

## **St. Louis Jazz Club Jazz Educational Activities**

The St. Louis Jazz Club sponsors two prestigious educational jazz festivals each year in the St. Louis area, the St. Louis Jazz Club/Lincoln Center “Essentially Ellington” Regional Jazz Festival at SIUE and the Greater St. Louis Jazz Festival at UMSL.

The “Essentially Ellington” festival is a regional version of the prestigious Lincoln Center festival in New York (*developed by Wynton Marsalis*) that highlights 15 high school jazz bands selected annually through a worldwide competition, all performing historically recorded music by Duke Ellington (*also some select works by Count Basie and Mary Lou Williams*). The St. Louis Jazz Club co-sponsors this regional festival with Jazz-at-Lincoln Center and SIUE. This festival has a unique educational focus developed to provide an intensive experience for a select number of invited junior and senior high school student bands. In the morning, a team of prestigious jazz artist/educators critique each student band before and after their performance. In the afternoon students attend improvisation and individual instrumental technique clinics. Before dinner each band rehearses with several of the guest artists. In the evening each band performs in a public concert with the guest artists and the SIUE Concert Jazz Band. The St. Louis Jazz Club is proud to take a leading role in sponsoring this superb educational event.

The Greater St. Louis Jazz Festival created by Jim Widner is huge, involving over 60 junior high, senior high and college bands/combos performing in the prestigious Touhill Performing Arts Center on the UMSL campus. Their performances are critiqued by acclaimed adjudicators, one of which listens to the band’s performance then follows them to a separate rehearsal room and works with them based on their performance. On Friday and Saturday night, famous jazz bands/artists perform for a public audience of 2000 people (*including the students*). For example, this year Wycliffe Gordon performed a tribute to “Louis Armstrong” and John Faddis performed a tribute to “Dizzy Gillespie.” The UMSL Jazz Ensemble performed with the guest artists for both events. The St. Louis Jazz Club is one of many sponsors for this prestigious St. Louis event.

The St. Louis Jazz Club is also active in sponsoring traditional jazz performances and clinics at area schools. Terry Meyers (leader of the Tommy Dorsey Orchestra and saxophonist with the Bill Allred Classic Jazz Band) conducted clinics last year at Rockwood High School and SIUE. Cornet Chop Suey performs for schools in conjunction with its Apple Shed Concert in Clarksville, co-sponsored by the St. Louis Jazz Club and Raintree Arts.