

THE DISTRICT CORRESPONDENT

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SPECIAL EDITION

There's a New Spot in Town...

If the headline conjures a familiar tune by the Eagles from 1976, we might be vibin' on the same wavelength. Over the summer, Madison Consolidated Schools invested in their next cutting-edge student space - *The Frequency Spot* at Madison Junior High School. "This project continues to prove that Madison is committed to creating innovative, engaging, hands-on learning environments where students can explore a wide variety of creative arts, be challenged in new and exciting ways, and learn about the variety of career paths in the music production industry," shared Dr. Teresa Brown, Superintendent.



Music Style



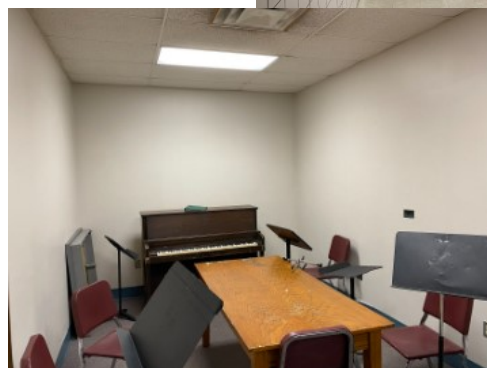
As part of the overall Fine Arts Academy, *The Frequency Spot* is a brand new elective offering for students at MJHS and they cannot get enough of the space, instruments, recording equipment, and new teacher, Mr. Jerry Navarro...(more on him later!) "The district, administration, students, and our Fine Arts teaching team have welcomed me, my classes, and ideas with excitement and enthusiasm," Navarro said. "This whole thing has been a dream come true for me, and I am so excited to be able to bring my passion for music and the industry to the students of MJHS and the community of Madison."

Late last spring, Navarro shared that they saw an ad on TV about Madison, IN - they lived in the Indianapolis area at the time. "I had not heard of Madison, but it sounded like a place I needed to check out," he continued. So they hopped in the car, took the short drive, and never really looked back. While he met some people, it wasn't until he connected with the school district that things really began to take shape. "The music industry has experienced a number of changes over the years," he explained. "My goal of making really great music has never changed."



In 2008, Jerry decided it was time to create his own company and use his years of experience in the music business: The Frequency Spot was born. He recorded and produced numerous acts, managed artists, was a successful studio owner, and has dedicated his time and ability to music, teaching and training the next generation of talent. "We are thrilled that we have Jerry working with our students each day," shared Jordan Warner, Principal at MJHS. "We knew from the minute we met him that we were onto something special. His energy, passion for music, and enthusiasm for teaching his craft, it was an immediate fit."

"There was space in the building that needed a facelift, and ideas had been tossed about for several years on how to bring something like this to life for our students, as well as the community," shared MJHS teacher and local artist and musician, Eric Phagan. "When you dream big things, you have to be creative about how to bring them to life, and patient as things come together. There is no coincidence in how all of this came about. Jerry is a great addition to our team, is an incredible talent, and has a heart for teaching and reaching students that is going to be a lot of fun to watch over the next several years." Beginning in June, Jay Roney, Facilities Director, and his team, along with Navarro, began work on the area around the band and choir rooms. "We did a bit of a refresh a few years ago to improve acoustics in these rooms," Roney shared. "This particular space has been on the radar for a while. We know that our Fine Arts program is quickly growing, and we want to be able to update the spaces to allow for that growth." The stage area at MJHS needs a new floor, and the lighting is outdated. The school is exploring grant opportunities that may help to cover the expense of a larger renovation. "For this particular space, we were able to take an unused closet and convert it into a soundproof recording booth as part of the renovation. Replacing a window where a wall used to be gives visual access to the students/artists as they work with the technicians in the classroom."



Take a nostalgic tour with us through pre-renovation photos.

The top photo is the decades-old entrance to the band and choir space featuring the old wooden brown doors.

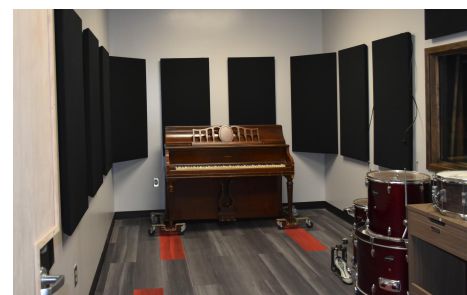
Middle, the entrance, the hallway connecting all of the classrooms in the Fine Arts space.

