



**2026 Mid-Atlantic Jazz Festival
High School Band Competition
&
Middle and High School Exhibition**

FESTIVAL DATES:

February 13 - 15, 2026

COMPETITION DATE:

February 14, 2026

EXHIBITION DATES:

February 13th, 14th, 15th,

PLACE:

**Marriott Hotel &
Executive Meeting Center
5151 Pooks Hill Road
Bethesda, MD 20814**

Event: **Mid-Atlantic Jazz Festival**
Website: www.midatlanticjazzfestival.org

Produced by: **The Jazz Academy of Music, Inc.**
Website: www.jazzacademy.org

Address: P.O. Box 6744, Silver Spring, MD 20916-6744

Contact: Paul Carr, Executive Director

Email: pcarr@jazzacademy.org

Phone: 301-871-8418

MID-ATLANTIC JAZZ FESTIVAL
HIGH SCHOOL BAND COMPETITION
MIDDLE AND HIGH SCHOOL BAND EXHIBITION

The Mid-Atlantic Jazz Festival

2026 will be the 17th Annual Mid-Atlantic Jazz Festival! In 2010, the first Mid-Atlantic Jazz Festival (MAJF) was launched by the Jazz Academy of Music, Inc., a Maryland non-profit organization, whose mission is to advance and preserve jazz music through education and outreach. The MAJF's three-day event has been a huge success, with attendance of thousands of jazz lovers each year. Attendees are comprised of listeners, educators, students, parents and musicians. Attendees travel to the festival from points all along the Mid-Atlantic seaboard and beyond.

The MAJF showcases local and touring jazz artists of traditional genres. Also showcased are the gospel and blues genres that are primary influences of jazz music. One of the most important aspects of the festival is the focus on the education of young musicians. Middle and high school, as well as collegiate, level jazz bands perform at the festival. The students also have the opportunity to attend master classes conducted by the touring musicians that are performing at the festival, film screenings covering legacy musicians, play in open "jam sessions" with professional musicians and of course see the pros in live performances. Many of these opportunities are free and open to the public.

The MAJF programming consists of 3 days of jazz music performances by some of the top musicians in the country. Artists like NEA Jazz Masters Ellis Marsalis, Brian Lynch, Roy Haynes, Branford Marsalis, Delfeayo Marsalis and Jimmy Heath; renowned pianist, the late Mulgrew Miller; saxophonist Bobby Watson and trumpeter Terrell Stafford have graced our stage. In addition, the event has an educational component that includes master classes, film screenings and interviews in front of a live audience with some of the more popular performing artists.

The 2026 event will include:

- 12 - 15 marquee performances on the Main Stage,
- 12 - 15 performances on our Q (Quincy) Bayou and Ronnie Wells Stages
- Free master classes, interviews, film screenings, state of jazz discussions and other humanities programming,
- Vendors of cultural art and couture, and
- Free jam sessions for all ages.

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JAZZ BAND COMPETITION OVERVIEW

The competition will include more than 12 high school jazz bands that are from schools located in the Mid-Atlantic States, including North Carolina, Virginia, Maryland, West Virginia, Delaware, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, New York, Connecticut, the District of Columbia and beyond. Members of the band must attend the same high school. The competition will begin at 8:00AM on Saturday, February 14th at the MAJF's Q (Quincy Jones) Stage location. Each band will have a maximum of 25 minutes on stage to set up, perform, break down and exit the stage. Bands must adhere to these timeframes. Band Directors may select three (3) compositions of their choice to perform, however, the entire program must be Jazz orientated, (i.e. Swing Jazz, Bebop Jazz, Latin Jazz, or Funk Jazz) and at least 2 of the 3 selections must be of contrasting styles. The panel will include 3 judges and 2 clinicians. Immediately following each performance, one of the MAJF clinicians will conduct a private clinic to provide immediate feedback on the band's performance.

At 4:15pm, three finalists will be named and will proceed to the festival's Main Stage location for a final playoff which will begin at 5:00PM. Each finalist will play two selections of their choice. The panel of judges for the final playoff will be augmented with one of the touring musicians that are performing at the MAJF. At the end of the playoff, the first-, second- and third- place trophies and cash award will be awarded.

Admittance to the competition will be on a first-paid first-served basis and will be determined by the postmark date.

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Warm-up and Performance Timeframes and Logistics

Each band will be provided with an individual that will serve as its MAJF liaison at the festival. The liaison will escort the band to the rehearsal space and to the stage area and will be available to answer questions and assist with other needs and requirements. Each band will be provided access to a room to tune and warm up prior to its competition performance on the MAJF's Q stage. The rehearsal room will be equipped with a piano, and a full drum set. Bass and Guitar amps are not provided. Each band will be allowed up to 30 minutes in the warm-up room just prior to its performance time. Approximately 15 minutes before a band's scheduled performance time, the Band Director should send the band's setup crew to The "Q" Stage performance area. The only equipment available on stage will be a piano, a drum set without cymbals, chairs, stands and sufficient microphones. While backline will be provided, schools may choose to bring their own equipment. However, on-stage time will not be extended beyond 25 minutes. Schools must bring all of their own percussion equipment, including vibraphones. Approximately 10 minutes before the scheduled performance time, the rest of the band should move to the performance area. Each band will have a maximum of 25 minutes on stage to set up, perform, break down and exit the stage.

