

## UMS Announces “DTE Energy Foundation School of the Year and Educator of the Year” Awards

### Awards Honor Washtenaw Technical Middle College and Kristi Bishop, Vocal and Instrumental Music Teacher at Ann Arbor’s Bach Elementary School.

Ann Arbor, MI (February 7, 2014) — The **University Musical Society (UMS)** is pleased to honor **Washtenaw Technical Middle College** as the 2014 **DTE Energy Foundation School of the Year** and Bach Elementary School Music Teacher **Kristi Bishop** as the 2014 **DTE Energy Foundation Educator of the Year**. Both recipients were nominated through a public nomination process. The awards will be formally presented during the 19<sup>th</sup> Annual Ford Honors Gala (benefiting UMS Education and Community Engagement programs) on Sunday, March 30, 2014. The Ford Honors Gala will take place in the **Michigan League** (911 N. University Ave., Ann Arbor) on the University of Michigan campus and follows a Hill Auditorium concert by **Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra with Wynton Marsalis**. **DTE Energy Foundation** generously sponsors this award through a financial commitment to UMS’s Youth Education Program.

The **DTE Energy Foundation School of the Year** award honors **Washtenaw Technical Middle College** (WTMC) for its dedication and commitment to arts education. WTMC has become a model among its peers in the integration of arts into the curriculum, in large part because of the efforts of the WTMC English Department.

This fall, the WTMC English Department partnered with professors from the University of Michigan’s Theater Department to infuse and deepen the study of Shakespeare into the curriculum. By aligning WTMC’s curriculum with the university’s productions of *Midsummer Night’s Dream*, *Comedy of Errors*, and *Romeo and Juliet*, English teachers at WTMC were able to bring their students to read-throughs, designer presentations, and open rehearsals of the productions to help them connect with the material from the inside out.

Kristi Bishop is honored as the **DTE Energy Foundation Educator of the Year** for her passionate commitment to integrating the arts into core curriculum at Bach Elementary School.

A longtime vocal music teacher in the Ann Arbor Public School District, Kristi Bishop has eagerly embraced the concept of arts integration and has crafted lessons that allow students to articulate their knowledge of subjects outside of the arts, such as social studies and science. In one project, Ms. Bishop's students wrote songs and created music videos to demonstrate their knowledge of cell structure. Encouraging students to reaffirm and communicate knowledge is not only a key 21<sup>st</sup> century skill, but also a great way to engage the students with their learning on an entirely different level.

"It's important to recognize the tremendous difference educators like Kristi Bishop and schools like Washtenaw Technical Middle College can make in the lives of young people and in the community at large," said Fred Shell, Vice President of Corporate and Government Affairs for DTE and Chairman of the DTE Energy Foundation. "Integrating the arts within learning opportunities in all subjects can change the way students approach critical thinking, and providing students with opportunities to participate in the performing arts can enrich their lives forever. We are very pleased to again sponsor the DTE Energy Foundation Energy School and Educator of the Year Awards to acknowledge the important contribution teachers, schools, and organizations like UMS make in the quality of life in our community."

UMS President Ken Fischer noted, "UMS is thoroughly impressed with the work that Washtenaw Technical Middle College is doing, especially with respect to using the incredible community resources at the University of Michigan. The arts provide an immediate and deeply-felt gateway to different world views and different moments in history, and they demonstrate the very best in human achievement. The arts contextualize and reinterpret our world and draw from many different skill-sets to do so; exposure to the arts can help young students do the same. WTMC understands this, bettering the lives of young people and the community at large."

Ken Fischer continues, "UMS is also very pleased to honor Bach Elementary School's Kristi Bishop for her commitment to music education and her creative approach. Through her efforts, Ms. Bishop has enriched the lives of her students and taught them new ways to understand, interpret, and communicate the core curriculum through the arts. We are also very grateful for the DTE Energy

Foundation's renewed commitment to UMS and its recognition of the value and excellence of UMS's artistic and educational endeavors."

The **DTE Energy Foundation** is the philanthropic arm of DTE Energy. The Foundation directs its contributions and involvement to support initiatives dedicated to developing the human and economic potential of the communities it serves.

One of the oldest performing arts presenters in the country, the **University Musical Society (UMS)** is now in its 135<sup>th</sup> season. With a program steeped in music, dance, and theater performed at the highest international standards of quality, UMS contributes to a vibrant cultural community by presenting approximately 60-75 performances and over 100 free educational and community activities each season. The **UMS Education and Community Engagement Program** reaches up to 25,000 children and adults each year through a diverse mix of initiatives and educational events. These programs give many students their first opportunities to experience the live performing arts. UMS continues to take a leadership role in advocating for transformative arts education experiences for our community.

The annual **Ford Honors Program** celebrates an artist or ensemble that has made significant contributions to international music history while also having a deep connection to the UMS's history. This year, **Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra with Wynton Marsalis** has been named recipients of the **2014 UMS Distinguished Artist Award**. A gala dinner will be held after their concert on Sunday, March 30 in the **Michigan League** (911 N. University Ave.), with proceeds benefiting UMS education programs. For information about the gala dinner, please call 734-764-8489 or email [ralesko@umich.edu](mailto:ralesko@umich.edu). **The Ford Honors Program** recognizes the longtime generous support of UMS's Education and Community Engagement Program by **Ford Motor Company Fund and Community Services**.

**Media Inquiries / Further Information:**

*Television crews and still-photographers are welcome to cover this event; please contact Truly Render at 734-647-4020 to arrange media coverage.*

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