

President's Message

September 2007

Colleagues,

It is an honor to be selected to serve as President of the South Carolina International Association for Jazz Education. I welcome the opportunity to serve and look forward to working with you as we enhance jazz education in our schools and promote this vibrant music throughout the state. Joining me on the board are: Robert Gardiner – Past President, Bert Ligon – President Elect, Matt Olson – Secretary, and Bryson Borgstedt – Treasurer.

On September 8th we set two goals for our unit to meet over the next two years and we discussed several ways to achieve these goals. The first goal is to double our membership by July 1, 2008. The logical first step for this goal is to have our own students become members at a cost of \$140.00 for school memberships or \$25.00 per student for a student chapter of IAJE. Further information about membership opportunities can be found at <http://www.iaje.org/iaje.aspx?pid=2>. In addition, on December 1, Bert Ligon and USC will host a clinic for high school students featuring workshops on improv and performance. Other workshops will focus on the SCBDA All-State Jazz Auditions. This event is FREE for IAJE members. Non-members have the opportunity to join at the event. If you know of any directors who have active jazz programs but are not current IAJE members, please encourage them to join.

The second goal is to become more visible in the state. The IAJE Big Band will continue to perform at the SCMEA Conventions and we are pursuing a regular time slot in the conference EACH year that will allow us to: present a clinic, feature a reading band performing new charts, and/or feature a school jazz ensemble in a performance. We discussed the idea of making our members available to middle and high school band directors to serve as clinicians to work with their ensembles and possibly form our own ensemble which would travel and perform school concerts to promote jazz and its history. In addition, we want our website <http://music.sc.edu/ea/Jazz/SCIAJE/> to become the primary resource for all jazz concert dates in the state, as well as instructional materials and practical ideas for use in a school jazz program. I encourage you to submit your concert dates and any other instructional materials or articles, solo transcriptions, or any other material you think will enhance jazz education in South Carolina.

Please remember that the mission of IAJE is to assure the continued growth and development of jazz and jazz education through programs which nurture and promote the understanding and appreciation of jazz and its heritage, providing leadership to educators regarding curricula, aesthetics and performance; assisting teachers and practitioners with information and resources; and taking an active part in organizing clinics, festivals and symposia at local, regional, national and international levels. Working together we can continue this mission and achieve the goals for our state unit. In so doing we achieve the larger goal of ensuring America's art form continues to be preserved, understood and promulgated in the state of South Carolina.

In closing, I invite all of you to our next membership meeting on Friday, February 8th, at the Charleston Convention Center. At this time we will need to ratify our new constitution and discuss ways we can clarify and attain the goals outlined above. In the meantime I welcome any suggestions you may have to enhance what we do for you. My contact information is listed on the website. Thank you for your continued support of jazz and jazz education, and I look forward to seeing all of you in Charleston.

Mark Yost
President, SC-IAJE