

# The Honeys Swing Band



The Honeys Swing Band is a 16-piece jazz big band with a powerful, dynamic sound. With a rich saxophone section delivering melodies that'll knock your socks off, a hearty trombone section that'll dazzle you, and a robust trumpet section that will drop your jaw, this band knows how to bring the heat! Backed by our grooving rhythm section keeping everything tight, you're in for a fun night of unforgettable live big band music! Together, The Honeys create a swinging experience that's impossible to resist. Get ready to dance, listen, and be swept away by the sound of pure jazz joy!

## Individual Bios

### **Matthew Felsen:**

Matthew Felsen is an up-and-coming trumpet player who performs regularly with several local community bands. Most notably, he took the stage at Disney Hall with the LA Winds this past June. When he's not practicing, you'll likely find him mountain biking on local trails or shooting hoops with friends. A student at Moorpark College, Matthew is currently studying business administration and balancing his academic life with a variety of creative and outdoor pursuits.

Matthew is also TVH's newest beekeeper and aspires to pursue a career in beehive removal. A passionate fan of swing music, he's especially excited to be leading a jazz

big band for the first time and looks forward to seeing the audience dancing along. “Aside from the music, the most satisfying part is looking back at the band and seeing all of your friends in it,” he says. Inspired by the timeless sound of Harry Connick Jr., Matthew is thrilled to be performing for an appreciative audience—and even more so knowing that the proceeds from the event are going to a great cause.

**Rana Banerjee:**

My name is Rana Banerjee. I’ve been playing trumpet for over 35 years across a wide range of genres. I’m thrilled to be part of this event because it brings together some of my favorite things: great musicians, jazz music, a worthy purpose, and bees. I’m blessed to be a husband and a father of three beautiful and loving kids and for my day job, I work as an engineering manager in the medical device industry.

**Jimmy:**

Jimmy has been playing guitar for 3 years and every genre of music excites him whether it’s Big Band, Jazz, Rock, Latin, and more. He likes to sing occasionally as he plays and accompany other singers. He is very excited for his first out of school big band gig at the valley hive honey competition!

**Jenna Marx:**

Jenna Marx is currently a senior at Westlake High School. She studies with award-winning musicians Brian Scanlon and Ira Nepus. She participates in programs such as the Colburn Jazz Workshop Big Band, JazzAmerica, and the LA Jazz Society’s Bill Green Mentorship Program and Young Musicians Showcase.

**Brendan McMullin:**

Brendan McMullin is an experienced music educator having taught public school music courses since 2003 and college music courses since 2008. Currently he is directing the Wind Ensemble, Jazz Ensembles, and Musical Theater Orchestra; and teaching Songwriting and brass Applied Music private lessons at Moorpark College. As a trombonist and vocalist he has shared the stage and/or recorded with artists such as

Duffy Jackson, Barry Manilow, Eric Whitacre, Barbara Streisand, and Clyde Reasinger; and has performed on stage at the Academy Awards

([https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=chG0z\\_gy-TU](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=chG0z_gy-TU)). He has earned numerous awards for his compositions including the 2014 National Band Association's Young Composers Jazz Composition Contest where his jazz big band composition, Sal y Pimienta ([https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0ek8Dpn\\_dIQ](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0ek8Dpn_dIQ)), was awarded first prize. As a result, the piece was performed at the Kennedy Center in Washington D.C. by the Airmen of Note and broadcast live on their website. Brendan's composition, Why You Gotta Be Like That (Jazz Overture for Full Orchestra) (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pXgbdm2xxUs>), was also recorded by the Kiev Philharmonic and included in the album Masterworks of the New Era, Vol. 12, which received a JPF Award Nomination under the category "Best Classical Orchestral Album." Brendan earned his Bachelor's Degree in Music Composition and California Teaching Credential from California State University, Northridge, and his Master's Degree in Music Composition from University of California, Los Angeles.

**Dave Watkins:**

Dave Watkins is the keyboard player and has been musical director for the Moorpark College theatre department for over 25 years. He is glad to be part of an event helping veterans!

**Joseph Clynick:**

Hello, my name is Joseph Clynick and I am in LA based session musician and producer. I work professionally with multi-platinum producers at a recording studio but I also love playing gigs and bettering my chops on saxophone. I am stoked to be playing with some familiar faces for such an amazing venue!

**James McDonough:**

My name is James McDonough and I have been playing saxophone for 14 years. I went to Moorpark for music where I was classically trained as well as taking private lessons outside of school for jazz saxophone. I have performed and recorded with many

different bands and producers across multiple genres of music. I come from a military family and admire the contributions and sacrifices veterans make everyday to keep our country safe which makes me glad to be participating in this event

**Manny Valachos:**

My name is Manny Vlachos. I am a professional structural engineer that has an extreme love for listening to and playing jazz music. I stopped playing trumpet when I entered UCLA in 1992 and I picked the horn back up again 3 years ago and I am passionate about developing my improvisational as well as my flexibility and Range skills on the trumpet. I especially love playing with other talented musicians and love a great audience. I am excited for this event and thank Matt Felsen and the Hive for providing this opportunity!

**Turner Perez:**

I've been playing the saxophone for 13 years. Im pursuing a degree in electrical engineering

**Eliana Rojany:**

Eliana has studied at the prestigious Colburn Jazz Institute, Stanford Jazz Institute, and earned a scholarship from the LA Jazz Society's Bill Green Mentorship Program. She competed in the Essentially Ellington Jazz Competition, where she was honored with an Outstanding Soloist Award. Eliana has had the opportunity to study under renowned jazz musicians Brian Scanlon and Victor Goines.

She's thrilled to be performing with The Honeys Swing Band and can't wait to get the crowd moving and dancing!

**Juan Perez:**

Here's my bio: For over 50 years I've played trumpet in many jazz, salsa, commercial, and cover bands. For the past 25 years I've supported my playing by working full time as a criminal defense attorney.