



NEWS RELEASE

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UW-Eau Claire choral group tours Argentina and Uruguay

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EAU CLAIRE — The Singing Statesmen, under the direction of Dr. Gary Schwartzhoff, professor of music at the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire, toured Argentina and Uruguay during the recent winter break.

While the weather, the city of Buenos Aires and the extraordinary concert venues made this destination attractive, Schwartzhoff said the cultural exchange was the most beneficial part of the tour for students.

"As a performing ensemble, audiences are drawn to the concert where the students and the audience have the chance to share music and the human experience," he said.

Senior Mike Jones, Hastings, Minn., said the trip became a phenomenal bonding experience for students and the people they met.

"We didn't speak the same language, but we watched people who were moved to tears and truly appreciated the music we created every time we sang. Those are the kinds of moments very few people get to experience in life," said Jones.

"I will always remember standing at the center of Buenos Aires with 68 of my brothers on New Year's Eve singing songs on our own for at least 100 Argentines," said Jones, who said a fireworks show did not distract people nearby from huddling close to hear and even videotape their impromptu singing. Some cried with joy.

While in Argentina The Statesmen performed with the cathedral choir during Mass at La Plata Cathedral in La Plata, sang with the graduate choir at La Universidad de Belgrano, participated in Mass at the Basilica of San Francisco and performed a shared concert with Coro Santa Maria de Los Angeles. They also sang on the ferry during a one-day excursion to Colonia del Sacramento, Uruguay.

"The experience will stay with me as long as I live," said Jones. "I cannot begin to thank UW-Eau Claire and the music department for the unbelievable opportunities I would have missed out on without their help and support."

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