



THE RENO JAZZ ORCHESTRA **Northern Nevada**

Annual Report 2021

Great American Music for All!

On behalf of the entire Reno Jazz Orchestra, our Board of Directors, and our dedicated staff, I sincerely thank you and all our fans who have contributed to our organization and continue to support our local programs. We are grateful to have returned to the stage this year and sustained our efforts with your support during this challenging time.

We would not be where we are today without the financial support and in-kind services that have been generously donated to enhance all our initiatives over the past twenty-four years.

When a small group of the finest showroom musicians in town founded our organization in 1997, they embarked on a mission to provide our community with exceptional big band jazz performances. Since then, our mission has expanded to include a robust jazz education initiative. Our growing performance and education programs enhance the cultural vitality of our community, and it is our joy to share the love of this great American art form with you and with the next generation.

It is my honor as our Executive Director and a member of the orchestra to witness our organization's positive impacts on our audiences and local music students. Music heals the soul, and we need it in our lives now as much as ever. I am proud to carry on our mission and present you with this Annual Report.

Thank you again for helping us keep jazz an integral part of Northern Nevada today, and for years to come!

John Bennum, Executive Director



The Reno Jazz Orchestra has been based in Northern Nevada for over 20 years. It was formed by musicians who performed and traveled the world with acts such as Frank Sinatra, Sammy Davis Jr., Elvis Presley, Natalie Cole, Luciano Pavarotti, and other legendary performers. The tradition of jazz excellence set by the founders continues today with jazz professors, educators, and graduates from the University of Nevada, Reno's jazz studies program setting new performance standards.

Our mission is to build a greater appreciation of jazz in Northern Nevada by providing outstanding big band performances, promoting the artistry of Reno Jazz Orchestra musicians through a variety of ensembles, and supporting jazz education through a mentorship program in middle schools, high schools, and colleges. All combined, we contribute to the vibrancy, diversity, cultural vitality, and quality of our community's artistic life.

Educational Programs

Jazz in the Schools

The Reno Jazz Orchestra's annual Jazz in the Schools (JITS) event occurs each February in the Department of Music's prestigious Nightingale Concert Hall at the University of Nevada, Reno. The program is supported through grants and private contributions. Young jazz musicians in Northern Nevada get the opportunity to hear other jazz ensembles, receive feedback from nationally recognized clinicians, and attend a concert by the Reno Jazz Orchestra.

This past year, although we were virtual due to the pandemic, our online Jazz in the Schools event included six middle and high school jazz ensembles from the area. They performed and received feedback from clinicians Mike Conrad and Kyle Engelhardt. Both clinicians are nationally recognized jazz educators from Iowa. A total of seven large ensembles performed and received feedback via Zoom. The clinicians led two well-received professional development sessions for directors, and the Julien Knowles Combo performed original music. The online concert included an educational portion in which Julien spoke about the writing process, how he got started, and the inspiration for each of the tunes.



Mentor Program

The Reno Jazz Orchestra Mentor Program is in its eleventh year of providing support to jazz education in our area schools. It continues to evolve with the help of funding from the E.L. Cord Foundation, City of Reno, State of Nevada, Healing HealthCare Systems, and private contributions. Participating schools this year were:

<i>Billingshurst Middle School</i>	<i>Depoali Middle School</i>	<i>McQueen High School</i>
<i>Carson Middle School</i>	<i>Desert Skies Middle School</i>	<i>Reno High School</i>
<i>Carson High School</i>	<i>Hug High School</i>	<i>Truckee High School</i>
<i>Damonte Ranch High School</i>	<i>Incline High School</i>	

