

How Sweet The Sound: Connecting Communities With Music

(NAPS)—Music connects our community in powerful ways. Whether it is joyful songs played at a wedding, the somber notes played during a funeral or the uplifting rhythms of a gospel choir—music unites us in good times and bad, and it is often a cornerstone element of how people celebrate their faith.

That's why Verizon Wireless is bringing its How Sweet the Sound™ tour to 11 cities across the country to search for the best church choir in America. Now in its second full year, How Sweet the Sound gives church choirs an opportunity to compete for the chance to win up to \$50,000 in cash and prizes and one choir will claim the title of "The Best Church Choir in America."

The tour is also an opportunity to recognize the good work that churches do every day within their communities. Last year, Chicago's Acme Missionary Baptist Church was named the overall winner for the 2008 How Sweet the Sound tour. According to church pastor, Reverend Bernard Sutton, the choir used their cash prize to help build a new sanctuary.

The tour looks for the best church choirs in America, without preference to any particular religious belief or denomination. Both small and large choirs are welcome to join the tour as there are two categories in the competition: Few Voices for six to 35 participants or Many Voices for 36 to 100 participants.

Donald Lawrence, GRAMMY®-winning, songwriter, producer, arranger and music director, will headline the tour for a second year as the emcee, and Marvin Sapp, award-winning gospel artist, will be back as a judge. Because How



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Sweet the Sound is centered on community, local artists in each city will create a custom art piece that pays tribute to the event in their hometowns.

For additional details about the registration process and participating cities or to view video clips from last year's tour, please visit the official How Sweet the Sound Web site at www.HowSweetTheSound.com.

How Sweet the Sound 2009 schedule includes the following dates:

- Sept. 19 in Houston
- Sept. 21 in St. Louis
- Sept. 24 in Washington, D.C.
- Sept. 25 in Philadelphia
- Sept. 26 in Newark, N.J.
- Sept. 28 in Detroit
- Sept. 30 in Chicago
- Oct. 2 in Atlanta
- Oct. 5 in Memphis, Tenn.
- Oct. 8 in Los Angeles
- Oct. 10 in Oakland, Calif.