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Collegiate Choir to Perform at Music Conferences

January 17, 2012

Illinois Wesleyan University Collegiate Choir

BLOOMINGTON, Ill. – Under the direction of J. Scott Ferguson, professor of music and director of choral activities, the Illinois Wesleyan University Collegiate Choir will be featured at two music conferences this semester – the Illinois Music Education Conference (IMEA) in Peoria, Ill. and the American Choral Directors Association (ACDA) Regional Conference in Fort Wayne, Ind.

The IMEA Conference is a four-day event that brings over 10,000 music educators and students to Peoria each year to share literature, hold workshops and perform for each other. This year's conference will be held from Wednesday, Jan. 25 to Saturday, Jan. 28 at the Peoria Civic Center. The Collegiate Choir's concert will take place on Friday, Jan. 27 at 2:30 p.m. The performance is open to registered members of the conference.

Having performed in 2000 and 2005, this will be the Collegiate Choir's third appearance at the conference. The choir will present a variety of pieces, including works by Heinrich Schütz, Felix Mendelssohn, Rudolf Mauersberger and Ilja Zeljenka, among others. They will share a concert session with the Neuqua Valley High School Varsity Chamber Singers. After their individual programs, the two ensembles will combine to perform a final selection by Józef Świder.

The ACDA Regional Conference will take place on Friday, March 9 and will coincide with the start of the group's annual spring tour, during which the choir will perform concerts in Illinois, Indiana, Pennsylvania, Massachusetts, New York, and Ohio. The conference brings together choral directors from across the Midwest region who will listen critically to the Collegiate Choir, among other groups. The Collegiate Choir is one of approximately 20 ensembles of all ages that will perform, affirming their place among the elite choirs in the Midwest. This is the group's second appearance at an ACDA regional conference.

While Ferguson notes this is not a competition, performing for 1,000 choral conductors adds more pressure than a regular concert would. As a choir, the students must be even more demanding and disciplined, reaching for a state of perfection and presenting themselves to the best of their abilities. Ferguson notes that it is a great honor to perform at ACDA.

During the conference, the ensemble will give the world premiere of *Te Deum* by Sydney Guillaume as part of the annual IWU Choral Commission Series, the oldest of its kind in the country at the collegiate level. They will perform three other pieces by Ilja Zeljenka, Ivan Hrušovský and Andrew Rindfleisch.

In addition to these performances, the Collegiate Choir will tour Germany during May Term. The itinerary will include four days of home stays and joint performances with German university choirs.

Established in 1948, the Collegiate Choir is made up of approximately 50 student musicians representing the School of Music and other areas of the University. The ensemble is dedicated to the performance of the finest sacred and secular

choral music of the past five centuries. Students in the choir are selected by audition and maintain a rigorous rehearsal schedule in preparation for their concert tours and other engagements throughout the year.

For more information on the Collegiate Choir, visit their website at **http://www.iwu.edu/music/ensembles/choral/CoChoir/index.shtml**. For more information on the performances, contact the School of Music Office at (309) 556-3061.

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