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## David Hong, IWU Sophomore: Peoria Teen Launches Youth Orchestra

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December 9, 1994

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David Hong, IWU Sophomore**Peoria Teen Launches Youth Orchestra;  
Benefit Concert Last August Helped Social Service Agency,  
Second Benefit Planned for Next Summer**Locals!  
Central + TL

BLOOMINGTON, Ill.--He's 19-years-old and founder of the Peoria Youth Sinfonietta, a 50-member musical ensemble, which held its second concert last August. Concert proceeds--more than \$1,000--benefited Neighborhood House, a Peoria Agency providing social services to youngsters and the elderly.

David Hong, whose family lives in Peoria, is an Illinois Wesleyan University sophomore, majoring in piano performance with minors in violin and religion.

His exploits as an orchestra conductor and impresario are reported in the winter 1994 edition of *Illinois Wesleyan University Magazine* in an article, "Playing in Peoria--IWU Sophomore/Conductor Founded Youth Orchestra," which is attached to this news release. The article was written by Elaine Graybill, *IWU Magazine* managing editor.

Hong and his sister, Juliette, founded the Peoria Youth Sinfonietta in 1993 at Westminster Presbyterian Church/Korean Presbyterian Church in Peoria.

Hong, who came to the United States from Korea at age 8 with his family, hopes to lead the Peoria Youth Sinfonietta in two concerts next summer: one of Baroque music on period instruments, and another as a memorial to fellow IWU student and friend, Matt Fry, who died of cancer this fall. Hong and his sister, a junior at Peoria High School, have organized an essay contest to choose the charitable causes that will benefit from next summer's concerts.

IWU, founded in 1850, enrolls about 1,800 students in a College of Liberal Arts, College of Fine Arts, and a four-year professional School of Nursing. In recent years, the university's endowment has grown to more than \$92 million; a \$15 million athletics and recreation center opened in the

(more)

## Peoria Youth Sinfonietta/2

fall of 1994; and a \$24 million science building will open in 1995. The Carnegie Commission for the Advancement of Teaching promoted Illinois Wesleyan to a "Baccalaureate I" institution in 1994, a classification that places it among 164 highly selective National Liberal Arts Colleges in the annual *U.S. News & World Report* rankings. *U.S. News* ranks IWU the second most efficient national liberal arts college--a key gauge of the campus' quality academic program and relatively reasonable cost. *Barron's Profiles of American Colleges*, another respected college guide, rated IWU "highly competitive (+)" in its latest edition. IWU's 1994 freshman class scored an average 27.9 on the ACT exam, compared to the national average of 20.7.