



***REGINA BELLE SPEAKS ON CAPITOL HILL
WITH NAMM ON HOW SCHOOL MUSIC EDUCATION CHANGED
HER LIFE***

On May 14, NAMM (www.namm.org), the trade association of the international music products industry, was recently honored to include Belle, as part of its federal government advocacy efforts for music education in Washington D.C.

NAMM Members, all professionals within the music products industry, take their message about the importance of music education being included as part of a quality education for all children to members of Congress and their staff annually. The goals are to advance policy reform by assuring that music is part of the core curriculum, and to ensure that programs are adequately funded to guarantee access.

Belle was invited to speak at a reception held in the U.S. Capitol along with television actor and musician David Cassidy. Belle addressed members of Congress, their staff, and NAMM Members about the role that music education played in her life to enhance her academic skills, confidence and social connections.

Singing an a cappella vocal piece as the opening to her presentation, which wowed guests, Belle also recounted for attendees how playing the tuba and the steel drums while growing up is still very much part of her persona.

"I don't have any idea where I would be today without music education in school growing up," said Belle. "Playing music helped me with math-to come up with answers to problems more quickly-and gave structure to my life. Music helped me to find confidence that I didn't have within myself. It gave me a great thirst to learn that much more."

Belle's inspirational words drew an emotional response from the audience, most of whom could identify with how playing an instrument while growing up can have a significant lifetime impact on a child.

For years, NAMM has conducted research regarding the effects of playing music on children and people of all ages. Research indicates that children who are engaged in music score higher on standardized tests and have higher school retention and graduation rates. Playing music has helped adults increase productivity, build confidence, reduce stress, stave off depression and provides an opportunity to learn and grow socially and emotionally.

"We were honored to have Ms. Belle speak on behalf of a very important cause," said Mary Luehrsen, NAMM's director of public affairs and government relations. "Success stories such as these demonstrate the true personal impact of learning music in school and help change the current perception and laws surrounding music education."