

A Community Building Initiative

- Bringing Youth Together
 - Strengthening Community Bonds
 - Empowering 'At Risk' Children
 - Partnering with School Boards and Corporate Sponsors
- ...through the power and beauty of Jazz



I was impressed by the discipline, quality, and enthusiasm of all on stage.

— Annie Appleby, TDSB Superintendent



Thank a lot.

Thanks Lots! Anisha

Thanks! - Tamarra Z.

Kristina

Thanks! ALICIA J.

Victoria

Thank you Dilan
The Cool Kid
from Karnataka

Thanks! Netisah

Thanks! Brianna D.

Kaiana
Marlena
Aliyah

Stephanie
Luka

Vanessa thanks

Thanks for sharing your expertise! - Suzanne Quabr. Fleming

Joseph

It has been a privilege to be part of every day

Zelma

Lindi

Michael E.

You Rock Saksham

Thanks Anemia

[Signature]

John D's
Rebecca

Kenneth

Casey

Thank MUKUL

Love: Naomi
Akash

Ajanthan
Thank you Howard!!

Valenda
thanks!

S.B.
BEDINA
Thanks
Candice

Abdul

Zerp a.k.a Jay

Thanks From
Jason
Chinn

Thanks! Alisha

Thank you Diana
Kaleena

Wilson V
ASHLEY C.

James

Shayville

Debbie
Thanks

Lucy S. Kapda sony
Riyank M
Thank you!

Nico
Selva

Wilson V
ASHLEY C.
Dianne

MAVIS

Joshua
Thanks



Overview for Schools

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- Bringing Youth Together
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 - Partnering with School Boards and Corporate Sponsors
- ...through the power and beauty of Jazz
-

The **We Are One Jazz Project**

The **We Are One Jazz Project** was founded in 2008 by Toronto-based jazz pianist and educator Howard Rees. It provides a creative answer to the needs of Toronto communities by bringing together young 'at-risk' children and master jazz musicians in an enriched learning and performance environment.

The project works in partnership with the Toronto District School Board to organize children (grades 3-6) in 'high priority' neighbourhoods into large-scale jazz choirs, directed and mentored by master musicians. Rehearsals over a four-month period lead to a public performance at a high-profile venue.

Each year, the project touches some 4,000 students, extended family, teachers, and community members. Thousands more learn about the project through alliances with various media, including TV, radio and print coverage, and social networks.



About Howard Rees

We Are One Jazz Project founder **Howard Rees** is an internationally-known jazz pianist, educator, author and founder of Canada's oldest independent jazz school. Howard's model for empowering young Canadians through jazz is based upon his more than thirty-year association with jazz master Dr. Barry Harris.

The **We Are One Jazz Project's** Mandate

- **Create** an environment for 'at-risk' children to experience the beauty and power of jazz music through their own active participation.
- **Empower** participants by nurturing their creative energies from a fundamental place of self-awareness and self-esteem.
- **Build** community bonds by modelling the project on the rich and diverse multi-cultural fabric of Canadian society.
- **Develop** young leaders by instilling an appreciation for the arts through a sense of hard work, accomplishment, self respect, and self discovery.
- **Strengthen** neighbourhoods by supporting the creation of permanent children's choirs.
- **Expand** provincially and nationally.



The apprenticeship model—sharing knowledge vs information, is what we are offering here.

— Howard Rees

History of the **We Are One Jazz Project**

The initial **We Are One Jazz Project** in 2008 involved a group of 300 students from North Etobicoke schools. Weekly rehearsals over a four-month period were conducted by jazz musicians and students also received mentoring from visiting jazz master Dr. Barry Harris. The program culminated in January 2009 with a sold-out concert at a Toronto theatre featuring the 300-voice children's choir, a jazz big band, a string section, a teen/adult choir, and world-renowned guest soloists, including Dr. Harris and saxophonist Charles McPherson.

Building on its early success, the **We Are One Jazz Project** worked with a group of 400 inner-city students in 2010, and with 350 students from North Scarborough schools in 2011. In each successive year, the project has been enthusiastically received by students, parents, community members, media, and sponsors.

The **We Are One Jazz Project** has been featured and/or reviewed by several key Toronto media including the Toronto Star, Global TV, CTV, CityTV, JazzFM, and Classical 96.3.

About Barry Harris

New York-based Jazz Master **Dr. Barry Harris** is mentor to the **We Are One Jazz Project** and his compositions form the ensemble's repertoire. Recognized internationally as the greatest living Jazz pianist and teacher, Dr. Harris has taught, performed, and recorded with (a virtual who's who of) the greats of the jazz world. A recipient of the Lifetime Achievement Award by the Grammy Foundation, Dr. Harris continues to be jazz music's senior ambassador - travelling the globe and inspiring new generations of young musicians.

How the Children and the Schools Benefit

Each year during our initial meeting with the schools, teachers voice a similar concern - "the children's attention is best in the morning", and some teachers are reluctant to have the weekly Thursday morning rehearsals replace reading, writing and arithmetic lessons. However, after the 3rd or 4th rehearsal the feedback is always the same - *'the students return from rehearsal more energized, more motivated and with greater attention for their afternoon lessons'*.

