

## **SPIRIT OF THE MEMORIAL ORCHESTRA**

The Spirit of the Memorial Orchestra Award was first awarded in 2003, and in its history – the award has honored what the Memorial Orchestra is all about: spirit, dedication, selflessness, putting others first, teamwork, a positive attitude among them. In the eight years of its existence – I have given the award only five times. Tonight – we add another name to the list of honorees.

I first met Dillon Shindler when he was in seventh grade. One of his hallmarks has been his longstanding talent in music. Most of you know him as a bass player, but he also has talents in playing cello, guitar and even a little viola. Dillon also excels in the more esoteric aspects of music as he demonstrates a good grasp of music theory and even more recently into the intricacies of maturing and developing the sound of an instrument over time.

But everyone who knows our program knows that we're about other things in addition to music. You can walk into our rehearsal hall and see us focusing on teamwork, family – and most of all – character. And that is one thing that makes Dillon remarkable.

Dillon's life verse starts with two words: Rejoice always. If there is a student that walks these two words, it is Dillon. If there is a student who can help others live these two words, it is Dillon. Dillon can walk into a room and light it up because of the relationships he has built with his friends. He has a fantastic sense of humor along with a great feel of when to use it. Just by being himself – he can make the mundane something to look forward to.

There is more to his life than just Rejoice always. In the recommendation letter I wrote for him, I mentioned the growth of his work ethic. Dillon also has one of those magnetic personalities that make him an effective leader and he has built a self-confidence that is going to carry him to many successes.

Joy of life, solid work ethic, self-confidence and leadership skills. What a great combination. That's the Spirit of the Memorial Orchestra!