Dean Robert L. Annis to Retire in December

Robert L. Annis, dean and director of Westminster Choir College since 1994, will retire on December 31, 2014.

Rider University President Mordechai Rozanski said announcing the retirement, “Bob has provided extraordinary leadership to Westminster Choir College during his 20-year career. Among his most important contributions were preserving and enhancing the legacy and great musical traditions of the Choir College while championing change and innovation. Thanks to his visionary leadership, we were able to conceive and bring to reality the new, two-campus Westminster College of Arts in Princeton and Lawrenceville, with its integrating theme of the arts as the overarching link.”

During his tenure as dean, Annis has been the driving force and creative muse for the continued world-renowned success of the College. He is credited with leading the evolution of the arts identity initiative for Rider University and the implementation and integration of Westminster Choir College with the School of Fine and Performing Arts and Westminster Conservatory to form the Westminster College of the Arts. The result of this merger has propelled the University into the upper echelon of academic institutions that offer Fine and Performing Arts programming.

Under his leadership, Westminster Choir College and Westminster College of the Arts added nine new programs or degrees that kept the

Leadership Grants Bring Playhouse Renovation Closer to Goal

The Playhouse has been a rehearsal space for some of the world’s great conductors, including Leonard Bernstein, Simon Rattle and Yannick Nézet-Séguin. It is also the site for many classes, opera and theatre performances and rehearsals of Westminster’s community ensembles.

As construction of the Marion Buckelew Cullen Center moves forward, plans have been developed to renovate Westminster’s historic Playhouse. Two leadership gifts have brought the Choir College closer to turning those plans into a reality.

In January philanthropist Betty Wold Johnson made a challenge gift of $250,000 to support the renovation in honor of former Westminster Choir College Board Chair William H. Scheide, as part of “Ode to Joy,” a concert celebrating Dr. Scheide’s 100th birthday. All gifts to that event were matched dollar-for-dollar, which secured $500,000 for the renovation project, making the concert the most successful fundraising event in Westminster’s history. Ms. Johnson also made one of the first
Westminster Symphonic Choir  2014–2015 Performances

ORFF: Carmina Burana  
Debussy: Nocturnes  
New Jersey Symphony Orchestra  
Jacques Lacombe, conductor  
October 10–12, 2014  
Various locations in New Jersey

Mahler: Symphony No. 2 “Resurrection”  
The Philadelphia Orchestra  
Yannick Nézet-Séguin, conductor  
October 30, November 1, November 2, 2014  
Kimmel Center  
October 31, 2014  
Carnegie Hall

Brahms: Ein deutsches Requiem  
Vienna Philharmonic  
Daniele Gatti, conductor  
March 1, 2015  
Carnegie Hall

Bach: St. Matthew Passion  
The Philadelphia Orchestra  
Yannick Nézet-Séguin, conductor  
April 1 and 4, 2015  
Kimmel Center

Bernstein: Mass  
The Philadelphia Orchestra  
Yannick Nézet-Séguin, conductor  
April 30, May 1–3, 2015  
Kimmel Center

Annis to Retire continued from page 1

College at the forefront of innovative curriculum while supporting the career goals of students. He also oversaw the building of new state-of-the-art music keyboard labs, renovations to the voice labs and practice rooms, and the renovation of Erdman Hall. The Westminster campus flourished after the restoration of the Princeton Campus quadrangle and the implementation of online ticketing technology that has enabled the College to offer performances to new and broader audiences.

Rozanki said it was also Annis’ persistence, fundraising acumen and conceptual planning that led to the construction of the Marion Buckelew Cullen Center, the first major academic building at Westminster Choir College since 1975. “I consider our 11 years working together as a wonderful partnership during which Bob not only helped advance the College’s stature but helped secure its future,” Rozanski said.

Rider University board of trustee member and Westminster Choir College alumna Ernestine (Mickey) Lazenby Gast ’68, added, “Bob built on the heritage and traditions of Westminster Choir College in an innovative way. With creative vision and determination, he enabled Westminster Choir College to become an integral part of Rider University and ensured a more robust place for music and the arts on both campuses. Our students and the community have benefitted significantly from his artistic and administrative skills. We are grateful for his years of dedicated service.”

The University is implementing a search process charged with finding a new dean.

Before his appointment as Westminster’s dean, Annis served as dean of enrollment services at New England Conservatory of Music and on the faculties of the New England Conservatory of Music and Brown University. He has served as a consultant and advisor to educational institutions and arts organizations in the areas of enrollment management, strategic planning and marketing. In addition, he has served as chair of an accreditation team for the Middle States Commission on Higher Education and was a member of the Princeton University Concerts Committee. Currently, he is a member of the Board of Directors for the Princeton Symphony Orchestra and the Princeton Regional Chamber of Commerce.

