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Musical Roots

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Musical roots

Rachel Rosellini '05 leads the next generation of singers in Palatine Children's Chorus.



Rosellini (above) returns to lead the chorus that she participated in as a high school student.

Story by SARAH (ZELLER) JULIAN '07

After participating in the Palatine Children's Chorus as a high school student, Rachel Rosellini '05 has returned to lead the organization, which is made up of 125 children ages 4 to 18. The group has six choirs, with the top two levels touring both the United States and abroad.

"It isn't often that the perfect job just falls in your lap, but that is really how it happened," says Rachel, who earned a master's degree in music education and is an elementary school music teacher in the Barrington, Ill., school district. After two years of leading the younger students in the Palatine Children's Chorus, she was recently named director. The group celebrated its 25th anniversary this year. "My goal, what I am hoping to accomplish, is to set the tone for another amazing 25 years," Rachel says.

Rachel credits Wesleyan's music professors and her classmates for helping her achieve success. "The friendships I made with my fellow music education majors have lasted through time. After college, a few of us that got jobs in the same areas started off living together and going through the pains of first-year teaching together. I know that I would not be the teacher I am today without these people in my life," she says.

Her student-teaching placement through IWU also cemented her love for teaching young children and her efforts as a Kodály educator, a teaching philosophy that focuses on early exposure to music and emphasizes that music is for everyone.

"My heart is and always has been with the youngest musicians in our education system," Rachel says. When it came time to be assigned to a cooperating teacher, she spoke with her advisor, Steven Eggleston, music professor and director/conductor for IWU's Civic Orchestra and Wind Ensemble. "I told him I thought I wanted to be placed with a Kodály teacher in the area."

Eggleston suggested the perfect match: his wife, Mary Eggleston, who is an elementary music teacher in Bloomington.

“Words fail me when I try to explain how much Mary Eggleston impacted my teaching,” says Rachel. “She unlocked the door to the secrets of breaking down music for kids.”

Rachel sees both opportunities and challenges in her new role. “I am really excited to have the opportunity to branch out of my mastered skill set. I know exactly what process to set up with the younger singers, but working to ensure the older singers have a meaningful rehearsal is pushing me out of my comfort zone,” she explains. “I am always trying to figure out the best way to help singers make connections and develop into master musicians. It makes a nice challenge and a nice change for me.”

[CLICK HERE](#) TO VISIT THE PALATINE CHILDREN'S CHORUS WEBSITE.