

L&C's Doug Byrkit Named ASCAP Plus Award Winner

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GODFREY - Lewis and Clark Community College Adjunct Music Professor Doug Byrkit was recently named an American Society of Composers, Authors, and Publishers (ASCAP) Plus Award Winner.

"ASCAP is one of the biggest and most respected performance royalty organizations in the US," Byrkit said. "I'm definitely not even close to one of their biggest earners, which

would be more like one of their major label stars like Dave Matthews, Stevie Wonder, Beyoncé, etc... But, to have them recognize me with this award is very validating to the work I've been doing."

Each year ASCAP selects Plus Award winners from its large member database. Winners are chosen on merit, activity generated by the member's catalog and the unique prestige value of each writer's catalog of original compositions as well as recent performances in areas not surveyed by the Society.

"The majority of the L&C music faculty members are performers as well," said Louis Michael, L&C Associate Professor of Music. "Doug is no exception, and, in addition to numerous performances every year, Doug has shown himself as an up and coming songwriter. This award substantiates his work as a composer and recording artist in the music industry. The music department is very proud to have Doug as part of our faculty and his success is a great inspiration to his students and colleagues."

Byrkit, who has been an ASCAP member since 2005, teaches Music Appreciation, Jazz in Multicultural America and private bass lessons at L&C. He earned both his Bachelor of Music and Master of Music at Southern Illinois University Edwardsville.

There are many moments in Byrkit's musical career of which he is proud. After a recommendation from the Memphis Grammy Chapter, Sun Studio in Memphis invited Byrkit to record in their legendary studio. His music has been featured on the Discovery Chanel's "Deadliest Catch," and he also plays in several local bands, including "Odds Lane," "Galaxy," and "Enterlife." Those wanting to hear Byrkit's music can visit www.oddslanemusic.com.

Byrkit said the music industry is constantly evolving, and successful musicians are mindful of the past while being ready to roll with the changes of the future.

"You never know where your career might go," Byrkit said. "Opportunities come and go, and, if you're not prepared, you will miss out. Things in music change fast and are changing faster and faster as the digital world grows. My advice to upcoming musicians is to stay informed, follow the changes and learn from the past without getting stuck in it."

A single father of two, Byrkit divides his time between his children, music and teaching.

"My goals are to continue to make the best music I can and continue to share it with others," Byrkit said. "The music business can be a dicey industry, which can be discouraging at times, and so can teaching. However, I think splitting my time between making and teaching music helps me keep my perspective fresh for both roles."

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Photo Cutline: Doug Byrkit, L&C adjunct music professor, is a recently named ASCAP Plus Award winner. Photo by S. Paige Allen