

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **Next Generation of Jazz Artists Takes the Stage at JazzEd Detroit Festival** **Mentorship and collaboration drive a rare, citywide model for student jazz education**

**DETROIT, MI, April 2026** — JazzEd Detroit will present the 2nd Annual JazzEd Festival on Saturday, April 25, 2026, at the Old Main Building on Wayne State University's campus, bringing together 10 high school jazz bands from across Metro Detroit for a full day of performance, mentorship and connection.

At the heart of the festival is a simple idea: mentorship matters. Students will perform for a panel of professional jazz artists who provide real-time feedback, followed by one-on-one coaching sessions designed to help each ensemble grow. For many participants, it is their first opportunity to receive direct guidance from working musicians in a professional setting.

"The robust engagement from my students spoke to how beneficial the experience was," said Joshua James of University of Detroit Jesuit High School and Academy.

The festival is structured in two sessions, 7 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. and 1:30 p.m. to 6 p.m., each offering the full experience. Schools from Detroit Public Schools Community District, suburban districts and charter programs will be represented, reflecting the breadth of jazz education across the region.

More than a performance opportunity, the JazzEd Festival is a reflection of a growing, collaborative model for arts education in Detroit. JazzEd Detroit brings together five leading organizations to create shared pathways for students, connecting classroom learning with professional mentorship and future opportunities. The initiative is supported by the Fred A. and Barbara M. Erb Family Foundation.

Students will participate in workshops led by Detroit artists and educators, including bassist 2025 Kresge Foundation Eminent Artist Marion Hayden and GRAMMY Award-winning trumpeter Kris Johnson. Sessions will explore improvisation, ensemble dynamics and the roots of Black musical tradition, reinforcing jazz as both an art form and a cultural legacy.

New this year, a student mixer will provide space for young musicians to connect with peers from across the region, building relationships that extend beyond the classroom and into Detroit's broader music community.

An on-site expo will introduce students to programs and opportunities offered by partner organizations, including the Detroit Jazz Festival Foundation, MSU Community Music School-Detroit, Music Hall, The Carr Center, the Detroit Symphony Orchestra, the Michigan Jazz Festival as well as the host venue Wayne State University. The expo is designed to help students take the next step in their musical journey by connecting them with resources, mentors and future pathways.

The festival will also feature a performance by Evening Star, a Detroit-based jazz trio with roots in the city's public schools. Two members are graduates of Detroit Public Schools, offering students a clear example of how their musical development can lead to professional artistry.

For educators, the festival provides meaningful engagement as well. Directors receive detailed adjudication and feedback, supporting classroom instruction and strengthening connections between schools and the professional jazz community.

**About JazzEd Detroit**

JazzEd Detroit is a collaborative initiative uniting The Carr Center, Detroit Jazz Festival Foundation, Detroit Symphony Orchestra, Michigan State University Community Music School-Detroit and Music Hall Center for the Performing Arts. Together, these organizations create a centralized hub of resources, mentorship and performance opportunities for young musicians, strengthening Detroit's jazz ecosystem and supporting the next generation of artists.

JazzEd Detroit is made possible through the generous support of the Fred A. and Barbara M. Erb Family Foundation. ArtOps, a Detroit-based nonprofit services organization, provides operational infrastructure, strategic coordination and administrative support for the initiative.

For more information or to stay connected, visit [jazzeddetroit.org](http://jazzeddetroit.org).