

Essentially Ellington at SIUE

I had the privilege of attending the Essentially Ellington Regional Festival at SIUE. This is a non-competitive festival designed to offer high school bands a chance to play traditional jazz that they have been working on and receive professional feedback from Jazz at Lincoln Center clinicians. This is a unique opportunity for the band leaders to get feedback for their band by professionals. It also gives the student chance to learn more about using their instrument and tricks of the trade.

The St. Louis Jazz Club is proud to sponsor this festival. It is amazing to see high school students so enthusiastic about the music they are playing. They take the mentoring from the clinicians seriously. The band leaders are thrilled to show off their bands and receive another perspective on their band. I'm always amazed at how good these teenagers play. I'm also amazed at what I learn sitting in on these sessions. It helps me appreciate bands better. This is the best way to get "our music" to the students with a positive result.

We help sponsor a festival at UMSL which I haven't attended yet. We also give scholarships for jazz camps at SIUE and Webster as well as the Bev Elliot, Jean Kittrell and Ruth Arnold scholarships. I think this is the best way to preserve, support and encourage traditional jazz and get exposure to the younger generation.

Judy Collins

Vice-President

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