As local schools transitioned from a hybrid model to in-person education, RJO was able to more than double the number of mentor sessions provided. In the spring of 2021, five schools received 38 sessions, and in the fall of 2021, 11 schools received 82 sessions. A total of 17 mentors worked with 12 schools to provide instruction on improvisation, instrument technique, jazz style, and playing in a jazz ensemble. As the local school district builds more schools, the request for mentoring increases, and the RJO continues to welcome new mentors. This year the RJO welcomed new mentors Chris Casaceli, Joel Stevens, Nick Bentz, Zach Howarth, and Tristan Selzler. The UNR faculty continues their partnership with UNR. This year's mentors were Hans Halt, Josh Reed, Andy Heglund, Peter Epstein, Karl Busch, and Dylan Coleman-Tunstall. Returning mentors included Jim Garaventa, David Gervais, Jonathan Phillips, Tyler Cravines, Nichole Heglund, and John Bennum. This program continues to be a beneficial and rewarding way to keep jazz alive and robust in our public schools and community.



Educational Programs (cont.)

Jazz Workshops

Our Saturday Jazz Workshops for middle and high school students returned to an in-person format with COVID-19 precautions being taken. Students focused on jazz improvisation, ear training, and rhythm with instructor Dylan Coleman-Tunstall.

Throughout each semester's eight sessions, guest instructors Tim Gay (saxophone), Tyler Cravines (drums), Zach Howarth (drums), and Chris Clark (saxophone) were able to give students more individual instruction.

The focus for the spring semester was learning about the recording process. The culminating event resulted in two tunes being professionally recorded at Tanglewood Productions: "Take the Coltrane" and "Lester Leaps In". The fall semester saw workshop students return to the stage as the opening act for the RJO's November concerts for their capstone performances.

Jazz in the Schools

February 13

Online Format

6 schools & approximately 200 in attendance

Student Jazz Workshops, Spring Semester

April 10 – June 5

Good Luck Macbeth Theater

9 students participated

Student Workshop Recording Session

June 5

Tanglewood Productions

Mentor Program, Spring Sessions

March 29 – May 14

120 students served

Student Jazz Workshops, Fall Semester

September 25 – November 21

11 students participated

Capstone performances at November

RJO concerts

Mentor Program, Fall Sessions

September 20 – November 30

Approximately 275 students served

2021 Reno Jazz Orchestra Performances

Monthly Music Series Recordings (Good Luck Macbeth Theater) & Premieres (RJO YouTube)

March 17 & 21	No Comprende
April 16 & 18	Blue Note
May 7 & 16	The Bayberry Cast

Regional Performances

May 28	RJO Quartet – The Alpine
July 11	RJO Quintet Featuring Carolyn Dolan – Artown, Village Green Park
July 30	Spirits – The Music of Earth, Wind & Fire – Robert Z. Hawkins Amphitheater
August 2	Spirits – The Music of Earth, Wind & Fire - Sand Harbor Warren Edward Trepp Stage
August 22	RJO Featuring Diane Schuur – Nightingale Concert Hall
August 29	Carson City Jazz & Beyond Festival – Brewery Arts Center
November 20 & 21	Celebrating the Music and Legacy of Dr. Larry Engstrom – Good Luck Macbeth
October 1	Theater “Spirits” CD Release
December 17 & 19	Home for the Holidays – The Theatre

Legacy Society

Candy and Chuck Reider
Susan Mazer and Dallas Smith

2021 Circle of Friends

Diamond – \$20,000+

Anonymous
Eleanor and Bob Preger

Ruby – \$15,000+

Julie and Craig Rauchle

Emerald – \$10,000+

Sandra Cath and David Contis
Susan Mazer and Dallas Smith
Ursula and Richard Tracy

Crystal – \$5,000+

George Foster
Lillian and Steve Frank
Dent N. Hand, Jr.
Linda and King Won
– in memory of Mr. & Mrs. Yuen C. Won

Silver – \$2,500+

Michael Gross
Lana and Stephen Hardy
Robert Z. Hawkins Foundation
Alicia and Jim House
Jane and Jim Nichols
Candy and Chuck Reider

