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**Sheboygan South Graduate Receives UW Oshkosh Chancellor’s Award**

(Oshkosh, June 2014)—Sheboygan South High School 2007 graduate, Jonathan Delray, received the Chancellor’s Award For Excellence during spring commencement from University of Wisconsin Oshkosh in May.

Delray graduated with degrees in music education and vocal performance.

No stranger to the performance world, Delray was inspired to start his musical career in high school with his choral director, Dr. Linda Jacobs. “She showed me how tremendously influential a choral director can be on students who are facing the pitfalls of adolescence,” Delray said.

During his time at Sheboygan South, Delray was an active member of the Concert Choir as well as the show choir, “The South High Singers”.

When the time came for Delray to choose a college to attend, he and his wife decided UW Oshkosh was the best fit because of their desire to become educators.

Never losing his passion for music, Delray served as the president of the Chamber Choir for four years, tutored piano students, served as an assistant conductor for the University Choir and was president of Students for Music.

The Chancellor’s Award is meant to recognize students for their achievements in academics, university service and community activities. Delray strived to receive the Chancellor’s Award for a few years, and now that he has won, he considers it one of his highest honors.

“It’s validation to me that my collegiate career has really had the impact that I always dreamt it could,” Delray said. “A few years ago, I attended my first [UW Oshkosh] commencement ceremony. Once there, I noticed all the stories of accomplished graduating seniors and I immediately circled the name of this award in the program. Since then, it’s been my aspiration to be granted this award. I consider this honor to be one of the crowning achievements of my undergraduate collegiate career, but I understand that my real work is just beginning.”

Delray was also the founder, conductor and music director for the Oshkosh Correctional Facility’s Second Chance Choir. Second Chance Choir developed from Delray’s original idea to start a musical program at the Oshkosh Correctional Facility. It is comprised of approximately 40 inmates at the facility.

Delray said Second Chance Choir completed a collection of ten songs, six choral pieces and four instrumental projects that became one of the keynote events at the Martin Luther King Jr. Day Ceremony sponsored by the Oshkosh Esther group in January.

Delray recalls a rehearsal held the day before Thanksgiving 2013, when each member said what he or she was thankful for. To Delray that was a heart-warming bonding experience.

“It was an incredibly meaningful day where we all became part of a community, not just a choir,” Delray said.

Delray and his wife will be moving back to Sheboygan to be closer to family. His ideal career would be a high school choral director, but Delray is not going to pass up any opportunity.

“Ideally, I will become a high school choral director, but any job in this field is a career worth having and will bring tremendous satisfaction,” Delray said.

***Students in UW Oshkosh Prof. Julie Henderson’s Public Relations Techniques course in the Department of Journalism developed the above story as part of a series profiling outstanding university students. The stories have been shared with students’ hometown newspapers.***

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