

NBHS Whaler Jazz Band Performs At Local Jazz Festival

New Bedford High School's Whaler Jazz Band performed at Berklee College of Music's High School Jazz Festival on Saturday, February 6, with NBHS students bringing two awards back to New Bedford.

The full jazz band received an award for participating in 10 Berklee High School Jazz Festivals. The band scored 243 out of 300 possible points for their efforts on Saturday.

Senior pianist Keegan Marshall-House won the Judges' Choice Award for excellence in the performance.

"It was an honor to receive the award," said Keegan. "I had a very good day, and everything about it was a fun and worthwhile experience."

This weekend, the New Bedford High School Jazz Band made its return to Berklee College of Music's High School Jazz Festival. The festival gave our students an opportunity to represent Whaler Pride in one of the great institutions of jazz. Along with performing, students were able to listen to performances from their peers around the region and interact with leaders of the jazz community.

Chelsea Spitz, a junior mellophonist, said, "We got to hear how other bands play and mentally note how we can improve as individuals as well as an ensemble."

"I'm really proud of the students' efforts and accomplishments this year," said Jazz Band Director Tim Mason. "We've been pushing them really hard, and the students are rising to every challenge. We're looking to the future now, and preparing for

more concerts and competitions. In the end, it's not about the scores but about being a part of the history of jazz and learning more about and really embracing the style of jazz music."

"Our students worked hard, and that was reflected in their accomplishments this weekend just as it is year-round," said Headmaster Bernadette Coelho. "As always, our students showed what Whaler Pride looks like, and that we're dedicated to our strong program of music, visual and performing arts at NBHS."

The Berklee High School Jazz Festival has been running for 48 years, with over 120 bands performing this year from places as far away as Puerto Rico and Denmark. It is held annually, usually in February, and is free and open to the public.

The New Bedford High School Whaler Jazz Band has upcoming performances in March at the NBHS Jazz and Show Choir Festival, and May at the Music in the Parks Festival in Agawam, MA, the NBHS Spring Concert, and the Rotch-Jones-Duff House Jazz in the Gardens Concert.