Boeing, Bank One, Kraft Foods and The Chicago Community Trust Join Forces to Advance Chicago Jazz; Concert Series Planned

The Boeing Company [NYSE: BA], Bank One, Kraft Foods and The Chicago Community Trust have formed an informal partnership to broaden participation in Chicago's jazz music scene and increase awareness of the accomplished musicians and exciting jazz venues in Chicago.

In forming the collaboration, the members have agreed to coordinate their existing efforts for greater impact where possible, while partnering to create other opportunities for people to learn about and enjoy Chicago jazz.

Research from the National Endowment for the Arts puts attendance at various festivals, venues and other jazz-related events in Chicago at a conservative one million. However, the local connection among jazz fans in Chicago to Chicago-generated jazz music and musicians is not as strong as it could be, according to the group.

"Chicago may have a large number of jazz fans," said Anne Roosevelt, director of community relations activities for Boeing World Headquarters, "but they aren't all necessarily fans of Chicago jazz. In fact, not many Chicagoans know that the city has a rich and dynamic jazz culture boasting a cadre of world-class musicians, not to mention important ties to jazz legends as important as Louis Armstrong, Duke Ellington and Nat King Cole."

The partnership members believe that a main reason Chicagoans aren't more aware of the area's jazz scene is lack of significant philanthropic support.

"Jazz is a unique and important local asset that is highly developed artistically but has been overlooked for the most part by the funding community," said Roosevelt. "We are confident that this effort will help change that."

Membership in the partnership is not limited or contractual. "On the contrary, those wishing to join our group may enter (and exit) as it fits their needs," said Kassie Davis, senior program officer with The Chicago Community Trust. "We hope this effort will encourage corporations, foundations and individuals to increase their philanthropic support of jazz to build audiences for local musicians and increase the capacity of jazz organizations to grow overall."

While funding by large corporations and foundations has been limited, Chicago jazz has built a support system of small for-profit and nonprofit organizations that haven't traditionally worked together in the past.

"The strategy of the partnership is to coordinate and develop these existing organizations and their activities in a way that will increase their benefit to the community," said Warren Chapman, president of the Bank One Foundation.

"Our intent is to enhance, not reinvent," said Amina Dickerson, Kraft Foods' senior director of global community involvement. "Our hope is that better coordination and increased, more focused activity will allow the Chicago jazz community to market the music in innovative ways to develop new audiences, encourage up-and-coming talent, and ultimately feed longer-term and more sustainable growth."

To kick off the effort, the partnership will sponsor a series of free jazz concerts this summer in Millennium Park's Jay Pritzker Pavilion, featuring Kurt Elling, Jon Faddis and the Chicago Jazz Ensemble, Mambo 911, and the Chicago Jazz Philharmonic, among other world-renowned Chicago jazz artists.

The summer series and the broader effort will be supported by "Jazz in Chicago," a free booklet produced by the Jazz Institute of Chicago geared toward people who like jazz but are not yet familiar with the quality and variety offered by local jazz performers and venues.

The guide will invite more active participation in the local jazz scene by identifying multiple opportunities to enjoy the local styles of the music through live performances, educational programs or via recorded music.

The partnership members are no strangers to jazz. Boeing and Bank One were co-sponsors of a concert by jazz artist Ravi Coltrane last August in Millennium Park. Boeing also sponsored the premier of Chicago trumpeter Orbert Davis Chicago Jazz Philharmonic at the 2004 Chicago Jazz Festival, while Bank One sponsored the Chicago Symphony Orchestra's Lincoln Center Jazz Residency, featuring Wynton Marsalis, in the 2002-03 and 2003-04 seasons.

For example, Kraft Foods is a sponsor of Hot House's Jazz Links Jam Sessions program. Kraft also has supported the Jazz Institute of Chicago's annual Crepuscule event as well as jazz performances that have been part of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra Kraft Family Matinee Series and Ravinia Festival's Kraft Kids Concerts.

In addition to supporting the jazz education programs of Ravinia and the Chicago Jazz Ensemble, the Trust also funded capacity building efforts of the Association for the Advancement of Creative Musicians and the Jazz Institute this year.

Boeing is the world's leading aerospace company and the largest manufacturer of commercial jetliners and military aircraft. Boeing employs more than 159,000 people in 48 states in the United States and 67 countries, with major operations in the Puget Sound area of Washington State, Southern California and St. Louis. Total company revenues for 2004 were $52.5 billion.

Bank One is Chicago's leading bank in serving consumers, businesses and corporations. It has more than 270 branches and 1,200 ATMs in the Chicago area. It merged with JPMorgan Chase & Co. (NYSE: JPM) in 2004 to form a leading global firm that serves customers under the Bank One, JPMorgan and Chase brands.

The firm is a leader in investment banking, financial services for consumers and businesses, financial transaction processing, asset and wealth management, and private equity. A component of the Dow Jones Industrial Average, JPMorgan Chase & Co. has its U.S. consumer and commercial banking headquarters in Chicago and its corporate headquarters in New York. For more information about the firm, visit www.jpmorganchase.com.

Kraft Foods Inc. is a global leader in branded food and beverages with a presence in more than 150 countries. The Kraft Cares global philanthropy program strives to be a catalytic force for social change in the communities where its employees live and work. In keeping with the company's corporate vision of helping people around the world eat and live better, Kraft Cares focuses primarily on helping end hunger and helping children and families improve their physical activity and awareness of nutritional practices. Last year, Kraft provided $86 million in food and financial support to thousands of nonprofit organizations nationwide. For more information, visit www.kraftfoods.com.

The Chicago Community Trust, as the region's community foundation, gives local residents an innovative way to manage their charitable giving. Celebrating its 90th anniversary in 2005, the Trust is a union of numerous bequests and contributions that form endowments totaling more than $1.2 billion. Income from these endowments supports more than $62 million annually in grants to agencies serving greater Chicago in the arts, community development, education, health, and the basic human needs of local residents. For more information, visit www.cct.org.

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