



## School of Piano Technology for the Blind awarded Gibney Family Foundation grant

News Release from **School of Piano Technology for the Blind**  
(March 19, 2015– Vancouver, WA)

The School of Piano Technology for the Blind has been awarded a \$78,963 grant to assist in funding a succession plan to recruit, mentor, and train a new Director of Instruction for the School. Mr. Don Mitchell, current Director of Instruction and a master technician in the field, having received his training from Emil Fries (founder of the School) and his predecessor, Ken Serviss (retired), has been employed by the School for 43 years and although no specific retirement date has been determined, the succession plan will allow for a smooth transition in the future when Mitchell does decide to reduce his work commitment and/or retire.

Executive Director Cheri Martin shared, “We are extremely grateful to the Gibney Family for recognizing the importance of putting our succession plan in motion. The Director of Instructor position is the lifeblood of the School and far too critical to be left vacant or filled by anyone but the most qualified person.” This plan, put in place by our Board of Directors, allows for the significant time and attention required to train a new instructor while ensuring the School’s institutional knowledge and history are preserved.

“The Gibney Family Foundation grant provides 2/3 of the funding required for our succession plan,” said Kim Capeloto, Board Chair. “We are working closely with other philanthropically motivated organizations and individuals in securing the remaining 1/3 funding called for in the plan.”

For more information, and/or to donate, please contact the School at 360-693-1511 or via email to [cherim@pianotuningschool.org](mailto:cherim@pianotuningschool.org).

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*The School of Piano Technology for the Blind was founded in 1949 by Emil Fries, a blind teacher and tuner who had a vision to start a school that would teach blind and visually impaired students the skills of piano tuning and repair so they could earn a good living and enjoy independent, productive lives in a financially rewarding profession. Since the School’s inception, more than 300 graduates have gone on to good careers in universities, music stores, school districts, and most often operating their own business.*