



HIGHWOOD LIONS MUSIC FESTIVAL

2025 IMPACT REPORT

Presented By:
Chelsea Bustin,
Festival Director



A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT

While you'll read a lot of numbers in this report, I want to remind you that these numbers matter to us because they represent people-- young people who had the opportunity to be encouraged and equipped towards greater skill and nuance in their musical endeavours. Thank you for your generous donations of time and money-- we could not run this festival without you!

-Sasha Penchuk, HLMF President

A MESSAGE FROM OUR FESTIVAL DIRECTOR

I love what Sasha shared about why these numbers matter to us. Over 350 students got the chance to perform and have their hard work recognized, encouraged and honed. We look forward to even more students in 2026! As someone who participated in this festival over 20 years ago and now has students of my own who participate, I'm grateful for the continued legacy we are creating!

In 2026 we will be welcoming Amanda Bartel to the Festival team, and she will be taking over as Festival Director. There are some exciting changes ahead for us as a festival organization. If you have any questions about the numbers in this document, please reach out to us at help@highwoodmusicfestival.com

-Chelsea Bustin, HLMF Director

2025 FESTIVAL BY THE NUMBERS

352 participants from throughout the Foothills who performed over two weeks.

70 hours of performances and adjudications in choir, piano, strings, musical theatre, classical voice, contemporary voice, bands, composition, guitar and speech.

40 local music teachers whose students benefitted from education and encouragement in their skills.



2025 FESTIVAL BY THE NUMBERS CONTINUED

15,150

in cash donations from local sponsors were given to fund our festival's events and awards.

4,250

value of 'gifts in kind' from local sponsors to help provide for the practical needs of our festival's operation.

4,325

dollars in cash awards were given to 40 'Scholarship of Excellence' winners across all disciplines.

24

students represented HLMF at the Alberta Music Festival Association's Provincial Festival in Edmonton.

2,725

dollar value of entry fees for the Provincial Music Festival that HLMF covered so students could participate without extra fees.

9

HLMF provincial participants who placed in the top 3 at provincials (an amazing result--we're so proud!).

4

Highwood Festival provincial participants who placed first in the province-- incredible!

250

volunteer hours given by local community members to help make the festival happen. We couldn't do it without them!



A WORD FROM THOSE IMPACTED BY YOUR GENEROSITY

“HLMF is one of the funnest and best music festivals, and I'm very grateful that I get to participate in it every year. The adjudicators, organizers, and other competitors are very nice, and I always learn a lot. HLMF has helped me prepare for exams and other performances. I look forward to next year!”

-Kaslyn, age 14. Kaslyn has participated for many years in the HLMF, and won first place at provincials in 2025 for her composition “The Poems of Shel Silverstein”.

“Being able to do festival every year was so amazing, it was really great to learn how to play in front of others and to hear other musicians play. It was good to hear ideas about a piece from another perspective. More specifically, I know it brought both my brother and I so much joy being able to play such fascinating pieces together and perform them each year!”

--Georgia, age 18. Georgia has performed in the HLMF for over 10 years. She and her brother Charles placed 3rd in the province in 2025 for their piano duet “Zapateado”.

“When my sister and I learned we were selected for a scholarship, we hugged each other and fell over on top of each other in the grass in excitement! We really appreciated [the adjudicator's] feedback and found it very helpful.”

-Briella, age 12. Briella was a first year participant in 2025 and won a scholarship for ‘Excellence in Junior Piano’.

“Thanks for all the work you do. ‘B’ had a blast. He worked hard and gained valuable experience these past couple years [of participation in HLMF]. He says he wants to play again at the concert! He's been inspired!”

-K, a parent whose 8 year old son has participated for the last two years and won ‘The Venue Performance Award’ in 2025.

“I enter students in the Highwood Lions Music Festival every year for the last ten years because I know it will be a positive and encouraging experience for them as well as an opportunity for me to learn as well! Students come away proud of their work and with concrete ways to improve going forward.”

-an Foothills piano teacher who has entered students for over ten years



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