

Press Release



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Manhattan School of Music Freshman Ben Benack III to Receive 2009 Pittsburgh Jazz Society / BNY Mellon Jazz Scholarship

PITTSBURGH, July 31, 2009 — The Pittsburgh Jazz Society and BNY Mellon today announced the selection of Ben Benack III as the recipient of the 2009 Pittsburgh Jazz Society / BNY Mellon Jazz Scholarship. Benack will receive his scholarship award at 6 p.m. on Sunday, September 13, during the Pittsburgh Jazz Society's *Jazz Day in the Park* at Schenley Plaza in Oakland.

Chosen by a panel of nationally recognized jazz musicians and educators on the basis of his scholarship application and accompanying audition CD, Benack will receive a \$5,000 award from the Pittsburgh Jazz Society and BNY Mellon.

The son of Ben Jr. and Claudia Benack of Upper St. Clair, Ben Benack III will attend Manhattan School of Music as a freshman beginning in August where he will study as a Jazz Performance major. Ben is a 2009 graduate of Upper St. Clair High School where he was principal trumpet for both the jazz and symphonic bands. Additionally, Ben earned the position of top trumpet in both the PMEA District Band and the PMEA Honors Jazz Band for District 1 along with several outstanding soloist awards, one of which was a scholarship to attend Duquesne University's Summer Jazz Workshop. His performance experience includes playing with the Grammy Jazz Ensemble, the PA All-Star Jazz Band, the Pittsburgh Jazz Society Ensemble and the Monterey Jazz Festival Next Generation Jazz Orchestra. Ben started playing the trumpet and singing with his father's big band and jazz combo when he was in the second grade.

"Ben Benack III is a talented and dedicated jazz musician, we are glad to provide a helping hand so this young musician can realize his dreams," said James P. McDonald, Managing Director of Philanthropy, BNY Mellon. "Our scholarship is a collaboration with the Pittsburgh Jazz Society that has opened the door for so many young musicians and composers to continue their jazz studies."

"There was a lot of competition for this year's scholarship, however, Ben rose to the top because his talent is truly inspiring," said Tony Mowod, founder and president of the Pittsburgh Jazz Society and executive producer and jazz host of WDUQ 90.5 FM. "With support from BNY Mellon, we will continue to invest in young musicians which is an investment in the future of jazz."

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A non-profit 501(c) (3) all-volunteer organization, The Pittsburgh Jazz Society is dedicated to the promotion, preservation, and perpetuation of all jazz through education, performance, partnering and community outreach for members and the general public. Please visit www.pittsburghjazz.com to become a member or to learn more about the Pittsburgh Jazz Society.

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