He has also had an extensive performing career as a clarinetist with numerous orchestras and chamber music ensembles, and as a recitalist throughout the United States. He continues to perform as a member of Collage New Music, the Grammy-nominated contemporary classical chamber music group. Formerly a member of the San Antonio Symphony, he began substituting with the Boston Symphony Orchestra and Boston Pops while an undergraduate student at New England Conservatory of Music. He is on more than 40 recordings and his performances have been broadcast on the Public Broadcasting System, National Public Radio and the Tokyo Broadcasting System. He is a graduate of the New England Conservatory of Music, the University of Southern California, the Tanglewood Music Center and the Harvard University/College Board Admissions Institute.
Andrew Megill to Lead the University of Illinois’ Choral Program

Associate Professor Andrew Megill MM’89 will join the faculty of the University of Illinois (Urbana-Champaign) School of Music as professor of conducting and director of choral activities. A member of the Westminster family since he entered the Choral Conducting program in the fall of 1987, Dr. Megill is admired and respected by the many students who have studied and sung with him, as well as his colleagues. During his time on the faculty, he taught choral conducting and conducted the Westminster Singers, Westminster Chapel Choir, Westminster Schola Cantorum and Westminster Kantorei. He was also associate conductor of the Westminster Symphonic Choir from 1993 to 2004, and he served as the interim conductor of the Symphonic Choir in the 2004–2005 academic year. As chorus master for the operas at the Spoleto Festival USA from 1994 to 2009, he also worked regularly with the Westminster Choir.

In addition to his work at Westminster, he currently leads three of North America’s finest professional vocal ensembles: the Orchestre Symphonique de Montréal Chorus, the Carmel Bach Festival Chorale and Chorus, and Fuma Sacra. He will make his debut conducting the Orchestre Symphonique de Montréal in December of 2014. He has also served as music director of The Masterwork Chorus and Orchestra and chorus master for the Spoleto Festival USA. He has been a guest conductor for the Yale Institute of Sacred Music, TENET vocal ensemble, the Juilliard Opera Center and Emmanuel Music (Boston), and served as interim choirmaster for Trinity Church (Wall Street) in Manhattan.

Dr. Megill is particularly admired for his performances of Baroque choral works. He regularly collaborates with pioneers in the field of historically informed performance and has conducted many leading period-instrument orchestras. He has collaborated with the Mark Morris Dance Company, folk singer Judy Collins, puppeteer Basil Twist and filmmaker Ridley Scott. Recordings of choirs he has conducted or prepared may be heard on the EMI, Canteloupe, Naxos, Albany and CBC labels.

Honoring him at Westminster’s Spring Convocation, Director of Choral Activities Joe Miller said, “Andrew is a humble servant, he is a true student of life, and he values helping others. Some of the great successes of our students have come from his passionate teaching, and he sparks curiosity by living his passion. He has raised the academic standards of our students and taught them to love learning. His impact is immeasurable.”

Happy Birthday!

The Westminster Symphonic Choir and the Vienna Chamber Orchestra, conducted by Mark Laycock, joined the Princeton community to celebrate William H. Scheide’s 100th birthday in a grand way. They performed Beethoven’s Symphony No. 9 and other works in a concert titled “Ode to Joy” at Richardson Auditorium in Alexander Hall in Princeton in January. The evening concluded with everyone singing “Happy Birthday” to Dr. Scheide, former chair of the Westminster Choir College Board of Trustees, as confetti rained down on the stage. The concert was recorded for broadcast on PBS later this year. Watch the Westminster website for updates.
Leadership Grants for Playhouse  continued from page 1

leadership gifts to the Cullen Center, which will be connected to The Playhouse after construction.

In April, The Presser Foundation awarded a $250,000 grant to The Playhouse renovation project. In recognition of the Foundation’s generous support, The Playhouse stage will be named The Presser Stage.

“Westminster Choir College of Rider University is grateful for Betty Wold Johnson’s and The Presser Foundation’s support of this important initiative,” said Dean Robert L. Annis. The renovation will preserve and expand The Playhouse to maximize students’ academic experiences and provide quality music education and performances to the greater community. Enhancements will include a 2,920 square foot addition to The Playhouse with an expanded stage and backstage, two dressing rooms, two restrooms, storage space and improvements to make the facility handicap accessible.

The renovated Playhouse will provide Westminster’s faculty and visiting artists an enhanced space for music education and performance instruction. It will also continue to be used for classes, rehearsals, recitals and semi-professional staged opera productions, as well as a convening area for various student activities.

The Presser Foundation was established in 1939 under the Deeds of Trust and Will of the late Theodore Presser. It is one of the few private foundations in the United States dedicated solely to music education and music philanthropy. The Presser Foundation supports music performance and education through undergraduate and graduate scholar awards, operating and program support for music organizations, capital grants for music building projects, and assistance to retired music teachers. Much of the grant making focus of the Foundation is on organizations and institutions in the 100-mile radius surrounding Center City Philadelphia. Westminster has been fortunate to have received close to half a million dollars in support from The Presser Foundation over the past 61 years, and it is particularly grateful that The Foundation will play a significant role in supporting The Playhouse renovation project. For more information go to www.presserfoundation.org.

As of May 1, 2014, $1.2 million has been raised in gifts and pledges in support of The Playhouse renovation, and fundraising efforts continue to secure the final support needed. To learn more about The Playhouse renovation and how you can invest in this momentous project, please contact Kate Wadley ’02 at 609-921-7100 ext. 8213 or kwadley@rider.edu.
Rexford Tester is Met Finalist

Tenor Rexford Tester MM'14 is the latest member of the Westminster Choir College family to take the stage at the prestigious Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions. He was one of nine finalists selected to sing in the Grand Finals Concert at the Met in March. Accompanied by the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra, he performed “Laguir oer una bella” from Rossini’s L’Italiana in Algeri and “Here I Stand” from Stravinsky’s The Rake’s Progress.

