading provider of university level creative and performing arts training with a portfolio of ambitious and popular courses.

Martin Isherwood, Head Of Music for LIPA, said, "As the 'World Capital City of Pop' it's great to see Liverpool in a new song writing collaboration with the world Music City, Nashville. These two great song cities are the home and source of some of the world's best songwriters and songs. Together, they are leading the song writing world to inspire songwriters to use their skill and creativity to promote what the world needs now more than ever: human kindness. As well as using the power of music and songs to lift our spirits, The Road to Nashville Liverpool International song contest, also offers support to all songwriter entrants with mental health issues."



Martin Isherwood (Left) and Dr. Talwar (Right) together at the LIPA sign. Credit: PLA Media

Alyssa Bonagura, recording artist, songwriter and graduate of LIPA, talked about the importance of music and the link to mental health, "I spent three years, 2006 to 2009, attending the Liverpool Institute for the Performing Arts. When I was over there, I had never felt more at home by the Liverpool people. You are combining two magical cities because music is at the heart of both of them. One of my biggest songs of my career was written in Liverpool called 'I Make My Own Sunshine'. I was going through a tough time being far away from my family when I wrote that song. This is such an important cause. A song can change your life, it can change your perspective, and it can change your mental health in an instant."

About The Road to Nashville - Liverpool International Song Contest

The Road to Nashville 2022 was birthed from the 2020/21 Liverpool International Song Contest, aimed at tackling discrimination and stigma around mental illness specifically tailored towards those in the creative sector. Created by TUFF (The Unity of Faiths Foundation) and backed by both the Nashville Metro City Council and the Liverpool City Council, the 2022 Road to Nashville Contest started with the global #KIND20 campaign. During the pandemic, TUFF's global #KIND20 campaign was a way to demonstrate and promote social integration and reached a staggering 6.7 million people worldwide. From here, the Road to Nashville – Liverpool International Song Contest expanded to address TUFF's wider goals of empowering young people and promoting acceptance, equality and respect for other cultures.

Participants in the 2020/21 competition were invited to attend 23 workshops across the Liverpool City region delivered by TUFFs Music division and led by TUFFs co-founder Dr. Shamender Talwar FRSA (renowned social psychologist) and Liverpool based producer Daniel Xander BSc MA (TUFFs Head of Music). These workshops provided education in music and production as well as one-to-one counseling with professional mental health practitioners. In addition to the thousands who attended the in-person workshops, TUFF also provided an online version for those unable to attend due to COVID-19, medical and/or mental health reasons. The 2022 Road to Nashville contest provides the same support for musicians and songwriters who sign up for free mental health services and has provided mental health and/or professional life coaching services for over 2,300 global participants to date.

About TUFF - the co-organizer

The Unity of Faiths Foundation (TUFF) is a British secular charitable organization working in four continents. TUFF bridges community sectors, organizations and government by rebuilding social integration and global community cohesion. TUFF empowers youth through participation in sports, music and science, as well as teaching education in human values such individual liberty, gender equality and respect for other cultures. TUFF was established in 2011 and has the support and acknowledgments of many dignitaries including H.H Pope Francis, H.M the Queen, and President Barack Obama to name a few. The ultimate goal is to share kindness and facilitate the integration and empowerment of those people who do not have a voice, due to numerous challenges and obstacles they face in their daily lives.

To learn more or donate to TUFF, visit: www.tuff.earth

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