Finally, this is the formerly closet area that stored old furniture and unused equipment.



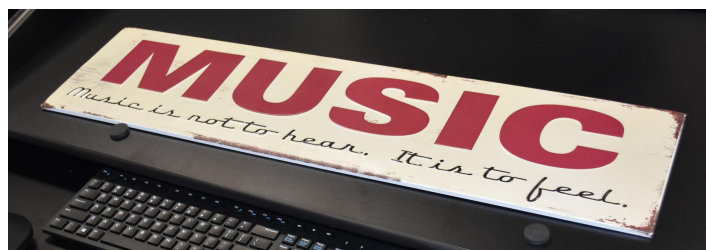
At left, the renovated entry hallway looking out from the classrooms.

At right, the former closet is now a soundproof studio with a window facing the classroom.



"We are committed to investing in student experiences," shared Superintendent Dr. Teresa Brown. "We are very excited about this space and curriculum. Mr. Navarro brings energy and is already collaborating with our other Fine Arts teachers to enhance and blend all aspects of current classes and students with these new opportunities. We have invested in the physical space, but also in specialized equipment that gives students hands-on experience in a real-world industry they may not have had access to before."

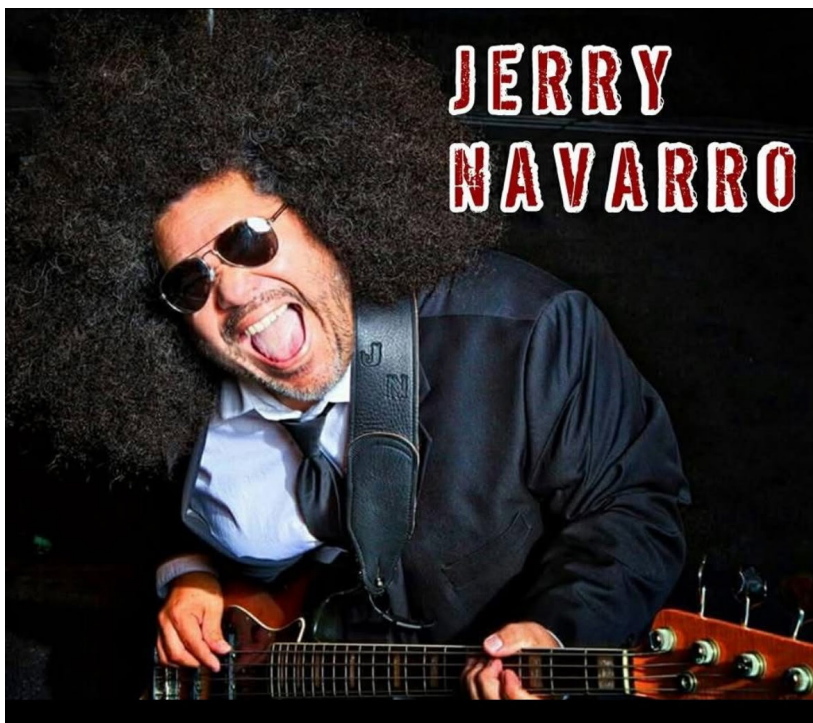
The team collaborated with Phil Manning of Manning Design Works (MDW) to create the branding package, logo, and signage for *The Frequency Spot*. "Phil was great to work with and had a great vision to capture what we were looking for in a visual," shared Navarro. The new sign, funded with help from Madison Music Movement (M3), is located inside the Fine Arts space at MJHS and is visible thanks to repurposed glass doors that replaced the old brown wooden doors that had been in place for decades. "This is a great space and we want everyone who visits our building to stop and look inside," Warner shared. "That area of our building is a high-traffic area with athletics, plays, etc., and we want to capitalize on the eye-catching, lighted sign to pique their interest!"



So, who is Mr. Jerry Navarro?

