



The driving beat in jazz education, performance and outreach providing opportunities for all from the musician to the student to our communities.

# 2023 Impact Report

# A MESSAGE FROM LEADERSHIP



The ColaJazz Foundation started humbly, soulfully and with a great passion to create a thriving jazz scene in our capital city. I truly believe in our artists, teachers, young people and our growing audiences who call Columbia and the Midlands home. We have exceptional talent and potential. We are reshaping our lives for the better and changing how the outside views and thinks about Columbia, SC.

2023 was an exceptional year filled with an abundance of concerts, outreach programming, new initiatives and solidifying efforts. It was not perfect by any means, but the journey to crushing the status quo and pushing past preconceived limitations is often met with struggle. “The difficult we will do immediately; the impossible will take just a little bit longer.” It’s a slogan used by great military leaders. In this fight for abundance in the arts, we keep this close to our hearts and we make it happen.

We are able to make it happen thanks to the incredible support of our members, donors, community partners and a great team. Success comes from us working together. And together, we are achieving incredible things.

I’m very excited to share this 2023 Impact Report with you.

The ColaJazz Foundation launched new initiatives, grew our programming, supported and celebrated so many local artists, reached thousands of young people, enriched the lives of our elders, brought back a beloved jazz festival and so, so much more.

While this report is meant to present a rather clear picture of our 2023, it is impossible to capture the feeling of 400 3rd graders dancing to jazz and hearing the vital message, “It is cool to be uniquely you.” It is impossible to capture the feeling of an elder who starts to tap their toes, sits up a little straighter and smiles. It is impossible to capture the feeling of being able to give to an artist in need. It is impossible to capture the feeling of presenting the world’s most celebrated jazz artist to a sold out audience.

I hope this report does excite you. I hope you will continue to support us and allow us to do even more for you, our artists and the City of Columbia.

In the spirit of swing,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mark Rapp'.

Mark Rapp  
Founder, Executive Director





## 86+ ZIP CODES

ColaJazz audiences come from all over South Carolina and beyond. In 2023, we saw people from over 86 unique zip codes including guests from Norway, Germany, Mexico, Tennessee, North Carolina, Florida, Texas, Virginia, Georgia, New York, Pennsylvania, and Mississippi.

## 350K

ColaJazz reached over 353,464 social media users in 2023 through organic campaigns. Our paid impressions reached 757K.

## \$88K+

ColaJazz paid out nearly \$90,000 to artists in 2023. We create work for our community of musicians crafting rewarding performance and educational opportunities year round.

## 5,000+

In 2023, our outreach programs reached over 5,000 young people across the Midlands employing a dozen local jazz artists.

2023's

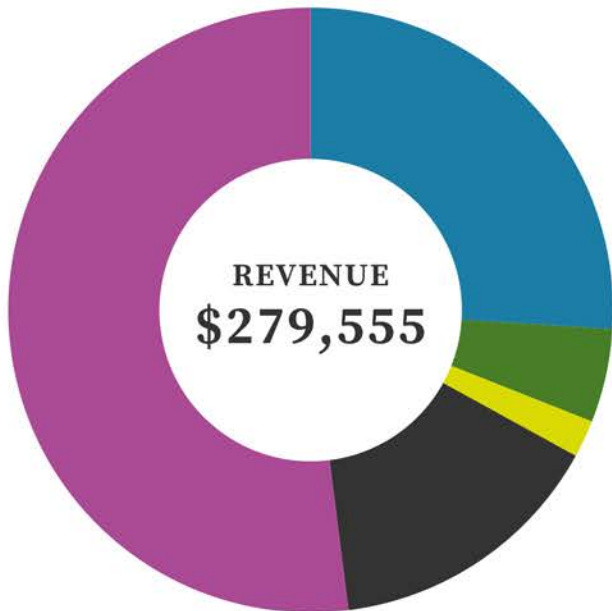
# REVENUE & EXPENSES

The ColaJazz Foundation is dedicated to growing, supporting and promoting jazz in the Midlands through events, education, recordings, resources and advocacy in order to create a thriving culturally rich community.

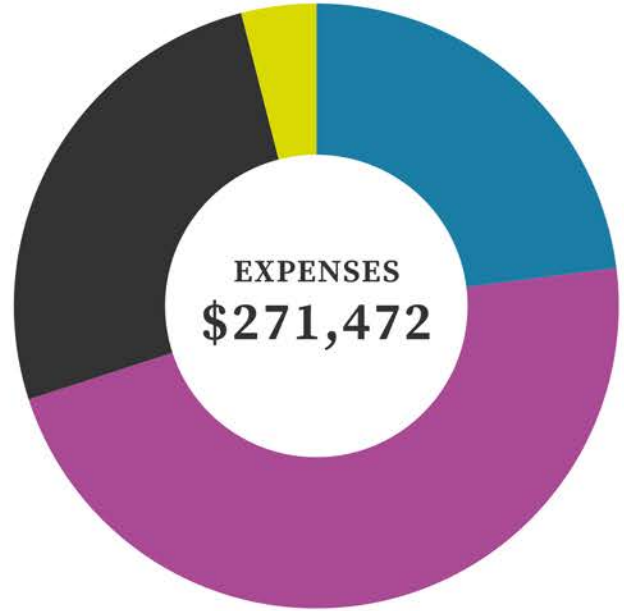
**43**  
*Public Jazz Concerts*

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**22**  
*Outreach Programs*



- MEMBERS / DONORS 26%
- SPONSORSHIPS 5%
- IN-KIND GOODS & SERVICES 2%
- GRANTS 15%
- EARNED REVENUE 52%



- EDUCATION / OUTREACH 23%
- CONCERTS & ARTIST SUPPORT 47%
- ADMINISTRATIVE / GENERAL 26%
- DEVELOPMENT 4%

ColaJazz operates on a fiscal year, January 1 to December 31.



