



*The Amherst Jazz Orchestra plays at the Holyoke Community College Jazz Festival in 2019, the last time the event was held before being canceled the past two years. (SUBMITTED / HCC)*

## HCC Jazz Fest returns with one-night concert

HOLYOKE — After being canceled the past two years, the annual Holyoke Community College Jazz Festival will return this Friday with a big band concert featuring the Amherst Jazz Orchestra along with members of the HCC jazz faculty.

The concert will begin at 7:30 p.m. on March 11 in HCC's Leslie Phillips Theater in the Fine and Performing Arts building on the main HCC campus, 303 Homestead Ave., Holyoke.

The HCC Jazz Festival was last held in March 2019 with Grammy Award-winning saxophonist Paul Winter as the guest artist for the two-day event. The 2020 and 2021

events were canceled because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Amherst Jazz Orchestra, led by trombonist David Sporny, has been a mainstay of every HCC Jazz Festival since the first in 1998. Traditionally, the festival opens with the concert on Friday night with a special guest artist playing with the orchestra, followed by jazz workshops with area high school musicians and a closing concert on Saturday afternoon.

This year's festival will be a one-day event with the Amherst Jazz Orchestra as the headliner and spotlighting members of the HCC jazz faculty: Ted Levine (saxophone), Geoff

Cunningham (trumpet), Pete Grimaldi (trumpet) and Robert Ferrier (guitar).

"It's been a long two years, and while we won't be having our usual guest artist, student performances and clinics, we will be having a big band concert with the Amherst Jazz Orchestra that will feature some of our HCC faculty," said Ferrier, the jazz festival co-founder and organizer. "It'll be great to be back on stage again, even if it's only for one night. Hopefully we'll be back to our traditional two-day event next year."

The concert is free for HCC students, faculty and staff, and \$10 for the general public. For more information, call 413-552-2485.