

A musical day at CSIU

BY CHRIS SHADDOCK

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MILTON — With cello and piano music flowing through the lobby of the Central Susquehanna Intermediate Unit (CSIU) Monday morning, members of the Pennsylvania Music Educators Association (PMEA) met at the complex to further enhance their teaching skills, for the sake of their students.

“This is an opportunity for us at the CSIU to promote the arts,” said Chief Academic Officer Dr. Alan Hack. “We often see that a lot of activities are promoted at schools, and sometimes the arts and music does not quite get the recognition, so this is an awesome opportu-



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Cellist An-Lin Bardin and pianist Naomi Niskala, of Bardin-Niskala Duo, perform at PMEA District 8 Professional Development Day.

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nity for us to be able to do some of that here at our local schools.”

PMEA’s District 8 Development Day was filled with seminars to give musical educators the opportunity to further perfect their skills.

“We have basically a tract for elementary general music, we have orchestra, we have high school choral, we have high school instrumental, we have elementary instrumental, we represent middle school music and elementary music,” Tim Latsha, District 8 Professional Development co-director, said, while

describing activities taking place throughout the day.

“The idea is that we have all different specialists and we want to give them an opportunity to get better at their skills so that the education of the kids in the region is dramatically impacted positively.”

PMEA District 8 is a non-profit organization with the intent to assist music educators throughout the counties of Bradford, Snyder, Lycoming, Columbia, Union, Montour, Northumberland, Sullivan and Tioga. It serves 48 school districts with the goals of providing musical experiences for students, profes-

sional development for teachers and advocating for music education throughout Central Pennsylvania.

“This is really important to be a trendsetter in our area,” said Latsha. “People need new tools in their toolbox. This is the way we get refreshed and we get excited about teaching yet again. Or we come with a problem that we’re looking for a solution. If I don’t know how to fix something in my curriculum this is my chance to get it.”

The day started with a performance by pianist Naomi Niskala and cellist An-Lin Bardin, of the Bardin-Niskala Duo. They perform

contemporary classical music involving topics such as identity, racism, cultural awareness and humanity.

“We’re teachers so we’re always learning,” said orchestra and modern band teacher at Shamokin Area High School teacher Nelson Rodriguez, who presented Modern Band 101. “There are new things out there and we want to be open to those things to make sure we are serving our students the best we can.”

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