

# SWOSU Students to Attend Prestigious Summer Program with Grammy Award Winners

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The “Mighty Tau Phi Singers,” comprised of 20 members of Southwestern Oklahoma State University’s Phi Mu Alpha Sinfonia in Weatherford have been selected to attend the inaugural U.S. King’s Singers Summer School on June 13-19, 2017, at DePauw University in Greencastle (IN).

The SWOSU men gained entry to the elite program by audition, according to faculty advisor Sure’ Eloff.

The King’s Singers, a British a cappella men’s ensemble, originated in 1968 at King’s College Cambridge, where the choral scholars studied under the direction of Sir David Wilcox. Over the course of 48 years, they have made over 150 recordings and earned two Grammys and one Emmy. The King’s Singers plan to host the U.S. residential summer school every two years.

As required, the SWOSU students prepared an a cappella folk song – *Vive L’amour* – a French folk song about brotherly love and lifelong friendships. They rehearsed weekly and added multiple rehearsals and sectionals as the recording date neared. Taylor Steier, music director for the fraternity, and Eloff, faculty member in the SWOSU Department of Music, advised and prepared the group and submitted the selection. Faculty member Vurl Bland engineered and produced the recording.

The guest clinician, King’s Singers tenor Bob Chilcott from 1986 – 1997, now works as a composer and serves as principal guest conductor for the BBC Singers. The residential summer school will cover a wide variety of repertoire with a clear emphasis on the art of close harmony singing. Preparation for the SWOSU group has already begun as the ensemble must bring a ready-to-perform concert program of 10 pieces in addition to specially selected coursework music.

“What a great opportunity for our student musicians to work with some of the finest singers in an intensive week-long setting,” said Dr. David Bessinger, chair of the SWOSU Department of Music. “This experience will broaden the students’ skills and musicianship. I am happy to support this artistic endeavor.”

While at the summer school, the men will stay in on-campus housing, take all meals together and follow a rigorous daily schedule including warm-up/vocal technique sessions led by the King’s Singers, several performances opportunities, informal concerts and a final day gala concert. They will be assigned a member of the King’s Singers who will mentor them throughout the week.

The 20 men from SWOSU represent six departments outside of the Department of Music, and the majority only study voice as a secondary degree requirement.

The men are already busy working with the College of Arts and Sciences, Office of Sponsored Programs, Department of Music, Phi Mu Alpha Sinfonia Alumni and

has a marketing team in place to begin a fiscal campaign to fund this most amazing opportunity. In total, the SWOSU group must earn at least \$27,000.

“Working with an ensemble of the King’s Singers stature is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. They are considered the best in the world at what they do and are passionate about sharing their knowledge and expertise with young singers,” Eloff said. “I am so proud of the Sinfonians and all the hard work they’ve done.”

**PARTICIPANTS are:**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Home Town</b>
Austin Alexander Hardman	Guymon, OK
Breydon Cole Renard	Enid, OK
Joaquin Angelo Martinez	Anadarko, OK
Aaron Christopher Edge	Ardmore, OK
Josiah Trey Langley	Lawton, OK
Cherokee Thomas Riddle	Muskogee, OK
Jesse Lawrence Hadley	Edmond, OK
Anthony Randall Valentine	Oklahoma City, OK
Jayden Eric Goeringer-Evans	Cordell, OK
Austin Taylor Smith	Altus, OK
Matthew Daniel Beebe	Enid, OK
Devan Neal Bettencourt	Kingfisher, OK
Davison Nguyen	Oklahoma City, OK
Noé Ruiz	Marlow, OK
Alan Lee Baker	Mustang, OK
Kristopher Daniel Benton	Stroud, OK
Jackson Alexander Anderson	Enid, OK
Taylor Vincent Steier	Enid, OK
Ethan Gage Mazzio	Moore, OK
Douglas Shane Finley	Velma, OK
Suré Eloff ( <i>faculty advisor</i> )	Cape Town, South Africa
Tamra Misak ( <i>University representative</i> )	Weatherford, OK