Bronze – \$1,000+

Suzanne and Matthew Booher
Danne Polk and Robert Callaghan
Ruthie and Jim Garaventa
Joe Gorman
James and Mary Ann Kidder
Martha and Bruce MacKay
Charlotte McConnell
Dr. Sandra Koch and Dr. Timothy McFarren
Patty Engels and Dick Medland
Nancy Rose
Lois and Don Smaltz
– in memory of Leonard Neidhold
Gloria and Dean Smith
Scott Thunder
Geri and Stuart Yount

RJO Partners – \$500+

Edna and Bruno Benna Foundation
Kris and Don Coppa
Ginnie Kersey
Janet and Monte Klein Family Foundation
Baiba and Ainars Liepins
Dan Pearson
Richard Ray
Kaye Shackford
– in memory of Joe Shackford
Lois and Bob Strejc

RJO Band Fans – \$100+

Alfred Amoroso
Anne Bacon
William Baker
Roberta Bel
John Bennum
Tom Berresi
Bernard Bronov
Elinor and David Bugli
Qingmei “May” Cai
Marion Camp
James Cavanaugh
Kim and Dion Clancy
Amanda Colbert
Judith and David Collins
Bob Conrad
Lynn and Richard Cusac
Margaret and Richard David
Denise DeSantis
Patty Dickens
Mike Eardley
Gregory Ghicha
Pricilla and Nate Gordon
Jana Greer
Ruth R. Gregory
Cindy Gustafson
Elyse and Shai Gut
Donna Harvey
Claudia Heath
Dema Herrera
Mary Ann McCauley

RJO Band Fan (cont.)

Jayne and Merle Hill
Denise and Michael Hurst
Diane Jankiewicz
Laurel Jones
Kathleen Keef
Sara LaFrance
Eva Lerud
Nancy Malmquist
Mary and Frank Marfisi
Denise and Peter Menzies, Jr.
Stephanie and Paul Neill
Linda and Steve Newberg
Nettie Oliverio
Joy Orlich
Lee Ragonese
Roz Reynolds
Joan Rose
Karen and Vern Scarbrough
Meri Shadley
Chris Shea
Carolyn and Michael Smith
Barbara and Alan Stirling
Elizabeth Wedemeyer
Kathleen and Andrew Woodard

RJO Friends – \$25+

David Bennum
Jill Blasingame
John Bowers
Diane Brach
Peter J. Bush
Lois Crocker
Andria Daley
Jennifer Dunn
Diana Fuzere
Donna Galante
Carol Gleason
Martha and Don Jessup
Pam Johnson
Carol King
Diana Kincade
Pennie and Knute Knudson, Jr.
Charles Leiber
Barbara McMeen
David McNulty
Janet Murphy
Alejandro Parrilla
Jim Rehberger
Eric Rosenberg
Jean and John Sokol
Susan and George Stigliano
Sarah S. Thomas
C. M. Weiss