Performance Requirements

Upon check-in for the competition, the Band Director shall provide the completed "Repertoire Form" (attached). The form should include the names of the soloists, so that each soloist can be considered for the outstanding soloist awards. The performance rules are as follows:

- On-stage time may not exceed 25 minutes including set-up, performance, breakdown and exit
- The entire performance must be Jazz-oriented (i.e. Swing Jazz, Bebop Jazz, Latin Jazz, or Funk Jazz)
- Two of the three selections must be of contrasting styles
- Directors are encouraged to vary the tempo of the selections and demonstrate the use of dynamics.

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THE AWARDS

Band

The Mid-Atlantic Jazz Festival High School Band Competition will culminate with the presentation of the awards. The awards presentation will take place on the festival's Main Stage. There are three (3) band awards, 1st, 2nd and 3rd place and three (3) individual awards that will be given to the outstanding soloists in the competition. Each band award recipient will receive a trophy. The registration fee will be waived for the 1st place band for next year.

Last year's first place winner was Susan Wagner High School (NY); Director, Paul Corn



Each individual award recipient will receive a plaque and a scholarship to attend the Jazz Academy Summer JAM Camp or Lab valued at \$625.00. This represents a full scholarship to JAM Camp and a partial scholarship to JAM Lab. Students are taught jazz improvisation, history and are paired by skill level in combo groups to play and perform various compositions representing various periods of jazz music. For more information on JAM Camp or Lab, please visit our website at www.jazzacademy.org.

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JAZZ BAND EXHIBITION OVERVIEW

Middle and High School Bands are invited to exhibit on our Q-Stage (Quincy Jones Stage) and our Bijou Stage at specific 30-minute time slots. During exhibition periods the Q-Stage and the Bijou Stage are free and open to the public. Each band will be provided with an individual that will serve as its MAJF liaison at the festival. The liaison will escort the band to the rehearsal space and to the stage area and will be available to answer questions and assist with other needs and requirements.

Each band will be provided with access to a room to tune and warm up prior to its performance on the MAJF's Q or Bijou stage. The rehearsal room will be equipped with a piano, and a full drum set. Bass and Guitar amps are not provided. Each band will be allowed up to 30 minutes in the warm-up room just prior to its performance time. Approximately 15 minutes before a band's scheduled performance time, the Band Director should send the band's setup crew to The "Q" Stage performance area. The only equipment available on stage will be a piano, a drum set without cymbals, chairs, music stands and sufficient microphones. While backline will be provided, schools may choose to bring their own equipment. However, on-stage time will not be extended beyond 30 minutes. Schools must bring all their own percussion equipment, including vibraphones. Approximately 10 minutes before the scheduled performance time, the band should move to the performance area. Each band will have a maximum of 30 minutes on stage to set up, perform, break down and exit the stage.

The Band Director is free to choose the repertoire; however, we ask Directors to consider including at least one selection from the American song book. Immediately following each performance, one of the MAJF clinicians will conduct a private clinic to provide immediate feedback on the band's performance.

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The Site



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We are pleased to join the Marriott Hotel as our venue sponsor for the Mid-Atlantic Jazz Festival. The Bethesda Marriott Hotel is a stylish hotel and event venue. It is the perfect location for the MAJF with over 19,000 square feet of expansive and flexible space. It is located at 5150 Pooks Hill Road, Bethesda, Maryland 20814.

The hotel features a staff committed to excellence, extraordinary dining options, and an outstanding location with complimentary shuttle service to the Washington Metro Transit's – Medical Center Station – Red Line (www.wmata.com) making it extremely accessible to most of the popular tourist destinations in Maryland and Washington, DC. Performance space, accommodations, food, vendors, and more are all indoors under one roof. The hotel is minutes from world-class shopping and over 200 restaurants. It is also conveniently located to all area airports, major highways and the Amtrak train station, Union Station. The festival room rate is \$205.00 per night for rooms with single-king or double-queen bedding options. We recommend that hotel reservations be made as soon as possible as the hotel will be fully booked for the festival. Guests must tell the hotel reservationist that they are attending the MAJF (Group Name: MFA) to get the festival room rate. Guests may also reserve online by clicking on the link below:

<https://www.marriott.com/event-reservations/reservation-link.mi?id=1743089384136&key=GRP&guestreslink2=true&app=resvlink&inventoryMissing=true>

For special group accommodation for your band, please contact the hotel event manager **Katherine Roberts** at 301-564-5464 and reference the Mid-Atlantic Jazz Festival. Katherine will work with you to adjust the rooms to book contiguous rooms on the same floor and to structure meal plans for your band members if desired.

