



T H E
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Arts Without Borders

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NORTH COUNTY BIG BAND STUDENT TAPPED TO TOUR WITH DELFEAYO MARSALIS

ST. LOUIS, MO – Saxophone player and high school senior Donovan Lloyd’s dreams of becoming a professional jazz musician are getting closer to reality. A third-year member of The Sheldon and HEAL Center for The Arts’ North County Big Band (NCBB), based out of The Sheldon in Grand Center, Lloyd was invited by acclaimed band leader Delfeayo Marsalis to perform with his Uptown Jazz Orchestra on three dates in California this past weekend, starting in Santa Monica, and ending the mini-tour at the venerable Yoshi’s in Oakland.

The 18-year-old Lloyd earned Marsalis’ attention as a direct result of his participation in the North County Big Band, under the direction of Harvey Lockhart, at a workshop hosted by The Sheldon for big band members in October of last year. Lloyd’s playing impressed the internationally known trombonist so much, that when he had an opening, he tracked Lloyd down.

Lloyd recalls the moment he found out he was invited to join the band. “I was in class and Mr. Lockhart called me and was like, ‘check your email, check your email.’ I checked and it was Delfeayo’s tour manager asking if I would be interested in touring with them and I just couldn’t believe it. I started yelling in the hallway.”

The North County Big Band has been a part of The Sheldon’s educational programs for seven years, recently joining forces with HEAL Center for the Arts, to offer students the opportunity to reach their educational and career goals. Many NCBB alums have received full college music scholarships after completing the program.

“This experience means a lot to me because I know that it is going to be a stepping-stone to build my future,” says Lloyd. “I could form connections with other musicians on tour and get other opportunities that would put me on the map.”

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Delfeayo Marsalis is one of the top trombonists in jazz today. Known for his “technical excellence, inventive mind and frequent touches of humor...” (*Los Angeles Times*), he and his orchestra perform songs that combine spontaneous arrangements with a New Orleans-style second line groove, bringing old school jazz traditions into the modern era. As an acclaimed musician, composer and producer, Marsalis has also dedicated his career to music theatre and education. He has toured internationally with jazz legends such as Ray Charles, Art Blakey, Max Roach, Elvin Jones and Slide Hampton.

Watch: Donovan Lloyd performs at part of The Sheldon and HEAL Center for the Arts North County Big Band at The Sheldon’s Spring gallery opening in March 2022:

<https://youtu.be/h0W26isNgSc>

<https://youtu.be/H7inMvD9uEM>

The Sheldon and HEAL Center for the Arts’ North County Big Band is made possible by the generous support of the Steward Family Foundation with additional support from David and Barbara Gifford.

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