As TDSB Superintendent Annie Appleby noted following our 2009 project: "Music helps develop creativity, concentration, memory skills, personal enjoyment and a life-long appreciation for the arts."



Preparing the children for a beautiful future, that they deserve.

- Dr. Barry Harris

The **We Are One Jazz Project's** Ongoing Plan:

The **We Are One Jazz Project** will continue its work in areas of the GTA identified by the City of Toronto and the Toronto District School Board as 'high-priority' ensuring that this unique and innovative music project reaches a maximum number of children. Priority communities for the project include:

- Flemingdon Park
- Lawrence Heights
- Regent Park
- Westminster-Branson
- Malvern



See the **We Are One Jazz Project** in Action

We invite you to watch a short documentary featuring recent rehearsal and concert highlights. Please click [here](#) to view.

Each annual project will run from October to February. During this four-month period, we will develop a children's jazz choir (grades 3-6) drawn from all interested schools across a school district. The choir will be open to all students. There are no auditions and no previous music training is required.

Weekly rehearsals (at one hosting school) are conducted by Toronto-based musicians/educators Howard Rees and Brian Katz, assisted by our professional vocal coaches and coordinating team. On several occasions throughout the project, visiting jazz master Dr. Barry Harris will conduct the rehearsals.

In addition to the children's choir, a teen/adult choir, a jazz big band, a string section and professional guest soloists all come together for a high profile, public performance at the project's conclusion. In past years, the **We Are One Jazz Project** has performed at the Royal Conservatory's Koerner Hall and the Toronto Centre for the Arts in North York.

The program includes the establishment of a permanent choir at the end of each project. This will provide continuity for students who wish to stay involved, and will also help develop community bonds across the GTA.



The music goes through my heart
and that makes me feel happy.

– Ajanthan A, 10-year-old student

The **We Are One Jazz Project**: 2012 - 2013 Schedule

October 1 – 12:	Howard Rees and Brian Katz conduct preparatory in-school workshops		
Ongoing:	Vocal Coaching Teams conduct weekly in-school workshops		
Week 1:	October 18	9:30 to 11am rehearsal	Dr. Harris' 1st visit
Week 2:	October 25	9:30 to 11am rehearsal	
Week 3:	November 1	9:30 to 11am rehearsal	
Week 4:	November 8	9:30 to 11am rehearsal	
Week 5:	November 15	9:30 to 11am rehearsal	Dr. Harris' 2nd visit
Week 6:	November 22	9:30 to 11am rehearsal	
Week 7:	November 29	9:30 to 11am rehearsal	
Week 8:	December 6	9:30 to 11am rehearsal]	
Week 9:	December 13	9:30 to 11am rehearsal	
Week 10:	December 20	9:30 to 11am rehearsal	Dr. Harris' 3rd visit
Week 11:	January 10	All-In rehearsal	
Week 12:	January 17	All-In rehearsal	
Week 13:	January 24	All-In rehearsal	
Week 14:	January 31	7 pm Concert: Toronto Centre for the Arts	



Thank you for inspiring our young people and inviting them to explore their creative energies.

- Dr. Chris Spence, TDSB Director of Education



The **We Are One** concert will be just two hours long, but the benefits to the students could be lifelong.

*- Excerpt from Transformative Jazz,
Toronto Star editorial*



“

The Choir Project has taught me that music is not just about notes (and sometimes words). It is about community, about love, about hardship, about feeling. It is a way for people to join together and express themselves. It can make people happy when they hit rock bottom; and sad when they are in paradise. This feeling of community, bringing joy to those around you as they bring joy to you, is what I had never experienced before.

– Taylor M, 17-year-old former choir participant

“

I strongly believe that every child is great at something, and I am confident that the **We Are One Jazz Project** exposed many of the children to their gift of music.

– Frank Liu, Principal, Percy Williams Jr. PS





Thank!
Lauren

dawra

THANK YOU

YAY! AUSTON!

Thanks Azem

Phoebe

THANK YOU

Fromo Sherron

Harpreet

David Perry
Eshwar
Fardousa Jones

Thankz
Rameet

Arjit
Anam
Maam

THANK YOU

Sabryna

THANKS!!

Rumit

David Perry

Nezha

Cassandra
Daniella

Thanks FROM MANUELA

Denisha

Chioma

Thanks - P

Steven

Thanks
Zamiel

Tony

Thanks Jennifer
013517

Gayatri

Thanks
Christina

Thanks
Jakob

Mishal

THANK YOU!
VISHVA

Jasmine

WE WILL NEVER FORGET THIS
- NIARA

Thank you
Puja

Rachel

Victor

Ar+L
Shabla

Eric

Thank you
Rabba

Sheneil

Melanie

Thanks
Ibrahim

Hope!!

Tempest

Christina

Murad

Haley
Shirley

abree

Alicia

Deep

Orla
Thanks you

music is
my life

Thanks
Julia

Prakruti

Janki



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