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Updates from Student Chapters

Concordia College  
(Moorhead, Minnesota)

The 2013–2014 school year was one of incredible growth for the student chapter of Concordia College, already the largest in the very active choral state of Minnesota. We were proud to bring forty-four students (just a portion of our membership) to the Minnesota state conference in November. Dozens returned to campus in August 2014 to attend Minnesota’s Summer Dialogue, hosted this year at Concordia.

Besides our monthly diet of relevant lectures and activities, our board was especially interested this year in engaging our members and other musicians in new ways. Unveiling a new public Facebook page (Concordia College ACDA) allowed us to provide supplementary materials such as articles and videos and advertise much better than before. Advertising was especially helpful in boosting two new initiatives this year. The first was a series of regular composer workshops that provided an opportunity for collegiate composers to try out their work on a live choir and receive feedback. It was a wonderful chance to show support for student composers and their compositions.

We were also eager this year to show support for the growing number of student-led vocal ensembles on campus. Thus, the Chamber Voices Festival was born. Our first annual festival featured sixty singers in five ensembles ranging from the classical vocal consort to jazz choir to one student composer’s lab choir. It was truly a roaring success, and we look forward to continuing and improving this celebration of student initiative and musical scholarship at Concordia.

University of Nevada-Las Vegas

The student chapter at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV), has been active since the 1990s under the advisory of Professor David Weiller and took new and exciting leaps over the past year: Thanks to outstanding student leadership, the UNLV fall semester included the hosting of a Western Division University of Nevada-Las Vegas Student Chapter at the Western ACDA Division Student Symposium, hosted by UNLV. (November 8-9, 2013)
Student Symposium, an event that had not been hosted in the division since 1993. With more than thirty student participants from Nevada, California, and Arizona, this two-day symposium celebrated the choral art and the love of music education. Guest presentations included “Psychology of the Choral Rehearsal” with Dr. Edith Copley (NAU); “Vocal Jazz…Basics and Beyond” with Dr. Mark Wherry (College of Southern Nevada); “Yoga for Singers” with Dr. Linda Lister (UNLV); and conducting master classes with Professor Lori Marie Rios (College of the Canyons), Dr. Mark Wherry, and Professor David Weiller. The Q&A discussion with new and experienced music educators was a big hit. Students were happy to get answers, stories, tears, and laughter from real professionals ranging from one year of classroom experience to fifty years.

UNLV is very proud to have Dr. Jocelyn Kay Jensen (fifty years of experience) on the choral studies faculty. In addition, six students from both Nevada and Arizona participated in the conducting master classes with Professor Rios and Dr. Wherry, and three students from Nevada participated as student composers, where their choral works were copied and distributed, read by a choir; and recorded as souvenirs. The UNLV Student Symposium also included a fabulous evening concert that featured outstanding choirs from throughout the western states ranging from elementary- to college-level singers.

With some light fundraising and a helpful student government, the four officers from the UNLV student chapter were able to attend the Western Division Conference in Santa Barbara. Two of those talented students were selected as student conductors in the master class with Dr. Sharon Paul. One member was also able to attend the Northwestern Division Conference in Seattle, Washington. The UNLV student chapter holds about ten members and is continuing to flourish each year. Attending conferences and being active in the organization encourages growth for these students and provides them knowledge to give back to the rest of the music education majors at UNLV.

In the coming year, the UNLV chapter has plans to attend the Western Division Student Symposium hosted by Northern Arizona University in Flagstaff, Arizona, on October 3-4, once again keeping the tradition alive. Other goals include attending the ACDA National Conference in Salt Lake City, Utah, and increasing student chapter membership.

Is your student chapter doing interesting activities! Email news updates and photos to sfansburg@acda.org. Updates should be 250 words or fewer. Include the name and email address for the person we should contact if there are questions on the information, as well as the name of your college or university and the city and state in which you are located. Space is limited, but we will publish as much as possible - with a preference given to submissions that are interesting, creative, and relevant to other student chapters and the wider ACDA.