



History

About Greater Des Moines Community Jazz Center

The CJC was formed by Willie Thomas, a nationally known trumpet player, in March of 1988. Its mission was to provide young musicians an opportunity to interact and share their gifted talents with area students. Since the departure of Mr. Thomas, the CJC has thrived under the leadership of Phyllis Leaverton. Long-time volunteer, Abe Goldstien took over the reins of the CJC in August 2017 and has many new and exciting plans for the future of CJC!

The main objective of the CJC is to provide young musicians an opportunity to develop their talents and enjoy music in a non-competitive environment. The structured monthly jam sessions are beneficial in this way - to both student musicians and professional musicians alike.

Over the years, CJC has maintained a regular monthly jam session on the first Sunday of every month at Java Joe's Coffeehouse in downtown Des Moines (214 4th Street). The CJC Big Band also performs there on the third Sunday of every month.



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The CJC sponsors an annual Junior High Jazz Festival and also the CJC Honor Bands which provide valuable experience for young musicians with an interest in Jazz.

Every October since 2001, the CJC sponsors the CJC Jazz Hall Of Fame and Special Recognition Awards (click "Hall of Fame above). This is an impressive evening that pays tribute to important long-time musicians, educators and promoters in the Des Moines area.

The CJC intends to be the source for JAZZ information in Des Moines. More and more young people in Des Moines are discovering this important American ART form and the CJC is here to help promote local JAZZ in Des Moines! Please feel free to contact us with questions or suggestions.