

Mariachi Nueva Generación Wins First at Mariachi Vargas Competition

Texas State's Mariachi Nueva Generación took first place honors at the 12th annual Mariachi Vargas Extravaganza Group Competition.



The prestigious competition, sponsored by Ford Motor Company, was held in December at the San Antonio Municipal Auditorium.

The Texas State mariachi ensemble has been gaining on its competition for several years now.

In its first Mariachi Vargas Competition in 2003, the ensemble placed third. In 2004 and 2005 the Texas State ensemble placed second. The first-place finish in 2006, therefore, was the natural culmination of the group's progress. Following the competition performance, the ensemble opened a sold out concert by the world-famous Mariachi Vargas de Tecalitlán.

"The Texas State mariachi ensemble worked very hard all semester on the show, which was arranged by one of our own students, Cirilo Campos," said Professor John Lopez, multicultural music coordinator for the School of Music. "The show was also a tribute to the well-known Mexican singer, Miguel Aceves-Mejla, who passed away earlier this year."

Mariachi Nueva Generación was judged superior to four other strong university mariachi programs. The judging was done by members of Mariachi Vargas de Tecalitlán.

The 2007 Texas State Mariachi Festival is scheduled for April 28 and 29. More information about the festival is available at www.txstate.edu/mcmusic.

Texas State Youth Mariachi Grows!

In the last issue of ENCORE! (fall, 2006), we announced the creation of the Texas State Youth Mariachi. There was a photo of the eight youngsters who were the founding members of the ensemble. This spring, the group has more than quadrupled in size. Each week, 33 young musicians meet to make great mariachi music!

Needless to say, the director of the ensemble, Professor John Lopez, is delighted and excited by the stunning growth of the Youth Mariachi.

This program is a wonderful outreach into the San Marcos and surrounding communities. Rehearsals are held weekly in the Texas State Music Building.



Texas State Singers Win Big at Texoma NATS

Four talented singers from the Texas State School of Music placed in the finals at the National Association of Teachers of Singing Texoma Regional Convention and Auditions in November, 2006. Two of them won first-place recognition. This tri-state competition, held at Baylor University, involved some 900 singers representing about 150 teachers. It is quite unusual for four finalists to come from any one music program. The finalists were:

- Catherine Clarke, first place among Sophomore Women
- William Hearn, first place among Junior Men
- Ashley Stone, third place among Junior Women
- Jason Slayden, third place among Senior Men

Both first-place winners (Catherine Clarke and Will Hearn) are students of Professor Juli Wood. Ashley Stone studies with Professor Bert Neeley and Jason Slayden studies with Professor Cheryl Parrish.

Of the 27 Texas State students who participated in the Texoma Competition, over half placed in the semi-finals.



In March of this year, five Texas State singers participated in the South Texas NATS Auditions held at Trinity University in San Antonio. About 150 students competed for prizes in this competition. Of the five Texas State students, four placed in the finals:

- Sarah Walker, first place in Graduate Women (lower voice)
- Lori Paradoski, first place in Graduate Women (upper voice)
- Tara Slight, second place in Graduate Women (lower voice)
- Lindsey Kowalik, second place in Graduate Women (upper voice)

Lori Paradoski was named Outstanding Vocalist in the competition (for the student with the greatest career potential) and won the prestigious Alice Dutcher Thornton Award. Paradoski and Kowalik are students of Professor Juli Wood. Walker and Slight are students of Professor Cheryl Parrish.

Salsa del Rio Takes Third Consecutive First Place Award!

The Texas State salsa ensemble, Salsa del Rio, was named the best Salsa/Merengue Band of the Year for the third year in a row at Univision's "Premios a la Musica Latina" awards.

The ensemble was also honored recently with a *Downbeat* Student Music Award; the ensemble was named as a College Winner in the Blues, Pop, and Rock Group category. This award was based on their recent compact disc ("Lloraras y Lloraras"), released in October, 2006.