Tester, who is also an alumnus of Westminster’s CoOPERAtive Program, received his master’s degree in Voice Pedagogy and Performance in May. While he was a student at the Choir College, he appeared in the role of Rinuccio in Westminster Opera Theatre’s production of Puccini’s Gianni Schicchi in December. Last season, he performed the title role in The Tales of Hoffmann and the role of Tonio in the CoOPERAtive Program’s production of La Fille du Régiment. A student of Laura Brooks Rice, he will enter Santa Fe Opera’s apprentice program this summer, where he will cover the role of Ernesto in Donizetti’s Don Pasquale and sing in the chorus for the season’s other operas.

Tester is the ninth Westminster student or alumnus to make it to the Met Finals. Previous finalists have been Levi Hernandez ’99, Kiera Duffy ’01, MM’03 and Disella Larusdottir MM’05, Michael Sylvester ’74, Norah Amsellem ’94, Laquita Mitchell ’99 and Melissa Citro ’98 were Grand Finals winners, as were faculty members Laura Brooks Rice and Nova Thomas.

Westminster Goes to the Grammy Awards

It’s promoted as Music’s Biggest Night—the annual Grammy Awards ceremony in Los Angeles. This year Westminster Choir College was well represented at the gala event. Annelies, the Westminster Williamson Voices’ recording of James Whitbourn’s setting of The Diary of Anne Frank, conducted by James Jordan, was nominated in the Best Choral Performance category. And Times go by Turns, recorded by New York Polyphony, whose members include Geoffrey D. Williams ’02, was nominated in the Best Chamber Music/Small Ensemble Performance category.

The recording industry’s most prestigious award, the Grammy, is presented annually by The Recording Academy’s voting membership to honor excellence in the recording arts and sciences. It is a peer honor, awarded by and to artists and technical professionals for artistic or technical achievement, not sales or chart positions.

The classical music awards and others were announced at a separate ceremony before the evening television broadcast that focuses on rock and pop music. Conductor James Jordan, accompanied by his wife Leslie, and Anne Sears represented Westminster at the ceremony, which was hosted by Cyndi Lauper.

While neither recording won, the Best Choral Performance nomination was a first for a Westminster Choir College recording project. Annelies has garnered critical acclaim on both sides of the Atlantic. BBC Magazine gave the recording five stars, and Gramophone praised the ensemble’s singing, “with a precision normally found in the best of the U.K.’s large chamber choirs, complementing the exhilarating performances of the soloists and orchestra.” It’s available online at amazon.com, naxos.com and iTunes.

Leslie Jordan, James Jordan and Anne Sears at the Grammy Awards.
Tom T. Shelton is ACDA President-Elect Designate

Assistant Professor of Sacred Music Tom T. Shelton has been elected National President-Elect Designate of the American Choral Directors Association (ACDA).

Shelton is a native of Greensboro, N.C., and a graduate of the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, where he earned both a Bachelor of Music Education and Master of Music in Choral Conducting. He has a passion for music education in all areas: church, school and community. A middle school choral music teacher for 18 years, he was selected Teacher of the Year at two different schools in North Carolina. In 1999, the North Carolina Music Educators Association presented him with the North Carolina Middle School Music Teacher of the Year Award. Before joining the Westminster faculty, he served as associate director of music for children and youth at First Presbyterian Church in Greensboro, N.C., and as conductor of the Chorale for the Greensboro Youth Chorus.

A member of the New Jersey Choral Directors Association Board of Directors, Shelton has been active with the American Choral Directors Association, serving as a clinician for ACDA and National Association of Music Educators (NAfME) Conferences in Alabama, Kansas, Kentucky, Mississippi, North Carolina and South Carolina. His ACDA leadership positions have included Southern Division president (2011-2012), national repertoire and standards chair for middle school/junior high choirs (2007-2009) and North Carolina president (2005-2007). He currently serves as the New Jersey ACDA repertoire and standards chair for youth and student activities. Choral groups under his direction were invited to perform for the North Carolina Music Educators Conference and the North Carolina ACDA Conference. Shelton was invited to present the interest session, “Working with Boys in the Middle School Choral Setting,” for the 2006 Southern Division ACDA Conference in Charleston, W.Va., using his 8th Grade Young Men’s Ensemble as the demonstration choir. In February, he presented a session for the 2014 Eastern Division ACDA Conference in Baltimore.

Westminster Participates in Summer Conferences

Westminster Choir College will be represented at two major professional conferences this summer.

AMERICAN GUILD OF ORGANISTS
JUNE 23–25 • BOSTON
Westminster alumnus Scott Dettra ’97, MM’98 will present a concert at Trinity Church in the City of Boston. Emerita faculty member and alumna Joan Hult Lippincott ’57 will perform with the Boston Early Music Festival Chamber Ensemble at First Lutheran Church of Boston.

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF TEACHERS OF SINGING
JULY 5–9 • BOSTON
Associate Professor Christopher Arneson is the conference program chair. Professor Laura Brooks Rice is a featured master clinician, double billed with Thomas Hampson. Assistant Professor Sean McCarther will present a lecture/demonstration titled “The Performer Within: A Movement-Based Performance Pedagogy” that will utilize Westminster Choir College students. Assistant Professor Eric Rieger will present “Beyond Communication: Using Lyric Diction in the Voice Studio as a Path to Technical Freedom.” Assistant Professor Kathy Price will present a poster paper titled “Collegiate Voice Assessments: What they are, how to do them, and why they matter.” Six alumni will also present poster papers at the conference. They are Marquese Carter MM’14, Jessica Hann MM’13, Jorie Moss MM’14, Lori Sen MM’14 and Jennifer Weiss MM’14. Professor Sharon Sweet will serve as a judge for the National Association of Teachers of Singing Artists Awards (NATSAA) Competition.

