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Metropolitan Opera Star Dawn Upshaw To Address IWU Graduation, May 20



BLOOMINGTON, Ill.--Two-time Grammy Award-winning soprano Dawn Upshaw will be the commencement speaker at Illinois Wesleyan University on May 20.

Upshaw, a 1982 IWU graduate, has recorded several albums, and has been on the roster of New York's famed Metropolitan Opera since 1984.

Graduation exercises are scheduled for 11 a.m. on IWU's quad. If weather is inclement, commencement will be held in the Shirk Center.

As part of the commencement program, Upshaw will receive an Honorary Doctor of Humane Letters degree. The topic of Upshaw's speech will be announced later.

Approximately 453 students--191 males and 262 females-- will receive bachelor's degrees this year. That number is more than 50 over last year's total of 377 graduates. This will be IWU's 145th commencement program.

Approximately 27 students are expected to graduate summa cum laude (grade point average of 3.9 or higher on a 4.0 scale), 47 may receive magna cum laude (3.7 or higher), along with 67 cum laude students. (3.5 or higher).

This year's class is shaping up along these lines:

- 376 students from Illinois.
- Graduates from 18 different states.
- 18 international students from 14 nations.
- Degrees in 39 different fields.

The fields range from anthropology to women's studies. Business is the largest field with 55 graduates. Other fields and their number of graduates include nursing, 47; biology, 39; psychology, 38; and English, 36.

There are five fields with only one graduate. These fields are drama, humanities, public relations, theatre dance, and theatre design and technology.

After Upshaw received her IWU degree in music, she moved to

(more)

IWU Commencement/2

New York, where she studied with Ellen Faull at the Manhattan School of Music.

In 1984, Upshaw won the Young Concert Artists auditions. That achievement earned her a spot in the Metropolitan Opera Young Artists Development Program.

Upshaw received a big break in 1988, when on a last second call, she was asked to replace the soprano lead in Donizetti's "Elisir d'Amore." She received rave reviews for that performance from the *New York Times*.

In 1990, Upshaw recorded her first album. Her rendition of Samuel Barber's "Knoxville: Summer of 1915" earned a Grammy award, which is the highest honor in the music industry.

Upshaw's second Grammy came in 1992, for her album, "The Girl with Orange Lips," a collection of songs by Maurice Ravel, Igor Stravinsky, Maurice Delage, Earl Kim, and others.

In 1986, Upshaw married Michael Nott, IWU class of 1979. They live in New York with their children.

The Upshaw-Nott family will be well represented at this year's commencement. Michael Nott's father, David Nott, professor of voice and choral music, will be honored along with James Hallam, professor of business administration. The two professors will retire this year.

Nott, who is also the director of the IWU Collegiate Choir, has taught at IWU for 31 years. He graduated from Carroll College in 1957.

Nott earned his master's degree from the Union Theological Seminary School of Music in New York, before receiving a Doctor of Musical Arts degree from the College-Conservatory of Music, University of Cincinnati. Nott has also taught at Simpson College, Hastings College, and Monmouth College.

Hallam is a 1953 graduate of Illinois State University in business education. Hallam also earned a master's degree from ISU in the same field, before receiving his doctorate in business from the University of Iowa in 1965.

Hallam has taught at IWU since 1988. Prior to joining the IWU faculty 6 years ago, he spent 22 years teaching accounting at ISU. During his last 16 years at ISU, Hallam was chairperson of the Department of Accounting.