Wilkes Community College's
MerleFest®
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ON THE CAMPUS OF WILKES COMMUNITY COLLEGE, WILKESBORO, NC
Presented by LOWE'S

LIVE FACEBOOK CHAT WITH ARTIST JIM LAUDERDALE FEBRUARY 1

Grammy®-winning singer/songwriter Lauderdale, volunteer contest chairperson of the Chris Austin Songwriting Contest, will be live on FB next week - and taking your questions!

Reminder: The deadline for submissions is February 18, 2011 - Get your songs in today!

Internationally renowned artist **Jim Lauderdale**, volunteer chairperson of **MerleFest's Chris Austin Songwriting Contest**, will participate in a live chat on Facebook on Tuesday, February 1, at 7:00 pm EST. The live chat with Lauderdale will take place at the social media site on the official page for the contest, found at MerleFest's "Chris Austin Songwriting Contest" (http://www.facebook.com/chrisaustinsongwritingcontest). Fans and aspiring writers can join the chat with questions for the acclaimed singer/songwriter about the songwriting contest and songwriting in general, giving them the rare opportunity to interact with one of the most celebrated artists in contemporary music. In order to take part in the chat, a participant must have a Facebook account, and be a "fan" of MerleFest's "Chris Austin Songwriting Contest" page.

Lauderdale, a Grammy®-winning performer and songwriter, is known for successes in both country and bluegrass music. He is among Nashville's "A" list of songwriters, with songs recorded by artists such as Patty Loveless, George Jones, The Dixie Chicks, Solomon Burke, Mark Chesnutt, Dave Edmunds, John Mayall, Kathy Mattea, Lee Ann Womack, Gary Allan, Blake Shelton, Vince Gill and George Strait. While Lauderdale hails from the Carolinas, his career has taken him all over the United States and abroad, making him an international recording artist with an ever-growing fan base.

Hosted by **MerleFest 2011** and now in its 19th year, the Chris Austin Songwriting Contest is an extraordinary opportunity for aspiring writers to have their original songs heard and judged by a panel of Nashville music industry professionals.

Contest entries for the Chris Austin Songwriting Contest are now being accepted via three methods: U.S. Mail (P. O. Box 121855, Nashville, TN 37212,) Sonicbids (www.sonicbids.com/chrisaustinsongwritingcontest) and American Songspace (www.americansongspace.com/contest/chrisaustinsongwriting2011.) But don't delay: the deadline for submissions is **February 18, 2011**.

Net proceeds from the Chris Austin Songwriting Contest support the **Wilkes Community College Chris Austin Memorial Scholarship**. Since its inception the scholarship has awarded over $35,000 to 71 deserving students. The 2010-2011 Chris Austin Memorial Scholarship recipients are Mary R. Griffith and Thomas Noah Russell.

Previous winners of the Chris Austin Songwriting Contest include Gillian Welch, Tift Merritt, Michael Reno Harrell, Adrienne Young, Martha Scanlan, David Via and Johnny Williams - isn't it time that *your* name is added to this list?!?

For additional information about the Chris Austin Songwriting Contest, call the contest hotline at 1-800-799-3838 or email Laurie Brintle Hayes, CASC coordinator at laurie.hayes@wilkescc.edu.

Join the chat on February 1 - and send in your songs!