



Martha Seroogy
Communications Director
Eau Claire Jazz, Inc.
715.836.4092
Martha@eauclairejazz.com

Eau Claire Jazz Festival announces winning bands
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EAU CLAIRE—The Eau Claire Jazz Festival is pleased to announce winning bands and outstanding soloists from the 43rd annual festival, which took place April 15-18. Ninety-nine middle school, high school and college big bands and combos traveled from all over the Midwest to participate.

Below is a listing of the top three bands and their directors per category and the outstanding soloist from each class. Schools are divided into classes based on school size. The top band in each class was featured on the evening concert along with guest artists Nicholas Payton, Kenni Holmen and UW-Eau Claire Jazz Ensemble I.

**College
Big Band**

- 1) Northern Illinois University, DeKalb IL | Rodrigo Villanueva
- 2) Gustavus Adolphus, St. Peter MN | Steve Wright
- 3) MSU Moorhead, Moorhead MN | Allen Carter

Combo

- 1) Moorhead Tri College II, Moorhead MN | Nick Fryer
- 2) Moorhead Tri College, Moorhead MN | Simon Rowe
- 3) McNally Smith College of Music, St. Paul MN | Kristin Sponcia

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High School

AA/A Combo

- 1) Memorial High School, Eau Claire WI | Bruce Hering
- 1) Bloomington North IV High School, Bloomington IN | Janis Stockhouse
- 2) Bloomington North V High School, Bloomington IN | Janis Stockhouse

B/C/D Combo

- 1) St. Paul Conservatory for Performing Artists, St. Paul MN | Mark Bobnick
- 2) Walker West Music Academy I, St. Paul MN | Felix James
- 3) "The ComBros", Regis High School, Eau Claire WI | Jeff Walk

AA Big Band

- 1) Memorial High School, Eau Claire WI | Bruce Hering
- 2) Apple Valley High School, Apple Valley MN | John Zimmerman
- 3) Minnetonka High School, Minnetonka MN | Miles Mortensen

A Big Band

- 1) Badger High School, Lake Geneva WI | Greg Bunge
- 2) North High School, Eau Claire WI | Eugene Power
- 3) Concord High School, Elkhart IN | Steve Peterson

B Big Band

- 1) Sparta High School, Sparta WI | Michelle Jensen
- 2) St. Anthony Village High School, St. Anthony Village MN | Andy Erickson
- 3) Jazz I, River Falls High School, River Falls WI | Bryan Jaeckel & Joe Coughlin

C Big Band

- 1) Annandale High School, Annandale MN | Lee Peterson
- 2) Elk Mound High School, Elk Mound WI | Gerry Murphy
- 3) Jazz II, River Falls High School, River Falls WI | Bryan Jaeckel & Joe Coughlin

D Big Band

- 1) Regis High School, Eau Claire WI | Jeff Walk
- 2) Brillion High School, Brillion WI | Michael Wagner
- 3) Columbus Catholic High School, Marshfield WI | Thomas Zimmerman

Middle School

- 1) Arcadia Middle School, Arcadia WI | Jim Gallagher
- 2) Highview Middle School, New Brighton MN | Andy Schmidt
- 3) Field Middle School, South Minneapolis MN | Kim Hotchkiss

OUSTANDING SOLOISTS

College

Chris Schuster | Saxophone | Moorhead Tri College

High School

Class AA: Patrick Kuehn | Bass | Memorial High School

Class A: Mike Gieron | Violin | Badger High School

Class B: Alex Snuffield | Trumpet | Sparta High School

-more-

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Class C: Brady Stromme | Alto Saxophone | Annandale High School

Class D: Alex Taft | Alto Saxophone | Regis High School

Middle School: John Wiemer | Trumpet | Arcadia Middle School

Other award recipients include schools who attended a majority of educational clinics on Saturday of the festival. Mesabi East High School and St. Paul Conservatory for Performing Artists were awarded the Excellence in Jazz Education awards for 95% of their students attending three or more clinics. Schools with 60% attendance to three or more clinics are Brooklyn Center High School, Columbus Catholic High School, Parkview Center Middle School, Lombardi Middle School and Owatonna Junior High. All schools were entered into a drawing for a free Ludwig Drum Co. drum set. Congratulations to Lombardi Middle School for winning the drawing.

The Eau Claire Jazz Festival is a partnership between Eau Claire Jazz, Inc, the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire, area businesses and organizations.

The festival is sponsored in part by a grant from the Wisconsin Arts Board with funds from the state of Wisconsin and the National Endowment for the Arts. Additional support comes from major sponsors Visit Eau Claire, TravelWisconsin.com, Hal Leonard Corporation, Sitepro.com, The Print Shop, Ludwig Drum Co. and Morgan Music.

Don't forget to mark your calendars for next year's festival on April 7-10, 2011. For more information on the jazz festival and upcoming events, visit www.eauclairejazz.com or call Eau Claire Jazz, Inc. at 715-836-4092. You can follow the Eau Claire Jazz Festival on Twitter and Facebook.

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