



The Ellis Marsalis Center for Music opened on Aug. 25 in the upper 9th Ward's Musicians' Village. The facility, which will function as a performance arts space, a school, and a community center, will begin hosting after-school programs this fall. Classes will emphasize New Orleans' music and roots, as well as professional and personal development for young men and women.

"Having the Ellis Marsalis Center for Music named for me is more than an honor," said Marsalis, who graduated from Dillard University in 1955. "It is also an opportunity to realize many of the dreams I have long held for the music and musicians of New Orleans."

The center, which features a performance hall, a computer lab, a music library, rehearsal rooms and a lounge, cost nearly \$7.5 million to construct. Funds came from donors as varied as New Orleans Area Habitat for Humanity and the National Endowment for the Arts, and Harry Connick Jr. and the Dave Matthews Band. The only thing students will have to pay for is insurance on their instruments, which the center will supply.

Marsalis' long and storied music career has featured a great deal of work as an educator. In 1989, Marsalis was awarded an Honorary Doctor of Music by Dillard University. He has served on the faculty at both the New Orleans Center for Creative Arts and the University of New Orleans.