Westminster representatives will be in the Choir College booth in the exhibit hall at both conferences. Check each conference’s schedule for details about these events. Please stop by to say hello and pick up a Westminster sticker for your name tag!
Friend of Westminster Establishes Endowed Piano Recital Series

Helmut H. Fuchs has generously established an endowment to help fund guest artists to perform in the annual piano recital series at Westminster Choir College. Dr. Fuchs, a chemist and composer, began the fund to expand Westminster students’ and the surrounding community’s access to piano music.

Dr. Fuchs began composing at the age of 15, and his works for piano and orchestra have been performed at Avery Fisher Hall, Carnegie Hall and Weill Recital Hall in New York City, among others. As a longtime professor of chemistry at the State of University of New York at Farmingdale and a composer, Fuchs feels he “has the best of both worlds,” the classroom and the concert hall. Dr. Fuchs is pleased to establish the fund at Westminster, where he admires the quality of artistry and breadth of performances offered to the community.

During recent academic years, the fund has brought to campus such renowned artists as Jeremy Denk, Steven Spooner and Alan Feinberg.

Westminster Family Photos 2014–2015

Westminster Opera Theatre’s spring production was Mozart’s Iolanta performed with chamber orchestra conducted by William Hobbs. Pictured are (from left): Jessica Hillabold, Rebecca Shimer and Jennifer Weiss, all of whom received master’s degrees in May.

Philadelphia Orchestra Music Director Yannick Nézet-Séguin posed with six aspiring conductors and members of the Class of 2014 before a performance of Beethoven’s Symphony No. 9 in Philadelphia. Surrounding him are: John Irving, Vivian Suen, Matthew Brady, Alex Underwood, Magdalena Delgado Vargas and Shane Thomas, Jr.

Noted conductor Simon Halsey worked with most ensembles and presented several workshops during his residency in April. He also recorded a podcast with Joe Miller focusing on choral music’s relevance in today’s world. It’s available in the Westminster-to-Go series of podcasts on iTunes.

The Westminster Choir College Team was the top fundraising team in Rider’s annual Relay for Life to benefit the American Cancer Society in April.

Pet Therapy Day is always a welcome way to relieve mid-term stress.

Commencement 2014

Westminster Choir College of Rider University awarded bachelor’s and master’s degrees to 120 students at the College’s 85th Commencement in May.

Carnegie Hall Executive and Artistic Director Clive Gillinson delivered the Commencement address. Declaring that most people’s lives don’t follow the path they expect when they graduate from college, he said, “Make sure that every single thing you do in life matters or don’t bother doing it. Follow what you love the most. I couldn’t imagine a better life than a life in music.”

Associate Professor Amanda Quist delivered the Charge to the Graduating Classes, urging the graduates to “go forward in the knowledge that you are loved by this community, this family, and your love in turn has made it stronger, and that has made all the difference.” Dr. Quist also received the Rider University Award for Distinguished Teaching.

Honorary doctorates were awarded to Gillinson and Joseph Flummerfelt, Westminster’s conductor laureate. President Mordechai Rozanski honored Dean Robert L. Annis, noting that this was his last Westminster Commencement before his retirement in December. Provost DonnaJean Fredeen presented Annis with a framed commemorative score of the Lutkin Benediction on behalf of the Westminster/Rider community.

Rider University Provost DonnaJean Fredeen presented Dean Robert L. Annis with a commemorative score of the Lutkin Benediction.

Whom shall we send? The graduating students performed Warren Martin’s Anthem of Dedication.
Conductor Laureate Joseph Flummerfelt’s honorary degree citation concluded with, “Westminster Choir College of Rider University is privileged to recognize your many achievements as a brilliant musician, an insightful artist and a devoted mentor and teacher. Your passionate commitment to artistic excellence is an inspiration to us all.”

Carnegie Hall Executive and Artistic Director Clive Gillinson and Westminster Choir College Conductor Laureate Joseph Flummerfelt were awarded honorary doctorates.

Graduate Moira Gannon wears the new pin signifying her support for the Class of 2014 Gift.

The brothers of Phi Mu Alpha Sinfonia formed a circle and sang their Parting Song after the ceremony.

Associate Professor Amanda Quist delivered the Charge to the Graduating Classes.
Westminster Reunion 2014

Westminster alumni returned to campus for two days in May to reconnect, share music and celebrate each other’s successes. Despite a driving rainstorm on Friday, many enthusiastic groups donned hard hats and toured the new Marion Buckelew Cullen Center and Hillman Performance Hall, which will open in the fall.

Alumni Council President Constance Fee ’71 (center) presented Westminster Alumni Merit Awards to Lynnel Joy Jenkins ’94 and Julia Kemp Rorhfas ’66. The third award recipient, Rosephanye Dunn Powell MM ’87, who was unable to attend, sent her heartfelt thanks for the honor.

