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## NEWS RELEASE

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### LEON HIGH JAZZ BAND SELECTED FOR NATIONAL COMPETITION

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February 1, 2012 (Tallahassee, Fla.)—Leon High School’s jazz band has been selected to participate in the seventh annual *Swing Central Jazz* High School Jazz Band Competition & Workshop in Savannah, Georgia, from March 28 to 30. The Savannah Music Festival, which hosts the event, chose only 12 bands to participate, including groups from as far away as California, Illinois, and Texas. “We sent in our audition recording in November, after a lot of intense rehearsals on the two required tunes,” said David Thornton, Leon’s director of bands. “I’m thrilled that our efforts have paid off. To be one of 12 bands chosen from across the country is fantastic. This is a great opportunity for our students to work with some of the best jazz musicians in the world!”

The Leon High students will work with jazz clinicians, perform in showcases on Savannah’s River Street, play in competition rounds, and attend a variety of performances during their stay. Trombonist Jonah Goldstein-Greenwood said that the band’s 21 members, many of whom are seniors, are looking forward to participating in their first out-of-town competition since 2009, during Thornton’s first year at Leon. At that time, the Florida State University graduate had restarted the school’s jazz program after it had been dormant for several years.

The trip will be expensive, so band members are working on ways to offset some of the costs. “To make the trip affordable for all the students, we need to raise about \$9,000,” said Terri Repasky, mother of saxophonist Tanner Repasky. “We hope that the community will help us get this great group to Savannah.”

The band will present a benefit concert on February 19 at the American Legion Hall at Lake Ella from 5 to 7 p.m. Admission is free, and donations will be accepted. “The Tallahassee community is wonderfully supportive of the arts. I think that if folks come out to hear the band play, they will be surprised that they are high school students. We

have some very talented musicians,” said Thornton. The group also invites local businesses to help sponsor the trip.

Pianist and composer Marcus Roberts leads a group of 19 esteemed musicians/educators who will work with the bands in Savannah. Each band will also receive a visit from a *Swing Central* clinician to help them prepare for the event. Leon Anderson, director of jazz studies at FSU, is the clinician for the Leon High jazz band and is scheduled to meet with the group on Friday, February 24.

On March 29, the bands will perform at Rousakis Plaza on River Street. On March 30, select combos will perform on Reynolds Square. Competition rounds will take place on March 30 at the Lucas Theatre for the Arts and will be webcasted. Each band plays three selections: “Grease Bucket,” by Wycliffe Gordon, “Sweet Georgia Brown,” arranged by Sammy Nestico for the Count Basie Orchestra, and “Conservation,” by Bobby Watson.

For more information about the Leon High School jazz band, contact David Thornton at 850-617-5719 or [thorntond@leonschools.net](mailto:thorntond@leonschools.net).

For more information about the Savannah Music Festival, visit [www.savannahmusicfestival.org](http://www.savannahmusicfestival.org) or contact Ryan McMaken at 912.234.3378, x. 104, or [ryan@savannahmusicfestival.org](mailto:ryan@savannahmusicfestival.org).