



KANSAS CITY AREA YOUTH JAZZ

MEET THE 2026 FELLOWSHIP



CALENDAR QR CODE

**TIME COMMITMENT
(YOUTH JAZZ SEASON)**

**90-minute Sessions
(15 sessions)**

- April (3 sessions)
- May (5 sessions)
- June (4 sessions)
- July (3 sessions)



**The 2026 FELLOWS album recording sessions
are: JULY 26**

OTHER SEASON CALENDAR NOTES:

**No sessions on Easter Sunday or the Fourth of
July weekend.**

**Paid gigs, festivals gigs, and other community
concerts are as scheduled during the season.**

2026 FELLOWS

THE ALAADEEN ENSEMBLE

TRUMPET

CHRISTIAN ADAMS

UNIVERSITY OF KANSAS

ALTO SAXOPHONE

FINN HELMER

BLUE SPRINGS HIGH SCHOOL

TENOR SAXOPHONE

XAVIER EVANS

UNIVERSITY OF KANSAS

TROMBONE

BRUCE BUSTAMANTE

SHAWNEE MISSION NORTHWEST HIGH SCHOOL

PIANO + KEYBOARD

ISAAC FAUST

STALEY HIGH SCHOOL

VOICE + ELECTRIC BASS

AMBER QUINT

SHAWNEE MISSION NORTHWEST HIGH SCHOOL

DRUM SET

CARLOS OLIVAS

MIDAMERICA NAZARENE UNIVERSITY

COMPOSITIONS + ARRANGEMENTS

CHRISTOPHER BURNETT

ENSEMBLE CLINICIAN



2026 FELLOWS

THE BILL CRAIN ENSEMBLE

TRUMPET

ANNIKA WINTER

WASHBURN RURAL HIGH SCHOOL

ALTO SAXOPHONE

BRAYDEN EVANS

UNIVERSITY OF KANSAS

TENOR SAXOPHONE

OWEN GRAY

UNIVERSITY OF KANSAS

TROMBONE

EILI RASMUSSEN

SHAWNEE MISSION SOUTH

ACOUSTIC + ELECTRIC BASS

PAXTON LEARNED

UNIVERSITY OF KANSAS

PERCUSSION

CARLOS OLIVAS

MIDAMERICA NAZARENE

NORD B3

ERIC KAPLAN

GUEST CLINICIAN

DRUM SET

HOUSTON SMITH

ENSEMBLE CLINICIAN



2026 FELLOWS

THE WATSON ENSEMBLE



TRUMPET

JACKSON MALONE

UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI-
KANSAS CITY

ALTO SAXOPHONE

KENYI YOYO

STALEY HIGH SCHOOL

TROMBONE

JOSEPH STUDNICKA

OLATHE NORTHWEST
HIGH SCHOOL

GITAR

GEORGE HAGAN

EUDORA HIGH SCHOOL

ACOUSTIC + ELECTRIC BASS

ETHAN STEINER

BLUE VALLEY SOUTHWEST
HIGH SCHOOL

PERCUSSION

CARLOS OLIVAS

MIDAMERICA NAZARENE

DRUM SET

NICK PEDIGO

ENSEMBLE CLINICIAN

PIANO + KEYBOARD +

VIBRAPHONE

GREG CARROLL

ENSEMBLE CLINICIAN



A close-up photograph of an elderly man with white hair and glasses, smiling and resting his chin on his hand. He is wearing a dark suit jacket over a white shirt. His hand is resting on a piano keyboard.

2026 FELLOWS

THE LEON A. BRADY VOCAL ENSEMBLE

VOCALIST AUDITIONS ARE IN
MAY AND THESE FELLOWS WILL
BE ANNOUNCE AT THAT TIME.

GUITAR + VOICE

[OSKAR RYAN-GARRARD](#)

PASEO ACADEMY OF FINE AND
PERFORMING ARTS

DRUM SET

[MAURICE BUTLER](#)

GUEST CLINICIAN

PIANO + ARRANGEMENTS

[REV WM THORNTON](#)

ENSEMBLE CLINICIAN



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Kansas City Area Youth Jazz Announces 2026 Fellowship Season and New Residency at Kansas City Kansas Community College (KCKCC)

KANSAS CITY – February 16, 2026 – Kansas City Area Youth Jazz (Youth Jazz) is proud to announce the launch of its 8th season this April, marking a significant milestone in the organization's mission to mentor the next generation of jazz talent.

Program Evolution and New Residency

Originally envisioned in 2012 during consultations with legendary educator Leon Brady, Youth Jazz officially launched its business plan in 2018. After seven successful years hosted at BRC Audio Productions—under the guidance of founders Bill and William Crain—the program has transitioned its primary operations to Kansas City Kansas Community College (KCKCC). This move provides student fellows with enhanced institutional resources, rehearsal spaces, and performance facilities.

The 2026 Fellowship Highlights

- * Professional Recording: The 2026 season will culminate in July with the recording of the program's 8th commercial album, titled "2026 FELLOWS."
- * Elite Studio Setting: Recording sessions will take place at Allegro Recording studio in midtown Kansas City.
- * Global Discography: The upcoming release will join a professional catalog of seven albums distributed worldwide via the Artists Recording Collective (ARC) record label.
- * Expert Mentorship: Fellows will work directly with a premier team of professional teaching artists and community partners.

Organizational Impact

"Our move to KCKCC builds upon the incredible foundation laid at BRC Audio Productions," said founders Christopher Burnett and Terri Anderson Burnett. "We are grateful for the ongoing community support that allows us to provide a premier, professional environment for these young musicians to flourish."

Kansas City Area Youth Jazz Inc. is an IRS-determined 501(c)(3) tax-exempt nonprofit and public charity. In addition to the Fellowship, the organization manages Jazz Artistry Now (digital magazine) and the annual Bird Boot Camp celebrating Charlie Parker.

Contact and Involvement

Prospective students, donors, and community partners are encouraged to visit the official website to explore involvement opportunities.

- * Website: <https://YouthJazz.us>
- * Phone: (913) 250-5141
- * Media Contact: Christopher Burnett, Founder

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