William Kelley Jr. ’65 was the speaker at the Golden Encore Luncheon, attended by alumni celebrating their 50th Reunion and beyond.
Jaimie Gilhooley Flack ‘77 presented retiring Dean Robert L. Annis with a card signed by most of the alumni attending Reunions. It featured a photograph of Williamson Hall embedded with the names of more than 5,000 Westminster alumni whose lives have been touched by Dean Annis.

Alumni Council Vice President James Busby ’85, MM’92 welcomed the graduating seniors into the Westminster Choir College alumni family.

Seniors who contributed at least $19.26 to the 2014 Class Gift received a commemorative pin (inset) to wear at Commencement and were welcomed into the Westminster Alumni Association following the Alumni Chapel Service. Jaimie Gilhooley Flack ’77 and Constance Fee ’71 presented each student with a pin.

Alumni Council Past President Jaimie Gilhooley Flack ’77 and Rider University Provost DonnaJean Fredeen presented Westminster’s Dean Robert L. Annis the Williamson Medal, which is symbolized by a crystal bowl, in recognition of his extraordinary commitment to Westminster Choir College.

Joseph Beck ’59 presented a multimedia lecture focusing on the impact that John Finley Williamson and Westminster Choir College have had on choral music in America.

John Nowik ’82 and Sun Min Lee MM’99 were surrounded by fellow graduates at the Alumni Chapel Service.
Westminster on the Road

The Westminster Choir and Westminster Schola Cantorum took the Westminster sound on the road this winter. In January the Westminster Choir, conducted by Joe Miller, performed six concerts and three high school workshops across Oklahoma and Texas. Westminster Schola Cantorum, conducted by James Jordan, traveled to Virginia and North Carolina in March.

Westminster Choir

Joe Miller, Marti Mortensen Ahern ’83 and host Scott McNulty paused for a photo after the concert at University Presbyterian Church in Austin. Earlier in the day Marti videotaped a fascinating story about singing the Lutkin Benediction for Luciano Pavarotti. You can watch it on the Westminster YouTube Channel: www.youtube.com/westminsterchoircoll.

During a workshop at Birdville High School, some members of the Birdville Choir joined the Westminster Choir to sing Daniel Elder’s Ballade to the Moon.

The Westminster Choir’s visit to the Oklahoma City National Memorial was a time for remembrance and reflection.

After visiting the Memorial, the Westminster Choir spontaneously decided to sing the Lutkin Benediction.

Schola Cantorum

Lynn Atkins ’04 with one of his community choir members after Schola’s Richmond concert.

Milton Rodgers ’81, MM’84 at the Schola Concert in Upperville, Va.

William Weisser ’70 joined Schola to sing the Lutkin Benediction in Durham.

The concert in Dallas offered the Dettra family the opportunity to bring their newest addition, Kate, to her first Westminster performance, which was presented at Scott’s church, Church of the Incarnation. Pictured (from left) Haley Dettra; Scott Dettra ’97, MM’98; Kate Dettra; Janet Dettra and Lee Dettra ’63.

During a workshop at Birdville High School, some members of the Birdville Choir joined the Westminster Choir to sing Daniel Elder’s Ballade to the Moon.
The Tutto Voce program was introduced this academic year to create a lifelong connection to Westminster Choir College by establishing meaningful engagement opportunities for students and alumni. Presented by the offices of Annual Giving, Alumni Relations and Career Services, the program introduces Westminster students to university history and traditions, demonstrates how alumni are a vital part of the past, present and future; and offers social events, stewardship and career development sessions.

This academic year, students were invited to numerous new events designed to strengthen their bonds with the Westminster community. Many centered on career development. Diana Crane, professor emerita and special assistant to the dean, discussed the importance of staying connected to Westminster and talked about the variety of successful career paths her former students have taken. Young alumni were also invited to engage with students. Kate Albe Wadley ’02, Heather Jones ’12 and Myles Glancy MM ’13 presented a panel discussion titled “Music Careers Beyond Westminster” and shared their career paths before and after Westminster and how their education led to successful and meaningful careers. Another panel discussion titled “New Trends in Education” featured James Moyer ’86, Vincent Metallo ’94 and Ryan Guth ’06 talking about their careers as music educators. Joseph Beck ’59 presented, “John Finley Williamson’s Impact on Choral Music in America,” and engaged current students in a lively discussion of Westminster’s illustrious legacy.

The Tutto Voce program also offered students the chance to see the impact of giving first hand. Current students took part in the nationwide movement #GivingTuesday by sending hand-written postcards of thanks to alumni, faculty, staff and friends who have supported Westminster through their financial contributions. The Class of 2014 helped to raise nearly $1,500 as part of their Senior Class Gift. These funds will provide scholarships to 2014–2015 sophomores at Westminster. In recognition of the seniors’ contributions, the Alumni Council held a Senior Class Pinning Ceremony during Reunions after the Alumni Chapel Service.

Westminster alumni interested in volunteering as speakers or mentors for the Tutto Voce program should contact the Office of Alumni Relations at 609-896-5340 or Liza Calisesi MM ’12 in the Office of Alumni Giving at 609-921-7100 ext. 8216.

Christian Carey Blogs about “The New Classical” for Musical America

Assistant Professor Christian Carey is taking a look at the music of today in a new Musical America blog “The New Classical.”

