



Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Whittier Union Students Celebrate Holidays through Song at Choral Festival

WHITTIER, CA – Ushering in the holidays with music ranging from uplifting classical works to fun Christmas favorites, the choirs of Whittier Union’s five comprehensive high schools celebrated the season during the District’s annual Choral Festival on Dec. 4.

Choral ensembles from California, La Serna, Pioneer, Santa Fe and Whittier high schools performed their pieces and received critiques from this year’s adjudicator, Dr. Iris Levine, an award-winning composer and conductor and Cal Poly Pomona’s Music Department Chair.

“It’s so much fun for me to work with high school kids and hear what is going on in our schools,” Levine said. “I applaud you all for doing it every day, and I applaud the choir directors, principals and administrators for supporting students’ work and the arts in Whittier.”

The annual concert is a unique opportunity for the choirs and their directors to come together to listen and learn from each other, as well as receive guidance from an expert. Levine is nationally recognized for her excellence in choral conducting and is founder and artistic director of Vox Femina Los Angeles, Los Angeles’ premiere woman’s chorus.

“It’s a privilege to work in a district that values high-quality performing arts and to be coached by someone as well-versed and respected as Dr. Levine,” Santa Fe High School Choral Director David Kwon said. “Besides giving students feedback on what they need to improve, the festival setting gives them an opportunity to hear other peer groups and sharpen their skills as a recipient and critic of music.”

In her critiques, Levine encouraged the students to project their voices, understand the impact of variations and arrangements, and think about the meaning of each musical piece. She also underscored the importance of using acoustics to their advantage and working together to ensure consistent sound and tone.

“Music is inside your heart and inside your soul,” Levine said. “Allow it to blossom at every stage of your life.”

Whittier Union High School District Superintendent Sandra Thorstenson called the performances inspiring.

“The Choral Festival is a wonderful and joyful experience that brings together our singers and gives them the opportunity to showcase their amazing gift of song,” Thorstenson said. “I want to thank our students for sharing their phenomenal talents and our choir directors for their dedication in developing the technical expertise and talent of our choirs.”

Each of the District’s comprehensive high schools offer beginning, intermediate and advanced choral and instrumental music programs and theater arts courses. The choral ensembles have performed in local, regional and national competitions in famous locations such as Carnegie Hall and the Disney Concert Hall.

PHOTO CAPTIONS:

CHORALFEST1: Award-winning composer, conductor and Cal Poly Pomona’s Music Department Chair Dr. Iris Levine was this year’s adjudicator at the Whittier Union High School District’s annual Choral Festival on Dec. 4, 2014.

CHORALFEST2: Santa Fe High School Choral Director David Kwon leads the Chamber Singers in song.

Additional photos are available at: <https://www.hightail.com/download/UIRRT2pGaTFoMIZMWE5Vag>.

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*The Whittier Union High School District provides all students with an engaging, quality standards-based instructional program delivered by a well-trained staff resulting in improved student achievement.
Whittier Union High School District works to achieve and maintain excellence in providing a comprehensive education for all students.*

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