

# Wheeling Jamboree Partners with WVU School of Music Industry.

## **PRESS RELEASE**

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MORGANTOWN, WV: Mon Hills Records, WVU's own student organized record label, proudly showcased three signed artists with preview performances at the Creative Arts Center.

With a variety of genres and artists, Mon Hills Records aims to demonstrate the music West Virginia inspires, from the big band jams of the High Street Jazz band, to the folk allure of the WVU Bluegrass Band and Wheeling Jamboree Artist Member Steve Smith.

The record label is considered an extension of the WVU School of Music and partnered with the new online master's program dealing with the music industry. Darko Velichkovski is the director of the Music Industry program and has managed to collect students from different educational backgrounds to perform the varying skills needed within a record label.

"As I entered the music program it became increasingly obvious that the practical component that was missing from the school was the ability to have hands on experience in the business," Velichkovski said.

With Velichkovski eager to teach both the science and ethics of the music industry, he knew he needed help from the students themselves.

Cody Kerns is the student general manager of Mon Hills Records and was inspired by Velichkovski to join in on the project. Kerns explained he had started out as "a plain old regular marketing agent" and never imagined doing something this big.

"I heard about this program two years ago when it was still just all talk," Kerns said. "The biggest thing for me is just getting to mix with all these people that I get to work with, they are the basis for everything. We have everything from a recording production team, accounting, the distribution and sales, live events and everything else. These guys really bring everything to the table and I'm so proud of them."

The WVU Music School also has the help of Dave Heath, president and executive music producer of the Wheeling Jamboree, who agreed to work with the label alongside of Velichkovski and the students.

"Brad Paisley, he's just one example of many West Virginia artists that came to national success on the Wheeling Jamboree," Heath said. "We are so happy to be connected to the real incubator that these students and artists represent."

Today's public announcement and press event featured the High Street Jazz Band with their rousing old timey New Orleans jam, which was followed by the WVU Blue Grass band with "How Mountain Girls Can Love." Steve Smith completed the act with a round of dueling banjos, which the crowd went wild for with yee-hawing and rhythmic clapping. Topping off the event all three bands came together to sing a heart-warming rendition of John Denver's "Country Roads." With trumpets tooting alongside banjos, Mon Hills Records promises diversity along with their talented stars.

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