

2020 STEVE LOWENSTEIN AWARD PRESS RELEASE

START: Immediately

STOP: 01/27/2021

WHERE: Portland City Council

WHEN: Wednesday, 01/27/21 10:00 am

City Council Presentation of 2020 Lowenstein Trust Award

As a result of the COVID pandemic, the 2020 Lowenstein Trust Award, normally presented in December, will instead be presented at Portland City Council on January 27th, 2021 at 10:00 am

Online – [Portland City Council Live](https://www.portlandoregon.gov/28258) <https://www.portlandoregon.gov/28258>

The Lowenstein Trust is proud to present the 2020 Steve Lowenstein Award to Portland musician and advocate Jeremy Wilson for his years of tireless work in support of local musicians facing health crises and impacted by Covid-19. The Trust believes Jeremy's work embodies Steve Lowenstein's appreciation of extraordinary volunteer service to those need as well as his recognition of the arts as a celebrated part of every healthy community.

From early childhood on, Jeremy Wilson explored and developed his artistic talents as a singer-songwriter. He spent 1986-2001 touring with his bands, the Dharma Bums – who were inducted into the Oregon Music Hall of Fame in 2011 – and Pilot. On the eve of opening his own recording studio in 2007, Jeremy collapsed from a rare life-threatening heart condition. His recovery was enabled by the generosity of friends and fans who raised money to help him access medical treatment.

Through his own healthcare challenges, Jeremy experienced the precarious circumstances of too many artists: underpaid, underinsured, and often living without a safety net in the event of a medical or economic crisis. To meet a critical yet unaddressed need, Jeremy established the [Jeremy Wilson Foundation \(JWF\)](#) in 2010. For more than a decade, assisted by an active board and volunteers, Jeremy has devoted thousands of hours in support of local musicians with medical and financial hardships. JWF provides direct financial assistance to musicians, helps them navigate the complexities of the healthcare system, and assists them to access social services. To date, JWF has provided more than \$500,000 in targeted emergency assistance to over 100 local musicians and raised additional funds to help reduce and erase especially high medical bills.

In early 2020, when Covid-19 forced closure of Portland music venues, local musicians lost their livelihoods. Many musicians had no ability to pay rent, buy food and cover other daily living expenses. Hundreds called the Foundation seeking help. To address the devastating impact the pandemic has had on the local music community, JWF immediately launched an emergency effort, distributing \$56,000 in direct assistance to over 100 musicians plunged into financial distress. Compassionate and undaunted, Jeremy has continued his selfless service to the music community. Foundation volunteers fill an important gap by listening to musicians in need, providing connections to help, and offering relief through financial assistance.

The Lowenstein Trust is part of the legacy of Steve Lowenstein, an inspiring model of public service. Steve's sense of purpose, integrity, and perseverance inspired many who have worked on issues of human rights and social justice. Steve served in the Peace Corps after law school in the early 1960s. Throughout his life he was a vocal civil rights activist. Steve was also founding director of Oregon Legal Services, author of a groundbreaking history – [The Jews of Oregon 1850-1950](#) – and at the time of his death in 1990, had served for six years as Chief of Staff to former Portland City Commissioner Mike Lindberg. In his will, Steve established an annual financial award to provide recognition and assistance to individuals who have made significant ongoing personal sacrifice to help those in need. Learn more at <https://www.lowensteintrust.org/>