

MMEA All-State Jazz Ensemble Concert - MOAJE President's Speech
January 31, 2026

Welcome to the All-State Jazz Band Performance which is part of the 88th Annual Missouri Music Educators Association In-Service Workshop and Conference!

In order to ensure our performers and attendees have a rewarding experience, we ask that all cell phones, smart watches, or any other personal electronic devices be powered off or silenced. Please refrain from taking still photographs during the performances.

MMEA copyright policies prohibit the use of audio and video recording devices during performances. Audio and video recordings are available for purchase.

At the conclusion of the performance, please exit the Ballroom at the rear of the hall. You may meet and greet conductors near the elevators by the registration table.

My name is Trey Wadell, and I am the President of the Missouri Association for Jazz Education. I would like to say a special thank you to our MOAJE board, Connor Callahan who is serving as the All State Jazz Coordinator, Clarence Smith, Cathy Coonis, Sarita Magno-Parsons, Dylan Noble, as well as MMEA Jazz Vice President Jennifer Sager. Please give these people a round of applause for all the hard work they have done behind the scenes to make today's performance possible.

I would also like to give a special thanks to our sponsors whose financial support is greatly appreciated. These include Jazz St. Louis, The Missouri Alliance for Arts Education, and Ernie Williamson Music. Please help me in thanking them as well.

Before we begin our performance, we would like to honor two people. One student and one jazz educator.

The first is the winner of our annual composition contest. Our winner this year is Ian Lundholm from Platte County High School with his big band composition entitled SPLAT! His teacher is Connor Callahan. His composition, as well as previous winning compositions, are available on our website. Though he could not join us today, please give a round of applause for this young composer.

Our second award is the MOAJE Jess Cole Outstanding Jazz Educator Award. This honor is bestowed upon an individual annually for their outstanding contributions to jazz education in Missouri.

Our winner this year is the director of Jazz Studies and saxophone professor at Missouri Western State University. His ensembles have performed at the Greater St. Louis Jazz Festival, the North Texas Jazz Festival, as well as at this conference. He has performed with some big name musicians such as Clark Terry, Bobby Shew, Manhattan Transfer, and others. He runs a great jazz festival each year at Missouri Western. He has even served as president of the Missouri Association for Jazz Education.

So, it is my great pleasure to award the 2026 Jess Cole Outstanding Jazz Educator Award to Mr. Bob Long !

Finally, it is my great pleasure to introduce this wonderful band of young students. I would like to formally recognize students who have been selected for either All-State Jazz Band or All-State band, for THREE [REDACTED] consecutive years:

Our THREE-Year Members include:

Scotty Russell on Tenor Sax
Zach Bonett on Tenor Sax AND
Keller McCowen on Bari Sax

The 2026 All-State Jazz Band is an excellent group and they are led by an outstanding jazz educator. Our director is a native of Pontiac, Michigan and currently serves as Professor of Jazz Studies, African American Studies, and head of the Jazz Studies area at the University of Iowa. He holds degrees from DePaul University, the University of Kentucky, Wayne State University, and the University of Colorado at Boulder. He has released five albums as a band leader and has even published a book entitled “What is this thing called soul: Conversations on Black Culture and Jazz Education.” **Please give it up for the 2026 Missouri All-State Jazz Band, and their director, Dr. Damani Phillips.**

[After the conclusion of jazz concert, while the audience is still clapping.....]

On behalf of MOAJE, we would like to present this certificate of appreciation to **Damani** for exceptionally leading the All-State Jazz Band this week!