Berklee Grant

November 2010 – June 2011

Funds will be used to update recording studio facilities at West Los Angeles College.

I am an instructor at West Los Angeles College in the music department. West LA College is a community college that serves 12,000 students the Westside of Los Angeles. We have diverse student body.

The reason we are applying for the Berklee Alumni Grant is because the music department at WLAC really needs an up to date recording studio. Our current studio was built in the 1980’s and it is apparent that it was not quite finished. What was finished was the recording room. This room is centered between two music classrooms It has angled double paned glass on both sides and can be used as a recording room that efficiently facilitates both classrooms. It is almost sound proof and is ideally located making it a good starting point for the facility.

The present equipment consists of a Tascam 3440 four track reel to reel, a Yamaha 16 channel mixer, several rack mounted power amps, several rack mounted equalizers, a dual cassette deck, and two monitor speakers mounted on the ceiling. I have brought in some equipment such as a reverb unit, Shure microphones and some adapters and cables. There is no signal processing equipment. That’s it.

For the last two years I have been teaching a beginning recording class based on the expectation that I would receive funds for some new equipment. Because of the recent fiscal crisis in CA these hopes were dashed. The students value this class so much that many of them purchased their own equipment to keep the class going. I’m still bringing my own versions of Finale and Logic to teach these classes.

This recording studio could be an integral part of the music department. This facility would act as a springboard to all music performance and recording aspects of the program generating cross curriculum into all classes involved. It’s main function would be to record student performances and projects enabling students to develop their performing and recording skills towards a professional level. It would act in a similar manner as the MP&E department at Berklee. This will prepare students in a highly practical way for real world situations in the music business.

Though we are a two-year college, we serve as a feeder school to UCLA. The Herb Alpert School of music on the UCLA campus or the Berklee College would be a positive step forward for many of our students. To further the chances of acceptance to a four-year university or college students need to have a firm foundation. The recording studio here at WLAC would greatly increase student’s chances for transfer.