

YSU receives "All Steinway" honors

BILL RODGERS | *The Jambar*

Youngstown State University officials and musicians were on hand Friday afternoon to officially recognize the Dana School of Music as an "All-Steinway School."

YSU is the first Ohio public university to earn this distinction that is only held by 40 other schools worldwide. YSU has joined schools such as the Juilliard School in New York and the Yale University School of Music.

Friday's presentation expressed the school of music's excitement to be included in this distinction by using 68 new Steinway pianos in their classrooms. The pianos, manufactured by the 150-year-old Steinway And Sons Inc., were referred to as "cultural treasures," by Bruce Stevens, president and CEO of the piano company.

"[Steinway] has created the finest pianos the world has ever known," Stevens said.

Provost Tony Atwater said the distinction shows the

school's commitment to quality and excellence.

"We're already one of the oldest and best schools of music in the nation," Atwater said. "Now when people hear about Dana, they'll say, 'Wait, they're an All-Steinway school too?'"

The new pianos are valued at \$837,000. A large part of the money for the pianos was raised through private donations.

"This is how state universities like ours are dealing with declining state funding. It would have been easy for us to throw up our hands and give up, but we can still succeed in times of economic stress with limited resources," Atwater said.

Stevens said he was delighted to be present at the event and to honor YSU. He pointed out that when Dana was established in 1869, his company had been making pianos in New York for only 16 years.

"Dana has had its own legacy for 135 years," Stevens said. "The school has always had a commitment to excellence for all

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of the gifted students who come here.”

Stevens then presented a plaque marking the event to George McCloud, dean of the College of Fine and Performing Arts.

Caroline Oltmanns, associate professor of piano, added to the presentation by playing a piece titled “Fireworks” by Claude Debussy. Oltmanns performed the piece on a Steinway piano in the recital hall.

“I believe “Fireworks” is a fitting thing to play to celebrate our new babies,” Oltmanns said, referring

to the new pianos.

Michael Crist, director of the Dana school of music, offered some closing remarks while cradling the plaque Stevens presented.

“The purpose of all this, of course, is the students,” Crist said.

Crist addressed the music students in attendance.

“As you move around your musical careers, you’ll begin to realize how this event was significant. [Dana] has been an excellent school for 135 years, who knows how much further we’ll go in the next 135 years?” Crist said.

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