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REGISTRATION DEADLINE AND FEES

The final registration deadline is January 15, 2026

- The registration form attached to this brochure must be completed for each band entry and signed and dated by the school's Band Director. Registrations are accepted on a first come first served basis.
- A registration fee is required for each band competing or exhibiting with the exception of the 1st place band from the previous year's competition whose registration fee only is waived. There is no discount for multiple performance groups by the same school. The registration fee for each performing group is \$325.00 for competing bands and \$295.00 for bands that are exhibiting for registrations received between now and January 15, 2026.
- In addition, a participation fee of \$25.00 is required for each student in your ensemble. The participation fee provides student access to all stages, masterclasses and interviews.
- You may register and pay on-line or complete the form at the end of this document and mail in your registration with the registration and participation fees. Checks should be made payable to: The Jazz Academy of Music, Inc. If you choose not to register and pay on-line you can still pay by credit card by including the payment information on the registration form or by calling the Jazz Academy Offices at 301-871-8418 to pay by phone.
- All students will receive an all-access student passport that will allow entry to all festival stages and activities. There are master classes, a "Kids JAM Session", a late-night Jam session and many performances on our various stages. The Band Director will receive 1 complimentary all-access **general seating** pass for the entire event.
- If you have any questions, please contact Iva Ambush, Program Manager at 888-909-6330.

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DEADLINES

Final: **01/15/2026**

MID-ATLANTIC JAZZ FESTIVAL REGISTRATION FORM

High School Jazz Band Competition
Middle or High School Exhibition
Competition Date: February 14, 2026
Exhibition Dates: February 13th – 15th 2026

INSTRUCTIONS: Complete and execute one form for each performing group. You may submit the form via e-mail to inquiry@jazzacademy.org or fax to 301-563-9339 or mail to The Jazz Academy of Music, P.O. Box 6744, Silver Spring, Maryland 20916-6744. For questions call 301-871-0858 or toll free 1-888-909-6330.

Name of Ensemble (as you want it to appear in print): _____

Sponsoring Director's Name: _____

Name of High School: _____

School Street Address: _____

City: _____ **State:** _____ **Zip:** _____

Office Phone: (____) _____ **Other Phone:** (____) _____

E-Mail: _____

Attendees: Number of Students: _____ **Number of Adults:** _____

Fees: [For Competition Attendees Only]

Item	Cost	Quantity	Total
Registration – High School Band Competition	\$325.00		
Registration—High School or Middle School Exhibition	\$295.00		
Participation Fees (\$25 per student and up to 3 Chaperons)	\$25.00		
Additional Student Passports (For Chaperons and non-participating students)	\$165.00		
Total			

Payment:

Check payable to:
The Jazz Academy of Music, Inc.

Visa/MasterCard
Name on Card: _____
Billing Address: _____
City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____
Acct# _____ Exp: _____ CVV Code: _____
Email Address (For Receipt): _____

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I agree to the conditions set out in the accompanying brochure and certify that all the performing participants are under 19 years of age as of February 15, 2026. I agree that the performance may be included in our MAJF promotional videos, photographs or recordings promoting this festival without fees.

Director Signature: _____ Date: _____

Print Name: _____

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MAJF BAND COMPETITION-EXHIBITION REPERTOIRE FORM

Please submit four copies to host at check-in for duplication and distribution

High School Name _____

Director's Name _____

PROGRAM:

Selection 1 _____

TITLE COMPOSER/ARRANGER

Soloist Name/Instrument:

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Selection 2 _____

TITLE COMPOSER/ARRANGER

Soloist Name/Instrument:

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Selection 3 _____

TITLE COMPOSER/ARRANGER

Soloist Name/Instrument:

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

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SAMPLE MAJF BAND COMPETITION ADJUDICATION FORM

_____ (School) _____ (Director) _____ (Date)
Selections/Soloists

- 1) _____
 2) _____
 3) _____

Gold-G= 8-10pts Silver-S=5-7pts Bronze-B=1-4pts

Score	Areas of Consideration	Comments
	Intonation/Tone Quality Consider: resonance, control, clarity consistency, warmth	
	Balance/Blend Consider: phrasing, ensemble	
	Dynamics Consider: individuals, sections, ensemble	
	Interpretation Consider: tempo, phrasing, emotional involvement, style	
	Precision Consider: articulation, technique, control of ranges	
	Rhythm Section Balance/Blend/Dynamics Consider: balance, style	
	Rhythm Section Time/Intensity/Drive Consider: steadiness of tempo, fills	
	Quality of Improvisation Consider: harmonic/melodic content, creativity	
	Choice of Music Consider: variety, suitability	
	Stage Presence Consider: dress, presentation and showmanship	

Total Points [Performance Level: (80-100= Gold), (50-79=Silver), (10-49=Bronze)]

Adjudicator's Signature: _____

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