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Jazz Ensemble to Hit New York, Boston

February 15, 2011

BLOOMINGTON, Ill. – Though recent storms have pounded the east coast, it is the Illinois Wesleyan University Jazz Ensemble that hopes to take New York and Boston by storm this spring break with the annual Jazz Ensemble Tour.

The band will travel to several sites around the two cities, playing venues from March 14-17 before returning home for a March 25 concert at IWU.



The Illinois Wesleyan University Jazz Band performs.

"It's touring that really brings musicians together," said Professor of Music Tom Streeter, who founded the Jazz Ensemble and has coordinated tours with the group for more than 30 years. "When you play in front of an audience more, you become more of a unit. When you are more of a unit, then the whole group just rises to another level."

The Jazz Ensemble takes at least one tour every year. These tours have varied from two to four concerts a day in high schools throughout the midwest, with trips to cities such as Phoenix and Chicago, and May Term travel courses to Asia and Europe.



Professor of Music Thomas Streeter

Streeter noted the tour schedule can be hectic a one for students, but one they seem to enjoy. "Usually we drive a day, set up, play a concert, get up early the next day and drive to the next gig," he said. "They love it."

This year's festival is part of the 40th anniversary of the Jazz Program at Illinois Wesleyan. Events have been ongoing through the 2010-2011 academic year to honor the program, as well as Professor Streeter, who founded the Jazz Program in 1971 and plans to retire at the end of the academic year.

Activities have been planned to help celebrate the program and Streeter's love of jazz, including the Jazz Ensemble Concert on Friday, March 25 at 7:30 p.m. in Westbrook Auditorium of Presser Hall (1210 N. Park St., Bloomington). The event is free and open to the public.

For additional information, contact the Illinois Wesleyan School of Music at (309) 556-3061.

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