

UGA professor makes positive impact with music

By Kevin Conner
Staff Writer

Arvin Scott uses the power of African and Brazilian percussion beats as a means to lure a multi-cultural cross section of kids into better grades, respect for their parents and positive thinking.

Scott's program, known as Drumming for Success, is the beneficiary of this year's Athens Human Rights Festival Art Auction. All proceeds raised from the auction at The Globe this past Thursday will go to the youth program.

Drumming for Success, which meets every Monday night at Hilsman Middle School on Gaines School Road, offers a unique incentive for kids to improve their lives.

"If they make a commitment for better grades, or something that will better themselves, I'll offer them a drum," Scott said. "Once they reach that goal, I'll give them a drum."

And so far the incentive has been effective, he said.

Scott said that when the kids get together and play their drums as a unit, the energy runs

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Dot Paul/Photo staff

University of Georgia music professor **Arvin Scott** makes African, Caribbean and Brazilian percussion beats with members of his Drumming for Success class at Hilsman Middle School. Scott's program is the beneficiary of the 22nd Annual Athens Human Rights Festival.

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high. And area residents will have the opportunity to experience that energy when Drumming for Success performs this afternoon at 2:15 p.m. on the Human Rights Festival's stage on College Square.

Also, this evening at 7:30, Scott will perform a solo drumming act, which he calls Spirit of the Drum.

Scott, a professor in the University of Georgia School of Music, teaches African, Brazilian and Caribbean styles, similar to what he teaches his Drumming for Success students.

He has shared his talents across the globe. Immediately after he graduated from the Berklee College of Music, he traveled throughout the United States, Europe and the Caribbean.

Deciding to pursue his career further, Scott earned his Ph.D. in

music, studying multi-cultural percussion and technology at Union Institute in Cincinnati, Ohio.

Scott said that working with Drumming for Success is perhaps one of his most rewarding endeavors. He opens the program to all kids, regardless of race, religion or socioeconomic background.

"For the kids, it's a community program that I make available for all children interested in learning about drumming and the program helps them get life-long lessons about life," he said.

Michael Collins, a Human Rights Festival organizer, said when he and fellow organizers pondered who would be this year's beneficiary, it was an easy decision.

"He was clearly the best candidate," Collins said. "He's providing a community service. He provides free drumming lessons and teaches kids to respect their parents, make better grades and things like that. It's a great service that he's providing. People love Dr. Scott. He's the perfect role model."