



News Release

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WESTERN HOSTS BIG BAND CONCERT NOV. 9

St. Joseph, Mo. —Nov. 1, 2006—The music department of Missouri Western State University will host the Jim Widner Big Band in concert at 7:30 pm. Nov. 9 in the Thompson E. Potter Hall Theater. Tickets for the concert are \$10. You may call at 816-271-4430 to reserve your tickets, and they may be picked up at the window that evening. Tickets may be also purchased at the door, but seating is limited.

Area directors and students will have the opportunity to attend master classes and clinics at 9:30 a.m. Nov. 10. Band members will present clinics at no charge, and they are open to the community. Please call ahead at 816- 271-4430 if you plan to attend.

A graduate of the University of Missouri, Widner holds a master of arts degree from Memphis State University and has done postgraduate work at the University of North Texas. He is an alumnus of the Stan Kenton, Woody Herman, and Glenn Miller big bands.

He has performed at the world famous Lionel Hampton and Montreaux Jazz Festivals. His performance background includes concert dates with Clark Terry, Buddy DeFranco, Mulgrew Miller, Louis Bellson, Randy Brecker, Bill Watrous, Marilyn Maye, and an appearance before former President Bill Clinton. Widner also serves as guest conductor for numerous All-State Jazz Bands, and his band performs all over the United States.

In 1999, students at the University of Missouri-Columbia renamed the music wing of the fine arts residential college, “Widner House,” in his honor. In April 2006 Widner was inducted into The Statesmen of Jazz.

Currently he is artist in residence/director of jazz studies at the University of Missouri - St. Louis and is a Yamaha performing artist. His jazz camps, now in their 20th

year, are spearheaded by members of the his band, which records on the Chase Music Group Label. Their critically acclaimed CDs include “Yesterdays and Today,” “Body and Soul,” “Live,” and “Flying High.” Their newest CD, “OUT OF THIS WORLD,” will be released in the spring of 2007.

The concert will also feature guest vocalist Steve Lippia. According to Bob Long, director of jazz studies at Western, Lippia has become one of the most prominent, in-demand vocalists and has quickly established his place among the finest interpreters of “standards” and traditional pop music in the nation. His youthful, energetic talent and powerful show creates a perfect blend of “classic” with “today.” His show introduces a new generation to this timeless music, while appealing to longtime listeners. It is immediately apparent that Lippia’s sound is reminiscent of a younger Frank Sinatra, with a hint of Harry Connick, Jr. and Bobby Darin.

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Missouri Western State University is a four-year public institution providing a blend of traditional liberal arts and professional degree programs. The university offers student-centered, high quality instruction that focuses on experience-based learning, community service, and state-of-the-art technology. Western is located in St. Joseph, Mo. and is committed to the educational, economic, cultural and social development of the region it serves.