



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Press Release**

**May 3, 2022**

***The Jazz Arts Group thanks Grange Insurance for long-term partnership and recognizes Kelly Shellhammer as the Ray Eubanks Distinguished Service Award recipient as they gear up for a historic season.***

COLUMBUS, OH, MAY 3, 2022 - The Jazz Arts Group (JAG) announces a special concert, "Byron, Bobby, and the JAG All-Stars", held on Friday May 20, 2022, at 7:30 p.m. at the Lincoln Theatre, to commemorate 49 years as they head towards a historic 50th season.

The Jazz Arts Group invites you to join them for an evening of music featuring the Jazz Arts Group Artistic Director Byron Stripling, Columbus favorite Bobby Floyd on piano, and a host of musicians that JAG is inviting back to the stage on May 20th in the historic Lincoln Theatre. At this concert, JAG will be recognizing a significant anniversary in their long-term partnership with Grange Insurance, reaching a memorable 40 years of continuous support, along with honoring the 2022 Ray Eubanks Award recipient, Ms. Kelly Shellhammer.

This coming season marks the 50th year from the founding of the Jazz Arts Group in 1973 by Mr. Ray Eubanks and to help kick off this momentous achievement, JAG would like to invite the community and its supporters to reflect on what the previous 49 years have brought to the Columbus area. Since its beginning, the Jazz Arts Group has been focused on bringing exceptional performances and providing jazz education to the community. They are looking forward to this historic season to not only reflect, but also celebrate the individuals, partners, sponsors, and musicians that have helped them achieve 50 years of music.

The Jazz Arts Group would like to recognize Grange Insurance for 40 years of their support and celebrate with them this important accomplishment. Grange Insurance and their continuous contribution to the Jazz Arts Group's mission and programs has paved the way for consistent education and performance opportunities throughout Columbus. To honor 40 years of continuous partnership, the Jazz Arts Group is giving special recognition to Grange Insurance to thank them for their support in creating opportunities for music and education throughout Central Ohio.

"Grange Insurance is proud of the many decades of partnership and support for the Columbus Jazz Arts Group. Their music inspires hope, provides food for the soul, and nourishment for our communities", said Grange Insurance President and CEO John Ammendola. "Grange is committed to providing support in building thriving and vibrant communities, and in many ways,

so do the arts. I applaud the Jazz Arts Group for playing a central role in creating rich social and cultural experiences throughout central Ohio and beyond. Their music is the common bond that connects cultures and neighborhoods, touching and engaging every one of us. It is truly an honor to accept this recognition on behalf of Grange and our associates."

The Jazz Arts Group is also honoring Ms. Kelly Shellhammer, who has been named the 2022 Ray Eubanks Distinguished Service Award recipient. Ms. Shellhammer retired in 2022 after 31 years as the Jazz Band Director at the Gahanna Jefferson Public School District. This award recognizes outstanding contributions to the Columbus community through jazz, and the Jazz Arts Group is honored to acknowledge Kelly for her outstanding leadership, passion for educating, and exemplary service to jazz within the Columbus community. "It was a great surprise to receive word that I was being honored with an award named for Ray Eubanks," stated Ms. Shellhammer. "Growing up here in Columbus with Al Berry as my band director and Wes Orr as my trumpet teacher, I was exposed to the Jazz Arts Group as a teenager. I fell in love with the music and the group. I have great respect for the work Ray has done in this community and am humbled to receive this award that bears his name. Not to mention joining an elite group of other award recipients such as Mark Donovan and Wes Orr." Kelly continues saying, "JAG not only influenced my life but was also a fantastic partner in my teaching career, affording my students many tremendous opportunities for which I am eternally grateful."

The Jazz Arts Group invites the entire Columbus community to join them in recognizing Grange Insurance and Ms. Kelly Shellhammer for their tremendous impact on the mission of JAG and the music community of Central Ohio. The Jazz Arts Group is America's premier not-for-profit arts organization dedicated to producing, performing and promoting jazz. Their mission is to advance and celebrate the art of jazz through performance and education and they hope for all to join them in this historic celebration of jazz in Columbus.

Tickets are now available with CBUSArts at <https://my.cbusarts.com/3769> or by calling 614-469-0939.

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