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Montana State University celebrates 25 years of music accreditation

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The Montana State University annual Christmas concert, scheduled Sunday, Dec. 15, at 8:15 p.m. in the University Theater, will commemorate the 10th anniversary of the Music building and the 25th anniversary of the Music Department's continuous accreditation by the National Association of Schools of Music, according to Dean Charles W. Bolen. Proceeds from the anniversary concert will be used for scholarships, he said.

The NASM, founded in 1924, is the agency responsible for the accreditation of all music-degree curricula with specialization in the fields of applied music, music theory, composition, music therapy, musicology, and music as a major in liberal arts programs.

The MSU Music Department has had continuous NASM accreditation since the late Dean John Crowder applied for accreditation in 1938. As the only music department accredited in Montana - and one of the few in the entire Northwest - it has long enjoyed national recognition, Dean Bolen said. Just last year the NASM re-evaluated MSU and reaffirmed its accreditation, he added.

"This record attests to the quality achieved by Dean Crowder and continued by Dr. Luther A. Richman of the music faculty, who served as fine arts dean from 1952 to 1962," Dean Bolen commented. "A quarter of a century of accreditation is also a tribute to the people of Montana since the real measure of any school is its graduates. The Music Department boasts a large number of distinguished alumni in professional and in important teaching positions all over the United States."

"MSU's recognition by the NASM brings it into the main stream of music education trends in the country," the dean continued. "Especially since World War II, colleges and universities have assumed a growing part in the musical training of (more)
American youth. Prior to this, talented students generally had to attend a conservatory or go to Europe for musical training. The addition of professional music curricula to college and university offerings has made a significant mark on American education."

"The effect of university general studies on music students, in the main, has been welcomed by music education leaders," Dean Bolen said. "Conversely, the influence of music schools on the universities has been in large part responsible for the 'cultural explosion' that has seen a tremendous increase in attendance at musical programs and in the purchase of recordings. This renaissance in music has resulted in the music industry being among the 10 largest in the United States."