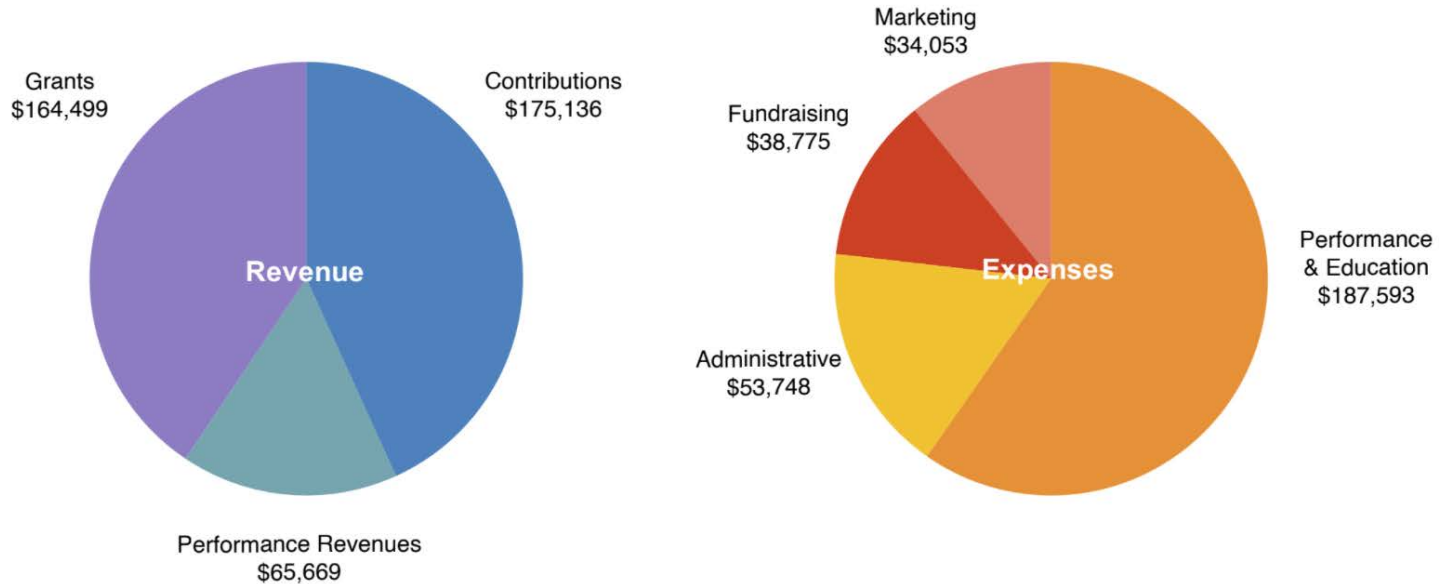
Corporate Sponsors

Absolute Music
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Montreux Golf and Country Club
Strategic HR Partners
Tanglewood Productions
TVC Accounting, LLC

Collaborative Partners

American Federation of Musicians
American Music City of Reno
City of Reno
Community Foundation of Northern Nevada
Education Alliance of Washoe County
E.L. Cord Foundation
For the Love of Jazz
Good Luck Macbeth Theatre
KUNR
Nevada State Parks
Nevada Arts Council
National Endowment for the Arts
Reno Youth Jazz Orchestra
This Is Reno / Local News & Event

2021 Financial Highlights



60% of expenses went directly toward Education and Performance

Please Note: revenue from grants reflects \$100,000 in federal relief funds due to the COVID-19 pandemic

2021 Board of Directors

Dallas Smith, President
Shari Pheasant, Vice President
Chuck Reider, Executive Director*
Scott Thunder, Treasurer
Andrew Woodard, Secretary
Bob Conrad
Mike Eardley
Scot Marshall
Linda Newberg
Vern Scarbrogh

2021 Staff

Chuck Reider, Executive / Music Director*
chuck.reider@renojazzorchestra.org

John Bennum, Assistant Executive Director*
john.bennum@renojazzorchestra.org

Lee Koch, Marketing / Development Director
lee.koch@renojazzorchestra.org

Jennifer Mannix, Special Events Director / Development
jennifer@renojazzorchestra.org

Danne Polk, Webmaster
danne.polk@renojazzorchestra.org

Nichole Heglund, Education Director
nichole.heglund@renojazzorchestra.org

*Effective October 1, 2021, Chuck Reider transitioned to the role of Board President, and John Bennum was named Executive Director.



**COMMUNITY
FOUNDATION**
of Northern Nevada

Awarded to the RJO Board of
Trustees for Generous Leadership
and Exemplary Commitment to 100%
monetary support in 2021.

Contact Us

[RenoJazzOrchestra.org](https://renojazzorchestra.org)

775.372.6160

support@renojazzorchestra.org

124 West Taylor Street
Reno, Nevada 89509

Like us. Follow us. Share your love of Jazz.