*2023 Overview*

# WHAT'S NEW?



The ColaJazz Foundation has a physical office space with a room for concerts and clinics. Our Board of Directors had some changes this past year and we've added a few incredible talents to the team. Our statewide SC Public Radio show, *ColaJazz Presents...*, produced by Shari Hutchinson of Marian McPartland's *Piano Jazz* fame, was renewed for a 4th season. Thanks to the work of local jazz great, Sam Edwards, we launched our ColaJazz Academy including a variety of jazz classes and combos.

The ColaJazz Foundation was the recipient of a few wonderful grant awards. ColaJazz and our Executive Director earned a couple "Best of..." accolades. Our Executive Director is recognized by Columbia Business Monthly as one of the Top 50 Most Influential leaders - an incredible achievement.



NEW ORLEANS CLARINETIST  
DR. MICHAEL WHITE

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR  
MARK RAPP



## COLAJAZZ ACADEMY



ColaJazz offers a unique series of jazz classes and workshops taught by authorities of their crafts. These sessions are for anyone who enjoys learning, growing, and exploring jazz music. Classes range from theory, history, arranging, business, styles, and more!

Also under our Academy umbrella, we have two Adult Jazz Combo classes meeting weekly to learn tunes, improvisational approaches and work up a public performance opportunity at our celebrated Loft Sessions and one on International Jazz Day at The Joint at 1710 Main Street.





# COLAJAZZ SUMMER JAZZ CAMPS

Since 2016, ColaJazz offers summer intensives for all ages. From our middle and high school jazzers to our adult jazz cats, we provide exceptional jazz camp experiences.

Students - young and old(er) - participate in large band ensembles, small combos, theory, improv, elective courses (marketing, budgeting, social media, etc.), masterclasses and grand finale performances.

Additionally, students learn about communication, self-discovery, and finding value in the individual while celebrating and supporting a group.

2023 saw a largest attendance yet in our Middle & High School camp, up 30% from 2022. And we had a dedicated strings combo for the very first time. The Adult Jazz camp saw increased attendance and the campers enjoyed performing on the beautiful mezzanine level of the Koger Center for the Arts.

*“We know from proven practice that jazz is a great community connector. It brings together folks of all ethnic, socio-economic and cultural backgrounds.” – Mark Rapp, Executive Director*







# COLAJAZZ OUTREACH

From performing arts centers to small classrooms and extended care facilities, Colajazz is out there!

Bringing jazz music to young people who have never seen a jazz band or have heard of Louis Armstrong or what “improvise” means is one of our greatest passions. Bringing a music concert to extended care patients is powerful beyond measure.

These programs also give our local musicians meaningful work and income.

Young people learn vital life skills through our programs, as well as, gaining an appreciation of America’s original art form. They learn:

- Creative expression (thinking outside the box, being courageous)
- Role of instruments (working well with others, social skills)
- Soloing and “Trading 4’s” (conflict & resolution, effective communication)
- Jazz history (understanding of the world around them)

In 2023, we presented 22 outreach programs reaching well over 5,000 young people across the Midlands and employed a dozen local jazz artists.







# COLAJAZZ CONCERTS

ColaJazz offers world-class jazz concerts throughout the ENTIRE year. We presented 43 public concerts in 2023, most of them giving our local artists incredible performance opportunities.

2023 highlights include: Lincoln Center Jazz Orchestra featuring Wynton Marsalis, Live in the Lobby with top New Orleans artists, intimate Loft Sessions and the Main Street Jazz Fest!



Notable artists include: Wynton Marsalis, Houston Person, Fred Wesley, Wycliffe Gordon, Don Vappie, Dr. Michael White, Jeremy Davenport, Wess Anderson, Charlton Singleton, Dr. Mitch Butler et al.







# COLAJAZZ ON-AIR



A collaboration between South Carolina Public Radio and The ColaJazz Foundation, *ColaJazz Presents...* is a special limited series featuring performances from a diverse group of South Carolina's top jazz musicians, plus interviews offering intimate perspectives into their lives, communities, and passion for music. *ColaJazz Presents...* entering its 4th season, is produced by Shari Hutchinson, former producer of Marian McPartland's *Piano Jazz*.

*Rapp on Jazz* highlights the Palmetto State's connection to the history of jazz music and the current jazz scene. These 60-second segments cover everything from famous South Carolinians like Dizzy Gillespie and Eartha Kitt to the "Big Apple" dance craze of the 1930s to the best clubs to experience jazz in the state.

a production of public radio  
**COLAJAZZ**  
PRESENTS

**RAPP**  
ON JAZZ



# THANK YOU.

Thank you to over 500 donors and members in 2023 who empowered the ColaJazz Foundation to do great work in transforming our lives! Your dedication to jazz education, outreach, concerts, and artist support makes an impact year round.

# THANK YOU SPONSORS.

Businesses supporting jazz aren't just sponsors; they're the vanguards of a city's cultural richness, showcasing a forward-thinking ethos that recognizes the profound impact of arts on our lives and the vibrant tapestry it weaves into the community.





# JAZZ MORE.

To support a full creative life for all, the ColaJazz Foundation commits to championing policies and practices of cultural equity that empower a just, inclusive, equitable community. In 2021, the ColaJazz Foundation was the recipient of South Carolina's most prestigious award for our service in the arts! The Governor's Awards for the Arts is the highest honor the state gives to recognize outstanding achievement and contributions to the arts in South Carolina.







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If you would like more information about the ColaJazz Foundation and our programs, please visit ColaJazz.com or email us: contact@colajazz.com