“There are a lot of reasons to be excited about New Classical music today,” Carey wrote in his first post. “The entrepreneurial and adventurous spirit of a number of ensembles, record labels, and concert series have provided us with a plethora of options to hear. Despite gloom and doom predictions about music’s future, there seem to be more and more composers interested in writing classical music and talented performers willing to play it.”

A member of the Department of Music Composition, History and Theory at Westminster, Carey earned a bachelor’s degree from The Juilliard School, a master’s degree in Composition from Boston University, and a doctorate in Music from Rutgers University. His teachers included Charles Wuorinen and Lukas Foss. He is active as a composer, performer and music theorist. His compositions have been performed by the Cassatt String Quartet, New York New Music Ensemble, Locrian Chamber Players, League of Composers and many others.

Since 2001, he’s been writing articles and reviews about classical, jazz, popular and experimental music for a variety of publications, including Signal to Noise, Perspectives of New Music, Tempo, Intégral, Musicworks, Sequenzazzt, NewMusicBox, Copper Press, Splendid magazine, PopMatters, All About Jazz, Muso and Time Out NY. He also contributed and edited articles for the latest edition of the Grove Dictionary of American Music and Musicians.

For over 100 years, Musical America Worldwide has been the voice of the performing arts industry. It provides the digital and print opportunities for performing arts professionals to reach out to each other to further their art and their businesses.
Class Notes

'60

Robert “Bob” Fraumann and his choir at Mt. Zion United Methodist Church in Marietta, Ga., were invited to join several other choirs and sing in Carnegie Hall as a backup for Steven Curtis Chapman on Saturday, February 8, 2014. The event was an exciting evening of music with a sell-out audience, in which Steven sang all original compositions with a 50 piece orchestra.

'67

Organist Michael Stairs performed with Gordon Tuck in a program titled “Dueling Organs” at Pittsgrove Presbyterian Church in March. Michael is chair of the Music Department at The Haverford School and serves as organist emeritus at The Church of the Redeemer in Bryn Mawr, Pa. He is also the official organist with The Philadelphia Orchestra and recently performed Saint-Saën’s Organ Symphony with the orchestra in April.

'72

Bethel LeBaron Pendleton recently joined the staff of the Music Studio with the New Jersey Workshop for the Arts. She will teach piano, theory and composition to local students. Bethel has also served as music director and choir director at Liberty Church in Union and at Millington Baptist Church in Basking Ridge, N.J., where she directed both the adult and children’s choirs.

'76 and ’77

Music Professor John Carter retired on May 2, 2014, after 30 years of service at Columbia College. John met his wife Linda Barnshaw Carter while pursuing his master’s degree at Westminster. Dick Dyer, a member of the committee that hired him in 1984, said of the couple, “They have both added so much to the music culture of this county. We’ve been very fortunate that they decided to live in Tuolumne County.”

Organist J. Jay Smith performed in a recital to celebrate the centennial of the Flemington Presbyterian Church’s Austin pipe organ in February. He performed Landis’ Christmas Dawn and Chant sans Paroles, as well as an excerpt from Widor’s First Organ Symphony and Handel’s Largo. He has been the director of music at the church for more than 20 years.

'82

In April Mark Laubach was the guest organist at St. John’s Lutheran Church in Allentown, Pa., during its Noon-Ten concert series. He performed Bach’s Prelude and Fugue in A Minor, the Chorale Prelude on Kommist Du Nun, Jesu, four movements from Widor’s Symphony for Organ No. 5, and Egil Hovland’s Toccata on Nun Danket Alle Gott. Mark has been the organist and director of music at St. Stephen’s Episcopal Pro-Cathedral in Wikes-Barre since 1986.

Joan Lippincott, The Gift of Music

Last June Joan Hult Lippincott ’57 played the evening recital at the 2013 Organ Historical Society (OHS) Convention in Burlington, Vt. The program, which was performed on the C.B. Fisk organ in the University of Vermont’s recital hall, was extremely well planned and executed, and it was enthusiastically received by the audience. Following the recital, the OHS held a reception and book signing to mark the release of Joan Lippincott, The Gift of Music. Written by Larry Biser ’65, the book chronicles the career of Dr. Lippincott and includes a complete listing of her recitals, discography and honors, in addition to essays and remembrances from many of her students and colleagues. The book was originally intended as a special tribute to mark her 75th birthday. It’s available through the OHS website, www.organsociety.org.
The Williamsport Chamber Choir and Orchestra, conducted by Kent Weaver, performed “Bach, Brahms & The Brits” in April. The Williamsport Chamber Choir and Orchestra’s mission is to provide superb cultural entertainment for the people of the Williamsport area. Choirs under Kent’s leadership have performed at numerous state, regional and national conventions.

The Southern Delaware Choral Society, directed by Ann Freeman and accompanied by Paul Fleckenstein, presented its “Regal to Rustic” spring concert in May. Paul has served as organist and director of music at Westminster Presbyterian Church in Wilmington since 1993.

Emily Magee has become recognized as one of the most important new voices of her generation. She made her Met debut in the role of the Foreign Princess in Rusalka in February. Highlights of her 2013–2014 season include the role of the Empress in Die Frau ohne Schatten at Covent Garden and the title role of Ariadne auf Naxos at the Vienna State Opera.

Principal organist at Princeton University Eric Plutz performed in a recital in celebration of the centennial of the Flemington Presbyterian Church’s Austin pipe organ in April. He performed works of J. S. Bach, Louis Vierne, David Johnson, Norman Landis and movements from Charles-Marie Widor’s monumental Fifth Organ Symphony.

