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## IWU Collegiate Choir's Commissioned Series Names Sylvia Monti Anderson Commissioned Choral Work Fund Honoring Delta Omicron

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### ***IWU Collegiate Choir's Commissioned Series Named Sylvia Monti Anderson Commissioned Choral Work Fund Honoring Delta Omicron***

BLOOMINGTON, Ill. - Since 1952, the Illinois Wesleyan Collegiate Choir has annually commissioned a choral work from the country's leading contemporary composers, making it the oldest choral commission series affiliated with an American college or university which is still actively working to foster new choral literature.

The Commission Series has presented many accomplished works from talented composers during its long and successful history. In a continued effort to attract outstanding musicians, a financial contribution from IWU alumni Joe and Sylvia Anderson of Bloomington will make this possible. The earnings from this endowment fund will be used exclusively for the annual commissioned choral works.

In recognition of the Anderson's generous gift to the School of Music's Collegiate Choir program, the Commission Series has recently been named the Sylvia Monti Anderson Commissioned Choral Work Fund Honoring Delta Omicron.

Joe Anderson, a graduate of Bloomington High School, has spent his entire working career at State Farm Insurance, just passing 35 years of service. He is currently vice president of creative services for State Farm.

Sylvia Monti Anderson is a retired music educator, having taught locally in Bloomington District 87 and Holy Trinity Parish schools for 24 years. She continues a performance career in the area, currently singing with Cantus Novus. Sylvia Monti Anderson, who has been active with IWU's Delta Omicron chapter as an undergraduate and chapter advisor for 27 years, was also a member of the Collegiate Choir for three years.

The Sigma chapter of Delta Omicron, which was established at IWU in 1926, is a national professional musical fraternity for men and women. The founding purpose of the chapter is to promote American music, musicians and composers.

Lloyd Pfautsch began the commission project when he was director of choral activities at IWU. The project receives no financial assistance from the University, but has been supported by alumni gifts, record sales and also by the IWU chapter of Delta Omicron.

The Collegiate Choir, which is the select organization among the School of Music's four active choirs, performs the commissioned pieces. As with all musical ensembles, membership is determined by auditions, which are open to the entire student body. Currently, the Collegiate Choir consists of approximately 63 students.

J. Scott Ferguson, IWU director of choral activities, commissioned composer Anthony Iannaccone, a professor at Eastern Michigan University, to be the first composer brought to Illinois Wesleyan by the Sylvia Monti Anderson Commissioned Series.

This year's commission, "Exsultate," which Ferguson says is one of the most exciting pieces in the series, is especially important because the Collegiate Choir will feature the composition on their May Term tour of Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Russia. "The countries to

which we travel expect to hear the Collegiate Choir perform the best American choral music," said Ferguson. "Now we can share the best new American choral music, too."

As a result of the Anderson's contribution, Ferguson was also able to commission nationally recognized Minneapolis composers Libby Larsen and Steven Paulus for upcoming years and said he looks forward to having more options with a greater fund. "We can attract those composers who have gained or earned national reputations, whose works are consistently on the highest level," said Ferguson. "We know that we will be publishing and that we will become part of the composer's repertoire, which is very exciting."

Ferguson hopes to take the series to the next step by attracting international composers, but many of these composers command fees of several thousand dollars. "While we continue to commission worthy composers in the meantime, let us work to expand our horizons so that ours will become the premiere commissioning series of its kind anywhere," said Ferguson.