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MEDIA ALERT FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Mecklenburg County Detention Center Unveils New Music Studio

Charlotte, N.C. — In an unprecedented step toward personal transformation and rehabilitation within the justice system, the Mecklenburg County Detention Center proudly announces the grand opening of Studio W⁵HY? a state-of-the-art soundproof music studio, as part of its groundbreaking new program, “Rhythm & Reflection: A Journey to Reformation”. The opening event will take place on Tuesday, June 3 at 1 p.m. at the Detention Center, 801 E. 4th Street.

Funded in part by a generous donation from the Tim Bergling Foundation, established in honor of the late Swedish artist Avicii (Tim Bergling), this innovative studio space aims to provide incarcerated individuals with tools for healing, self-expression, and lasting change.

“Rhythm & Reflection” is a transformative program that merges rhythm - through music, movement, and routine - with reflection, using journaling, meditative practices, and group discussion. Its mission: “A place where rhythm and reflection meet reformation, to explain the WHO, WHAT, WHEN, WHERE, WHY, and HOW of YOU! A journey inside of self to methodically release guilt and shame, for restoration and reformation of self”.

The program encourages residents to explore their past, confront guilt and trauma, and develop the self-awareness and emotional tools necessary for reintegration and renewal. Through this methodical approach, individuals examine their identities, motivations, and choices, with a focus on rebuilding self-worth and developing responsible decision-making strategies.

The name Studio W⁵HY? speaks to the five core questions central to the program:

- WHO they are beyond their actions

- WHAT life events shaped them
- WHEN & WHERE key decisions occurred
- WHY they made those decisions
- HOW they can evolve and grow

The support from residents for the music studio has been remarkable. Inside the music studio you'll find a powerful act of expression from former resident Sergio Salazar, who painted a mural of Avicii on the detention center wall. Like Avicii, Salazar struggled with mental illness and suicidal ideation during his time in jail. Today, Salazar is a business owner, thriving in life, and continuing to honor Avicii's music, which once gave him strength and connection.

"Studio W⁵HY? will serve as a powerful outlet for musical creation, poetry and the spoken word, giving voice to stories that often go unheard," said Sheriff Garry McFadden. "We are truly honored to have the Tim Bergling Foundation invest in and support our mission here at the Detention Center. I am excited to see how this new music program changes the lives of our residents."

"I am profoundly grateful to the Tim Bergling Foundation for their incredible generosity and vision in supporting the MCSO recording studio," said Dorian Johnson, Director of Programs. "My heartfelt thanks also go to Giles Greenwood, whose unwavering support and ultimate connection to the Foundation helped bring this dream to life. Through tapping into emotional blind spots, our residents will find deeper truths about who they are and who they are meant to become."

"We strongly believe in the power of music to promote mental health, create meaning, and strengthen self-esteem. While our work is primarily based in Sweden, we occasionally support international initiatives that align with the foundation's values," said Klas Bergling, founder of the Tim Bergling Foundation. "We're proud to be part of Studio W⁵HY? – a meaningful example of how music can contribute to healing and positive change, regardless of location. This collaboration came about through a personal connection with one of Tim's fellow artists."

MEDIA RSVP REQUIRED. Interviews with Sheriff Garry McFadden, program leaders, and pre-selected residents will be available at the grand opening.

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