The Manhattan Choral Ensemble, one of the premier volunteer choirs in New York City, presented “Requiem in Stone” in March, under the direction of guest conductor Andrew Megill. The performance featured early Baroque masterworks by Heinrich Schütz and Johann Hermann Schein.

Cardetha, under the direction of Michael McCarthy, recently released a CD featuring the compositions of Stephen Caracciolo on the New American Music Choral Series with the GOTHIC label. The recording includes There is no rose of such virtue, a carol dedicated to and premiered by Allen Crowell and the Westminster Singers in December 1990.

Courtenay Budd Caramico performed in “Friends of Wadsworth Concert—The Legacy Continues,” sponsored by the Newman Cultural Arts Commission on April 26, 2014. Courtenay will lead the 2014–2015 concert series season, as its former director Charles Wadsworth steps down. She has performed with the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, the National Symphony, the Santa Fe Chamber Music Festival, and at Carnegie Hall, Spoleto Festival USA, Grand Teton Festival and the Bard Music Festival.

Tenor Jonathan Boyd continues to perform throughout Europe, North America and South America. Highlights from this season include Britten’s War Requiem with the Bogota Philharmonic; Tamino in The Magic Flute with Opera Tampa; Elijah with Fort Worth Symphony; Anatol in Vanessa with Opera Metz; and Heurtebise in Glass’s Orphée with Pittsburgh Opera.

Canti di Gioia, directed by Vincent Treadway, performed with baritone Joshua Mazur in a performance at the First Presbyterian Church of Lake Placid in March. The program featured a wide variety of solo and choral works, including several African-American spirituals, as well as works by Ralph Vaughan Williams and Mark Hayes. Vince is the founder of the Alliance of Christian Musicians and previously served as the director at the Proclamation Presbyterian Church of Bryn Mawr, Pa.

Jennifer Barsamian was featured on GoodHousekeeping.com and Womansday.com in an article “How I Finally Lost 150 Pounds.” The article discusses her struggle with weight and how it held her back from being cast in vocally appropriate roles. She was motivated and shed 150 pounds. In recent seasons she has been heard at Asheville Lyric Opera, Opera Company of the Highlands and the Utah Festival Opera.

Thomas (Tom) Cunningham, music director of the Manhattan Choral Ensemble (MCE), is currently on a one-year sabbatical in New Zealand. In addition to the MCE, Tom was the founder and director of the Boston Choral Ensemble, and he has served as the director of the Dartmouth Chamber Singers and as the associate conductor of the Masterwork Chorus of New Jersey.
Baritone **Raymond Ayers** joined the roster of Balmer & Dixon Management in March, and will join the ensemble at Germany’s Nathanal Theater Mannheim in September.

Soprano **Danielle Talamantes** will sing the role of Frasquita in The Metropolitan Opera’s production of Bizet’s *Carmen* in its 2014–2015 season. This season, she debuted at Avery Fisher Hall as the soprano soloist in Bob Chilcott’s Requiem.

**Ellary Draper** will be joining the faculty of the University of Alabama as an assistant professor of Music Therapy this fall. In August, she will graduate from the University of Texas at Austin with a Ph.D. in Music and Human Learning. Her dissertation investigates the behaviors of students with disabilities in inclusive music classrooms. She has also been invited to present during the National Association for Music Education’s Special Education in Music Education Pre-Conference this October in Nashville.

**’03**

The Chorale of Moody Bible Institute, directed by **Xiangtang Hong**, performed at Demopolis First Baptist Church, featuring a broad range of repertoire chosen from all periods of music history. She enjoys sharing her love of music and conducting as a choral clinician, adjudicator and guest conductor, but her greatest joy is being a mentor to her students.

**Amelia Garbisch** completed her dissertation, *Perceptions of Pedagogical Practice in the Teaching of Musicianship to Instrumentalists and Vocalists in High School Music Education Settings: A Comparative Analysis*, in pursuit of her Ph.D. in Choral Music Education. Currently, she is the music director at Mt. Airy Presbyterian Church and maintains a private studio in Philadelphia, Pa.

**’04**

Baritone **Jonathan Scott** recently performed the role of Giorgio Germont in New Jersey Verismo Opera’s production of *La Traviata*. He was named a finalist in the New Jersey Verismo Opera 2013 Annual International Vocal Competition, which drew applicants from throughout the United States, Canada, Germany and Italy.

Soprano **Rachel Brager Goldemberg** won the Intermountain Region National Association of Teachers of Singing Artists Award Competition. She will perform in the finals in Boston in July 2014.

**’09**

Soprano **Heather Fetrow** performed the role of Bastienne in Mozart’s *Bastien and Bastienne* with Garden State Opera in April. Upcoming performances include Haydn’s *Lord Nelson Mass* with the Park Slope Singers, conducted by Ira Spaulding, on June 8, 2014.

Tenor **Steven Brennfleck** will be the 2014 Gretch Bence Young Artist in Residence in the Music Department of St. Lawrence University. He will visit classes and choral rehearsals, teach a master class and perform a recital.

