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Excellence in Creative Activity Award Citation for Phillip Swan

Lawrence University

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2011 AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN CREATIVE ACTIVITY

PHILLIP A. SWAN

Your achievements as director of Cantala, the women's choir at Lawrence, have been magnificent. The choir is praised for the energy and beauty of its performances, its repertoire of original pieces, and the excitement that it creates for performers and audience alike. Cantala has performed both recognized masterpieces for women's choir and new compositions from living composers. The choir is known for its outstanding vocal production and mastery in the art of creating an artistic choral sound. This year Cantala received the highest honor in the field of choral ensembles by an invitation to perform at the prestigious American Choir Directors' Association national conference. Cantala was selected from over four hundred entries from around the globe, and was the only women's choir chosen to be honored. Cantala's personnel have always been primarily Freshman and Sophomores, so the task of preparing these young voices for the most prominent stage in America was no easy task. Part master musician, part inspirational director, and yes, part psychologist, you transformed your young choir from wide-eyed recruits in September to a world-class vocal ensemble in March. Cantala performed flawlessly at the ACDA convention and received standing ovations from the choir world's most discriminating audience—2,000 choir directors! No one could believe that the program they heard had just come from a choir of Freshman and Sophomores. This accomplishment is clearly the result of the inspired, creative, and brilliant work you do with our students.

Among your many awards, you have co-authored a successful grant from the National Endowment for the Arts for its prestigious American Choral Masterpiece Program. The grant supported an invitational festival that included the performance of five American Choral Masterpieces. You also obtained a Mandel Foundation grant to commission a new multi-movement composition and have commissioned several other important works. Your own activities as clinician, guest conductor, and workshop leader have taken you around the globe and have resulted in a long and continually growing list of accomplishments.

I am confident you will continue making outstanding contributions to the world of music with your consummate performances, innovative commissioning initiatives, and visionary leadership.

In recognition of your creative accomplishments, I am extremely pleased to present you with the 2011 Award for Excellence in Creative Activity.