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Media Contact: Carolyn McClair | CMPR

carolynmcclairpr@gmail.com | 917.686.0854

**THE LOUIS ARMSTRONG EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATION
WYNTON MARSALIS, PRESIDENT RELEASES THE FOLLOWING
STATEMENT ON THE PASSING OF GEORGE T. WEIN**

New York- The Louis Armstrong Educational Foundation mourns the loss of its board member, colleague, and friend George Wein. George changed the nation and the world's concert going habits. His innovative festival format expanded the international avenues and venues for this definitive American music. The music was then (as it is now) marginalized by a lack of general cultural education, racism, and a deep-rooted American desire to embrace the lowest forms of entertainment true manifestations of Afro-American artistry. In his time, Louis Armstrong was at the center of this controversy. This foundation exists because he wished to combat ignorance and prejudice through Jazz education. George and his black American wife, Joyce, faced many trials and tribulations as a pioneering mixed-race couple in the late 50's and 60's. They were, however, deeply dedicated to one another and also business partners. George and Joyce worked as hard as they could to elevate our national life and consciousness through culture.

George's notes below says all there is to say about his significance as a musician, an entrepreneur, and deep-rooted disciple of jazz music.

"Having been born in 1925, there are not too many left from my era with whom I can share my youthful musical experiences. I was first immersed with Pops on a recording of "When the Saints go Marching In" in 1938-39. After noticing in Downbeat when Harry James, (who had just won Best in Trumpet), said that Louis Armstrong should be the winner as he 'was the greatest of all trumpeters,' it further pushed me into the world of Louis Armstrong.

"A long time ago, 1950 to be exact, I took the biggest leap of my life and opened up a club in Boston called Storyville. The only experience I had as a club owner was having played in jazz clubs on the Boston scene. All my life, I've followed where motivation took me and have had the joy of success and despair of failure. The band I opened with at Storyville was Bob Wilbur featuring Big Sid Catlett on drums. Big Sid had been Louis Armstrong's drummer for many years.

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“Louis Armstrong and the All Stars with Jack Teagarden, Earl “Fatha” Hines, Cozy Cole, Barney Bigard and Arvell Shaw were playing a concert at Symphony Hall. My instincts as a promoter took hold. I gave Big Sid the night off and told him to get those guys to come to the club as my guests when the concert was over. Not only did they come to Storyville, but they also brought their instruments and one by one they went directly to the bandstand. I had been in business for three weeks at that time. With all the musicians on the stage, Pops came in and walked right to the microphone and sang ‘Sleepy Time Down South’ and forever changed my life. The excitement and electricity created by Louis Armstrong at Storyville in Boston on a September night in 1950 made me realize what my career would be ad infinitum. ‘A life in jazz.’”

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