Christine Jordanoff Celebrates 25 Years
In 2011, Christine Jordanoff, professor of music education and director of choral organizations, is celebrating her twenty-fifth season as director of the Children’s Festival Chorus (CFC).

Leading a children’s chorus was a long-standing dream for Jordanoff, even before 1973 when she became a member of the Duquesne faculty. It was 12 years later that a colleague connected her with the CFC, then in need of a director.

A few months afterward, Jordanoff became the group’s director, and CFC became an ensemble-in-residence at Duquesne. Under Jordanoff’s direction, the CFC began attracting funding and landing singing engagements. In 1987, they performed successfully in a Pittsburgh Opera production, the acid test of preparedness and professionalism, according to Jordanoff.

Since then, Jordanoff has developed the CFC into a cultural and educational asset for the city and for Duquesne. Today, the CFC has approximately 150 singers, most between the ages of 8 and 15, divided into three groups according to ability. It employs six people, three of them full time, and performs an average of 15 concerts each year.

Because it is an ensemble-in-residence, the CFC enjoys a relationship with the University that benefits the young performers, and in return, the CFC wins fans when they perform, which brings visibility and prestige to Duquesne.

In addition, music education majors can enroll in Children’s Choir Lab to work closely with the children in the chorus, an opportunity to validate and demonstrate teaching techniques and a course offering unique in the state, according to Jordanoff.

Jordanoff can point out many successes in her 25 years with the CFC, including repeated requests to supply the chorus for concerts and opera productions. This spring, for example, children from the CFC will perform in the Pittsburgh Opera’s production of Turandot. The chorus has also been selected several times over the years, by audition, to perform at music educator’s conventions.

But for Jordanoff, perhaps the most convincing proof of success is that alumni of the CFC are sending children to audition for the chorus, a sign of stability that spans generations. Some CFC alumni have also gone on to successful careers in music, and by Jordanoff’s estimate several hundred CFC alumni have become alumni of Duquesne.

“It was providential,” Jordanoff says of her 25 years with the CFC, “and it was probably the most important professional move that ever happened in my life.”

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