

LaureLive announces 2018 lineup for third annual festival

By RYAN DENTSCHEFF | Posted: Wednesday, December 13, 2017 11:45 pm

Planning for the third annual LaureLive music festival has been ongoing since last summer and over the weekend, the band lineups were officially announced.

The two-day weekend event will once again be held in June with big-name bands and musical acts filling the air with hits on the Laurel School Butler Campus. Notable performers at this year's event include Foster the People, Fitz and the Tantrums, X Ambassadors and Daya on June 9 and Brandi Carlile, Cold War Kids and Trombone Shorty & Orleans Avenue on June 10. In total, 25 performers will take one of the festival's three stages over the course of the weekend.

Elevation Group, an event management company partnering with Laurel School for the third consecutive year, is the lead organizer and producer of the festival. Denny Young, president at Elevation Group, said the event's success over the past two years – with top billed artists such as The Head and the Heart, Gary Clark Jr. and Young the Giant last year and O.A.R. and Grace Potter in 2016 – has helped LaureLive earn a positive reputation and led to 2018 being arguably the best lineup yet.

“The first thing that people have already noticed is a bigger lineup,” Mr. Young said. “As these events develop, you also start gaining the trust of artists of all sizes, and it opens up opportunities that don't exist when you're in year one of a festival.”

The reputation of the festival is also impacting ticket sales. Mr. Young said there were more than six times as many “early-bird” tickets sold this year than last year. Early-bird prices ended this weekend when the lineup was announced.

A key aspect of the annual festival is the integration and immersion of students from the Laurel high school into all facets of the festival. From pre-planning that will begin in January to execution in June, numerous students will have huge roles in making the festival a success. This year, 25 students will be a part of the LaureLive.

Laurel Head of School Ann V. Klotz said the school is excited to be heading into the third LaureLive festival and looking forward to the students once again getting the opportunity to experience organizing and operating a professional music festival.

“The commitment our students have shown to making this annual festival a success has been contagious,” Ms. Klotz said. “We are ecstatic about the lineup, and our students look forward to spending the next six months working with Elevation Group to help execute what we know will be another successful, family-friendly event for our school and our community.”

Trey Wilson, director of strategic partnerships at Laurel, said the opportunity is a great learning experience for the students. In addition to working and specific planning for the event, there is also a class where various professionals are brought in to engage with the students. In the past, for example, a lawyer visited

with students to discuss the operations of contracts. The students also met with a local radio station and Skyped with a few bands performing at the festival.

“The girls have been given different lenses to see what it’s like to plan and be a part of a music event like this, and Elevation Group also regularly incorporates many of the girls’ ideas and feedback,” Mr. Wilson said.

On the day of the event, the girls work at the various areas of the festival, including with talent relations, coordinating at the VIP tent and backstage and working at the kids play areas. “There are all sorts of opportunities for the girls,” Mr. Wilson said.

And for many of the girls, this summer will be the third event they’ve participated in. Mr. Young said having students with the extended experience and knowledge will allow them to be given more responsibility and have an even greater impact in the festival than the past two years.

As the festival continues to grow and expand and attract new and bigger artists to perform, one thing that won’t change is the family atmosphere at the event. Officials at both Laurel and Elevation Group said they recognize that having that atmosphere is another unique aspect of the festival that makes LaureLive such a great event.

“It was very important in the design of the festival that we take families and students into consideration,” Mr. Young said. “We have artists who appeal to all different ages, from kids in first grade, to college, to their parents. It makes for a really cool environment where families can get together and enjoy music.”

More information on the event and ticket sales can be found at laurelive.com.