

Business

Men in Suits rock for a good cause

**Making music
'exhilarating' for
Bay Street band**

**Concert fundraiser
for Classroom
Connections**

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By day, they are men in suits — Bay Street investment bankers and executives.

By night, they are Men in Suits — rock band — making music for a good cause.

"Making music that people enjoy is an exhilarating thing. And at the same time, you're supporting a great cause like social justice. What could be better than that?"

That's Don Tapscott talking, a business strategist and author, who has written extensively on how technology shapes culture. He also plays keyboard. Men in Suits will take the stage tonight at the Orbit Room on College St. for a sold-out event that will raise about \$10,000 for Classroom Connections, a Canadian non-profit group that develops teaching material to help children learn about social justice, peace and citizenship — subjects that tend to get short-shrift in conventional textbooks.

Then there's Tapscott's bandmates: Gerry "used to be the head of equities trading for Merrill Lynch Canada" Throop; investment bankers Jim Hardy of National Bank Financial and Vince Mazza from Scotiabank; and Stewart Borden, a partner at Brendan Wood International. (Tonight Throop will be joined on lead vocals by Tapscott's daughter Niki, a student at the Richard Ivey business school in London, Ont.)



BERNARD WEIL/TORONTO STAR

The group Men in Suits includes Niki Tapscott, left, Jim Hardy, Vince Mazza, Gerry Throop, Stewart Borden and Don Tapscott. The group plays tonight at The Orbit Room on College St. for a sold-out event that will raise about \$10,000 for a Canadian non-profit group that develops teaching material.

On the bill is everything from The Rolling Stones and the Beatles to the Temptations. What started as a hobby became a serious pursuit, then a chance to give back to the community. In that regard, Men in Suits are in good company.

A half-dozen or so such bands have sprung up among the Bay Street crowd. Last year, the annual battle of the bands, dubbed Baystock, drew a crowd of about 1,000 from CEOs all the way down the corporate ladder and raised \$100,000 for the Ontario March of Dimes. This year's event takes place June 2.

(Sadly, Men in Suits had to bow out. "We were entered in it but, as happens with investment

bankers, we've just found out that our lead guitarist has to be in another country that day," Tapscott said.)

Classroom Connections' material can be found in pre-school to Grade 12 classrooms in about 10,000 schools across Canada.

"Some people don't realize that even though the government says this is the curriculum and this is what needs to be taught, all the material is not provided," said Heather MacTaggart, executive director.

The group's biggest initiative to date, a two-part resource guide with posters and a website called "Cultivating Peace" has

been so successful that it's been exported to 50 countries. MacTaggart calls the money raised by tonight's event a good start. Don't expect "some old farts jamming away," Throop said. These are investment bankers, after all. They take their music seriously.

When Throop joined Rockwater Capital as head of equities last September, some colleagues weren't aware that he had another gig.

"A couple of months into it, I send out a note that says, 'By the way, my band is playing. . . Lots of people go, 'Really?' People show for the curiosity factor and then say, 'Whoa, this isn't bad for guys with day jobs.'"