**Rebecca Brinkley Jones** and pianist Tzu-Hwa Ho were chosen to be one of 10 singer-pianist pairs at the Baldwin Wallace Art Song Festival this summer. The pair will work with Roger Vignoles, Warren Jones, Joan Rodgers and Andrew Garland. Rebecca will also sing the role of Ilia in Mozart’s *Idomeneo* with the Kansas City Opera Institute in August 2014.

**Bridgette Gan** will cover the role of Micaëla in *Carmen* as an apprentice at Santa Fe Opera this summer. Highlights of her 2013-2014 include a resident artist position with Palm Beach Opera where she sang the role of Apparition No. 2 in *Macbeth* and Stella in *Les contes d’Hoffmann*, and her debut with the Marine Chamber Orchestra as the soprano soloist in *Knoxville: Summer of 1915*.

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**Have a Class Note to Share?**

Do you have news you’d like to share with the Westminster community in the next issue of *Symphonic*? Please send it to wccinfo@rider.edu or Office of External Affairs, Westminster Choir College, 101 Walnut Lane, Princeton, NJ 08540.
Soprano Kelly Ann Bixby won the Eastern Region National Association of Teachers of Singing Artists Award Competition. She will perform in the finals in Boston in July 2014. Kelly is the current choral music director at Moorestown Friends School.

Lauren Frey placed third in the Great Lakes Regional Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions. Recently, she performed the role of Musetta in Opera Western Reserve’s production of La Bohème. The Classical Cleveland wrote about her performance, she “brilliantly negotiated the intricacies of her role with sparkling ease.”

Trey Davis has accepted a position as associate director of choral activities at Louisiana State University and will begin in fall 2014. He will be working with 12 graduate students and with multiple choirs, as well as teaching conducting classes.

Alexandra Batsios performed the role of Berta in Opera Saratoga’s production of Il Barbiere di Siviglia in February 2014. A review of the performance in South Florida Classical Review stated that, “Alexandra Batsios was a wonderful, big-voiced Berta, delivering the maid’s Act 2 aria.”

Tenor George Ross Somerville will make his Opera Saratoga debut in 2014 after recently performing the role of Rev. Horace Adams in Peter Grimes with Des Moines Metro Opera. He is on the full chorus roster of Opera Philadelphia and is a member of the extra chorus with The Metropolitan Opera.

Pianist Keenan Boswell is currently pursuing a Doctor of Musical Arts in Opera Coaching at Butler Opera Center of the University of Texas in Austin. This summer, he will participate in the Carmel Bach Festival.

In Memoriam

Mary Meade Ensinger ’44 passed away on April 12, 2014.
Madeleine Sala Salster ’44 passed away on February 27, 2014.
E. Nelson Larrabee ’30 passed away on October 8, 2013.
James G. Kallam ’51, MM’52 passed away on February 1, 2014.
Joanne Baumgartner Near ’52 passed away on December 18, 2013.
Henry L. McDowell ’53, MM’54 passed away on April 14, 2014.
Jean Nauman Savage ’53 passed away on October 17, 2013.
Helen Huber Stroh ’54 passed away on November 3, 2013.
A. John Calhoun ’56 passed away on April 17, 2014.
Donald R. Mathis ’56 passed away on October 27, 2013.
Karen Heinritz Stewart ’57 passed away on February 17, 2014.
Mary Evelyn Bruce ’58 passed away on December 29, 2013.
George W. Decker ’61 passed away on April 4, 2014.
Jon O. Carlson ’63, MM’64 passed away on November 1, 2013.
Margaret Hansen Brandell ’67 passed away on January 29, 2014.
Roger Bailey ’70 passed away on December 3, 2013.
J. Mark Mason ’76 passed away on April 10, 2014.
Joel B. Hayden ’79 passed away on March 22, 2014.
Omar Garner ’91 passed away on April 12, 2014.
Jeffrey T. Dinsmore ’94 passed away on April 14, 2014.
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To make a gift online, visit alumni.rider.edu/wccgive.
Dear Alumni and Friends,

Alumni Reunion 2014 was one of the most exciting and moving in recent memory for those who were able to attend, with emotional acknowledgements of the service of Dean Robert Annis, Dr. Joseph Flummerfelt and Dr. Alexander McCurdy; Dr. Joe Beck’s presentation on the treasured legacy of Dr. John Finley Williamson; tours of the new Marion Buckelew Cullen Center; glorious performances by the Chapel Choir, Bell Choir, Jubilee Singers and the new undergraduate opera program; and the thrilling Commencement ceremony at Princeton University Chapel. These are just a few highlights of the many rich and meaningful experiences Westminster alumni enjoyed while they were back on campus.

In the past year, Westminster Symphonic Choir, under the direction of Dr. Joe Miller, received rave reviews for its performance of the Rouse Requiem at Carnegie Hall in May and the Williamson Voices, led by Dr. James Jordan, was nominated for a 2013 Grammy Award for their recording of Anneleys. A list of the significant impact our students, faculty and alumni are having in the fields of education, performance and service would be far too lengthy to list here.

Our rich heritage is being honored as we move forward to the exciting growth that lies ahead. The state-of-the-art Marion Buckelew Cullen Center will be completed in August, and we anticipate the renovation of The Playhouse. It is your generosity that makes these developments possible, and your continued participation will help bring them to completion. Our alumni are one of our most valuable assets. The tremendous gratitude felt by us all for your ongoing support and commitment cannot be overstated, and we thank you sincerely.

Yours,

Constance Fee ’71
Alumni Council President
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