



**Charleston County School of  
the Arts**

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## Media Release

### School of the Arts Musician Makes History with Honor

**North Charleston, SC** – There are plenty of scholars achieving greatness in the arts at Charleston County School of the Arts (SOA). One of them, Jonah Paquette, achieved greatness on the national stage. The senior musician was selected to perform in the prestigious Jazz Band of America during last month's Music for All Festival in Indianapolis, IN. This is the second year in a row he received this honor, making him the first South Carolina resident to be chosen twice for the national ensemble.

"The festival was, by far, one of the best experiences that I have ever had," exclaimed Paquette. "Everyone was a great musician who had [amazing] sick improv skills. An event like this is truly special because a unique camaraderie is formed between the students who come from all over the U.S., yet all share a passion for jazz music."

The Jazz Band of America performed in concert March 10, 2017, at Butler University. Paquette, who plays the trombone, was a featured soloist. The 20 students (representing 18 high schools from 10 states) participated in the ensemble. They started practicing together two days before the event; it was part of the three-day Music for All National Festival.

"The hours we spent jamming together were amazing," added Paquette. "As graduation draws near, I hope that the skills I learned in Indianapolis stay with me as I continue to play jazz in college and beyond. Being a part of the Jazz Band of America two years in a row has been two of the greatest experiences of my life."

Paquette has been at SOA since sixth grade, and was selected for the All-Region Band in his seventh and eighth grade years. As he continued to work with his mentor, Ken Foburg (a founding member of the Charleston Jazz Orchestra), he experienced more success during his high school years. Paquette made the All-State Clinic Band in 2015. He then was selected to the All-State Jazz Band in 2016 and 2017; he received First Chair Trombone (best-in-state honors) both years.

"Jonah has been one of the hardest working students in the SOA Jazz Ensemble. His discipline and work ethic are second to none," explained Basil Kerr, the school's band director. "Jonah loves playing his instrument. He has studied the jazz masters of the trombone, and his knowledge of styles and technique rival many college music majors."

Jazz Band of America members are selected by recorded audition and evaluated by leading music educators.

"To be selected from among their peers for membership in this national ensemble is a great achievement and honor," said Eric Martin, Music for All President and CEO. "The 2017 Jazz Band of America members are ambassadors of America's music programs, as well as their states, schools, and communities."

Paquette will attend the University of South Carolina in the fall, and will major in International Business.

For more information about this accomplishment, contact Basil Kerr at (843) 529-4990.

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#### **About the Charleston County School District**

Charleston County School District (CCSD) is the second largest school system in South Carolina representing a unique blend of urban, suburban, and rural schools that span 1,000 square miles along the coast. CCSD serves more than 50,000 students in 86 schools and several specialized programs. With approximately 6,100 employees district-wide, CCSD is the fourth largest employer in the region.

CCSD offers a diverse, expanding portfolio of options and specialized programs, delivered through neighborhood, charter, magnet, IB (international baccalaureate), and Montessori schools, and is divided into three Learning Communities led by associate superintendents. Options include specialized programs in science, engineering and mathematics; liberal arts; music and other creative and performing arts; career and technical preparation programs; and military and other public service enterprises.

#### **About Music for All**

Since 1975, Music for All, through its Bands of America and Orchestra America programs, has been a destination and set the standard for scholastic music ensemble performance and music education advocacy. As a 501(c)(3) nonprofit educational organization, Music for All's mission is to create, provide and expand positively life-changing experiences through music for all. Music for All's vision is to be a catalyst to ensure that every child in America has access and opportunity for active music-making in their scholastic environment.

Music for All's programs include 30+ annual events, including the Bands of America Grand National Championships and Regional Championships for marching band, the Music for All Summer Symposium camp for students and teachers, the Music for All National Festival and Affiliate Regional Music Festivals for concert bands, orchestra, jazz and percussion ensembles and national honor bands and orchestras.