



## **Mercer Island High School Marching Band partnering with Banda Escolar De Guayanilla of Puerto Rico**

Mercer Island High School, Mercer Island, WA

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The Mercer Island High School Marching Band will be making its fourth appearance in the 2019 Rose Parade.

[Mercer Island](http://www.mercerisland.com) is a residential island community of 25,000 in Lake Washington, connected to Seattle by the Interstate 90 floating bridge. [Mercer Island High School](http://www.mercerislandhighschool.com) has 1,500 students, with more than 300 of them participating in the Marching Band, making it one of the largest in Washington state. The programs have received many awards and previously participated in the London New Year's Day Parade and traveled to China and Australia.

The MIHS Marching Band is helping to support the Banda Escolar de Guayanilla (BEG) from Puerto Rico, a community band that was also chosen for the 2019 Rose Parade, two weeks prior to the devastation of Hurricane Maria.

[YouTube video of BEG's story](#)

BEG was founded in 1975 and serves its small community in south Puerto Rico. They have marched in four Rose Parades, including in 2012 with Mercer Island, which launched a lasting friendship between the MIHS and BEG directors.

The MIHS band sent a delegation of students, band directors and others to Guayanilla over spring break in April 2018 to build relationships with BEG's student leadership and to assess how best to provide aid and to form a lasting partnership. The students met with Puerto Rico and Guayanilla civic leaders and marched and play with BEG in their annual festival.

BEG directors and several members returned the visit in October, participating in Mercer Island's annual Homecoming Parade.

[Mercer Island Reporter article](#)

[KING 5 News Seattle coverage](#)

The MIHS band has raised over \$30,000 for BEG through a variety of "Island to Island" fundraisers. The bands will collaborate in a number of events while at the Tournament of Roses, including Bandfest on Dec. 30. Mercer Island's [Bandfest performance](#) will feature a program of Seattle music, including Jimi Hendrix, Heart, Nirvana, Sir Mix-a-Lot and Macklemore.

Visit [mercerislandbands.com/beg](http://mercerislandbands.com/beg) learn more about their work with Banda Escolar de Guayanilla.