

October 9, 2019

Dear High School Band Director,

We are pleased to announce the formation of the Southwest Ohio Youth Jazz Orchestra! The purpose of this ensemble is simple: to inspire the next generation of jazz musicians through education and performance while celebrating Ohio's contributions to our Jazz heritage. As you may know, every major city in Ohio hosts a youth jazz orchestra. Prior to 2019, these ensembles have included the Columbus Youth Jazz Orchestra, the Cincinnati Youth Jazz Orchestra, the Toledo Youth Jazz Orchestra, and the Cleveland Youth Jazz Orchestra. We are pleased and honored to host the inaugural Youth Jazz Orchestra to serve southwest Ohio! This group would not be possible without the partnership with Springboro Community Theatre.

In the short term, we hope to create an ensemble comprised of the area top student jazz musicians. In the long term, we hope to compete in the Essentially Ellington Competition in New York City. This is a lofty ambition but we are confident. With the wealth of talent from southwest Ohio, we know the Essentially Ellington competition is within our reach but we need your help. Please share the attached student invitation letter with any and all of your jazz students who may be interested in auditioning. There is no cost to audition, but we will have a \$200 participation fee for the year. Students will have the option of bringing a letter of recommendation and applying for a scholarship.

Please see the following page for our rehearsal and performance schedule. Pending audition, ensemble members are required to attend all rehearsals and performances. Exceptions would include school conflicts, illness, or family emergencies. Students must also be enrolled in a band/orchestra program in his/her home district.

Our director for the 2019-20 season will **Dr. Jimmy Leach from the University of Dayton**. As a trumpeter and vocalist, Dr. Leach brings a wealth of experience as an educator and performer. Past experience includes work at Harvard University and numerous Jazz Orchestras from across North America. To learn more about Dr. Leach, visit <http://www.jimmyleach.com/bio.htm>

Assisting with the group will Mr. Bill Burns. Mr. Burns teaches in Centerville City Schools and directs the Sinclair Community Jazz Ensemble. He has over 20 years of experience in jazz education and is a past-president of the Jazz Education Connection of Ohio. To learn more about him visit <http://www.billburnsjazz.com> Thank you for your help and support of Jazz Education! We look forward to hearing your students audition!

Sincerely,

Bill Burns
Community liaison, Southwest Ohio Youth Jazz Orchestra
Email: southwestohiojazz@gmail.com