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Community Contributes to MRHS Band Fundraising Goal

The Mountain Ridge High School Pride of the West Marching Band has currently raised over \$50,000 - far short of their final goal of \$300,000. "The Arizona tax credit donations can help us get there," said George Hattendorf, band director. "If every student in the band can secure four to five tax credit donations from private parties in Arizona, we could easily reach our goal." **Friday, December 19, will be the bands' first marching rehearsal for the parade from 7 to 9 a.m. at Mountain Ridge High School.**

Tax credit donations are starting to come in. Married couples may donate \$400 and singles can donate \$200 and will receive the money back dollar-for-dollar when they file tax returns. Anyone wishing to take part in helping the MRHS teens get to Washington D.C. may donate to the MRHS Band Aides, a 501(c)(3) organization that supports the band by mailing a tax credit payment directly to the school at 22800 N. 67th Ave., Glendale, 85310 (specify 2008 or 2009 due to the timing of the trip).

"We are calling our state senators, have a meeting set up with Governor Janet Napolitano, and are continuing to ask for support from the state of Arizona and our local community as we are the only entry representing our state," said Hattendorf.

A large donation has been secured from Petsmart for \$10,000. Wal-Mart has offered a semi-truck to haul equipment cross-country in time for the parade, just as they did when the band participated in the Rose Parade in 2007. Private donations are also starting to come in from states across the country. "I got one today from Massachusetts," said Ruth Phillips, band parent and vice-president of the parent group supporting the band.

The local church and small business community is also coming together in support of the band. The Community Church of Joy asked the band to serve hot chocolate to onlookers in cars at their Holiday Lights display which brought in more than \$2,000. Nearby Hillcrest Junior High contributed more than \$700 in donations from their holiday concert. Local restaurants including Oggi's and

McDonald's are designating nights in support of the band with 20% of collected proceeds going to the band. Other sponsors include Arrowhead Community Hospital, TensionDesign, and Technology Staffing.

"We are beginning to find solutions to the challenge of getting a 175-member band to Washington D.C. in a hurry when the area will be packed with people." Three planes have been secured to transport the band to Washington at a total final cost of \$173,000. Music Celebrations International, a travel company, is working on ground transportation for the band once they arrive for the parade.

If you are interested in finding out more about supporting the Mountain Ridge High School Pride of the West Marching Band and their participation in the 56th Inaugural Parade, please visit HYPERLINK "http://www.mrhsband.net"www.mrhsband.net.

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