Originally from Oxnard, California, Jerry Navarro has been playing bass guitar and performing since he was 6 years old. He started out playing in his Dad's Romantic Mexican trio, and playing numerous church performances, which led to playing in top-forty bands all over the Golden Coast. In 1996, he made his trek across the U.S. and found his way to Nashville, Tennessee, and enrolled at Belmont University, studying Music Performance and Composition while also attending the Nashville Jazz Workshop. Although he plays every genre of music, Jerry has an extra special connection to Jazz music. For those who have heard Jerry play his bass, whether it be the upright, playin' those swingin' jazz tunes, or the electric bass, thumpin' that crazy funk music, you can tell that Jerry has that special "thing" that makes your whole body smile when you hear him pluck the strings.





In 2001, Big Kenny and John Rich ("Big & Rich") formed the Muzik Mafia, a ragtag collection of unique and talented musician friends and collaborators. It is most responsible for the birth and early feeding of country acts like Big & Rich and Gretchen Wilson. Jerry was the bass player and an original "Pit Boss" of this phenomenon that changed the face of the music business. In 2004, it received massive public exposure from The Wall Street Journal, Rolling Stone Magazine, The Los Angeles Times, USA Today, Entertainment Weekly, The Tennessean, Country Music Today, Billboard Magazine, The Washington Post, Blender Magazine, Country Weekly, and The New York Times, and later a popular television show.

Over the years, Jerry has shared the stage with artists such as Kid Rock, Bon Jovi, Hank Williams Jr., Martina McBride, Keith Urban, Toby Keith, Dave Matthews, 3 Doors Down, Velvet Revolver, Stephen Cochran, Jewel, Bobby Brown, Sisco, Saliva, Wynonna Judd, Darryl McDaniels (Run DMC), Peter Wolf (J. Geils Band), George Clinton, Angie Aparo, and Richie Sambora, just to name a few. In addition to touring all over the U.S., music has also taken Jerry to Japan, Europe, and the United Arab Emirates.



These professional shots capture Navarro's personality perfectly, it's magnetic! Pictured above in the studio, he and fellow MJHS teacher, local artists and musician, Eric Phagan, talk about their vision for the program.

He has played with jazz artist Kelly Sweet, Funk legends Jabo Starks and Clyde Stubblefield, jazz trumpeter Rod McGaha, Grammy-nominated pianist Jody Nardone, and chart-topping jazz pianist Beegie Adair. Until recently, he toured with one of the music industry's best songwriters, J.D. Souther, who is known for writing hit songs like "New Kid In Town" and "Best Of My Love" (The Eagles), as well as "Her Town Too" featuring James Taylor and is more recently known as a featured actor in the first season of the hit television show "Nashville." Jerry has also been on the Silver Screen, featured as the drummer in the movie "Pure Country 2", "The Gift" Featuring George Straight, and many other stars of the silver screen. Jerry has had opportunities that most people can only dream of, giving him a broad base of experience to offer to Frequency Spot clients.

There are "BIG" Things (and People) Coming



Click here for a very special message from a BIG fan of our new space!

"We want this to be a space where students and artists come to create together. We have some pretty BIG things planned. We have talked with some artists who are very interested in coming to work with our students, giving them a unique opportunity to learn about their creative processes, the technical aspects of production, hearing their stories and experiences, and stoking curiosity. Our number one goal and priority is to teach students about the beauty of creating all types of music, appreciating the growth that comes from the creative process, an understanding that it looks different for every individual, and ultimately giving them a safe space to create their own content." - Navarro on *The Frequency Spot* educational experience opportunities.

In his time in the industry, Navarro has witnessed firsthand the changes and evolution of producing and releasing content. "One of my passions is teaching young people how to create and protect their work," he shared. "It is really easy today to create content and push it out, but there are also ways to do that and be able to protect your intellectual property, and that is our long-term goal with *The Frequency Spot*. I have worked a long time to be able to create something special like this, and Madison Consolidated Schools was the first to really listen, see and share the vision, bringing a level of passion for their students that matches mine, and believed in me and my work enough to invest in this incredible opportunity for our students."

In time, students at MCHS will also have the opportunity to participate in the curriculum offerings of *The Frequency Spot*. "Our goal is to incorporate this into the Fine Arts Academy pathway in the short term, but also look at ways we may be able to create a local pathway around music production that meets the Indiana standards and graduation requirements," shared Warner. "We are very excited to see where this goes!"

