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Frevert Gift Enables All-Steinway School Designation

April 22, 2019

BLOOMINGTON, Ill. – Thanks to a [\\$3.5 million gift from the C.B. Frevert Family Trust](#) designated for Illinois Wesleyan University's School of Music, aging pianos will be replaced with instruments of the highest quality, and Illinois Wesleyan will become one of 153 universities in the world to earn the distinction of being an All-Steinway School.

"Through its investment in 35 new Steinway & Sons pianos, IWU will meet the requirements to earn the coveted All-Steinway School designation," said School of Music Piano Technician David Horine '71. "This investment is timely, as many of the instruments in Illinois Wesleyan's collection of pianos are between 50 and 132 years old. Although these pianos have been well maintained through a budgeted maintenance program, it is time to bring new life to faculty studios and the practice rooms of Presser Hall by replacing them with Steinway & Sons pianos."

A portion of the designated gift from the late Cyril "C.B." Frevert '61 will provide for the purchase of 35 new Steinway & Sons pianos, while a portion will fund an endowment for ongoing maintenance and repair of all pianos at the School of Music. Frevert specified that the remaining one-third of the bequest will fund endowed scholarships for School of Music students.

"Steinway is and has always been synonymous with quality," said Associate Professor of Music and Keyboard Department head Iliia Radoslavov. "Being an All-Steinway School will re-energize our recruiting efforts and provide us with the opportunity to promote what the School of Music in particular and Illinois Wesleyan in general have to offer. This investment will positively impact not only our current students but also many more for generations to come. I also am very confident that the All-Steinway School status will continue to contribute to the reputation of the IWU School of Music as a lively artistic haven that provides not only excellent education, but a focal point for the community's cultural life."

President Eric Jensen added, "C.B. Frevert's generous gift, directed toward keyboard instruments, allows us to purchase new Steinways as well as establish an endowment for the ongoing maintenance and repair of pianos in the School of Music. By becoming an All-Steinway School, we give a very clear signal to our students, faculty and staff that Illinois Wesleyan University is committed to musical excellence. We're very grateful to Mr. Frevert for making this breakthrough possible, and for the scholarship support that his gift also provides."

According to Steinway & Sons, [All-Steinway Schools](#) demonstrate a full commitment to excellence by providing their students and faculties with the best instruments possible for the study of music. Additionally, all functioning pianos that were generously donated to the School of Music will remain part of Illinois Wesleyan's fleet.

"Steinway congratulates Illinois Wesleyan University on this monumental step toward becoming an All-Steinway School," said Steinway & Sons President Ron Losby. "This generous gift from the C.B. Frevert Family Trust will help to create a superior environment for the study of music and will help to enrich the lives of piano students — and everyone their music touches — for many years to come. This is truly a great day for music at IWU."

"The generous Frevert trust has allowed us to prioritize student recruitment and retention," said Interim Director of the School of Music Victoria Folse '86. "The investment to become an All-Steinway School is consistent with our donor's intent and will provide an enhanced student, faculty and staff experience. We are excited to showcase our distinction for music excellence in the community."

Star Commanday '21, who is pursuing a Bachelor of Music in Piano Performance at Illinois Wesleyan, said she is excited to earn a degree from an All-Steinway School.

"Pianists are always at the mercy of the instrument they are provided, but a high quality instrument can inspire an equally fine performance," Commanday said. "Being an All-Steinway School will be a huge draw to prospective piano majors and a great benefit to current students."

C.B. Frevert, who made the All-Steinway School designation possible, lived on his family farm in rural Stanford, Illinois, for much of his life. He later moved to Knoxville, Tennessee, and wintered in Florida. After earning a bachelor's degree from Illinois Wesleyan in 1961, he went on to earn a master's degree from Northwestern University. He taught in Earlville, Illinois, and played the organ for many years at churches in the Bloomington-Normal area.



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