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L.A. PIERCE COLLEGE CHOIR TO PERFORM AT KENNEDY CENTER FOR MEMORIAL DAY CEREMONY

(Editor's Note: Photos follow after news release)

Woodland Hills, Calif. – The Los Angeles Pierce College Choir has the distinguished honor of being invited to perform with the U.S. Air Force Band at the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C. this May.

Under Dr. Garineh Avakian, Pierce Professor of Music and Choir Director, they will participate in the [National Memorial Day Choral Festival](#) May 26-30, 2022. This Festival is a musical tribute saluting America's military and fallen heroes, set in the Concert Hall in the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts.

Dr. Avakian said, "I am proud and humbled to experience this remarkable opportunity with my students. It is a complete honor and joy to be invited and supported to share this experience through music for our country."

The invitation was extended by The United States Air Force and American Veterans Center through Music Celebrations International after an application process that began in Summer of 2021.

The Choir is comprised of sixty-seven Pierce College students who will travel to Washington, D.C., to sing. Six senators from the Associated Student Organization and a handful of faculty and staff from Pierce will also attend.

"The Music Department at Pierce is growing and thriving with our many performing ensembles like the Symphonic Band, Studio Jazz Band, and the Choir. It is the students that make our program great, along with the infectious energy and talent of our devoted music instructors," Dr. Avakian said.

Music performed by the Choir ranges from classical and musical theater to jazz and medleys. They perform two concerts a year, and have participated in choral festivals such as the Invitational Community College Choir Festival at the University of Southern California, Thornton

School of Music. The Choir also collaborates with many local high schools to engage and inspire students in choral music.

The Washington D.C. trip will provide an exceptional performance opportunity for Pierce students, who will experience singing in the Concert Hall of the internationally renowned John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. They will also get to witness the activities surrounding our nation's capital during Memorial Day Weekend.

The Pierce Choir will work with one of America's foremost choral conductors, Dr. Craig Jessop, former Lieutenant Colonel in the U.S. Air Force Music Programs, Director of the U.S. Air Force Singing Sergeants in Washington, DC; and music Director of the Mormon Tabernacle Choir.

The students will rehearse daily at the Kennedy Center with Dr. Jessop and Dr. Avakian, perform on Sunday, May 29, and lay a wreath at Arlington Cemetery during the National Memorial Day Parade, which will be nationally televised.

At a Choir rehearsal on campus recently, Pierce College Interim President Ara Aguiar said, "Dr. Avakian, your talent and energy are infectious! You and our Pierce students touch the hearts of our community through music."

On Sunday, the Choir will attend the official National Memorial Day Concert on the West Lawn of the U.S. Capitol, featuring the National Symphony Orchestra, and broadcast live on PBS. This Memorial Day Concert will finish with a breathtaking fireworks display over D.C. presented by the Presidential Salute Guns Battery of the 3rd United States Army Infantry Regiment.

Between rehearsing and performing, students will have the opportunity to visit the Thomas Jefferson Memorial, the Marine Corps Iwo Jima Memorial, Arlington National Cemetery, possibly viewing the changing of the guard, and the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. Other sightseeing may include visiting the National Air and Space Museum or Smithsonian American Art Museum.

Recently, the Pierce College Choir was awarded a special recognition certificate from Councilmember of Woodland Hills, Bob Blumenfield, for its commitment to the arts and dedication of bringing community together to enjoy the work of musicians.

Los Angeles Pierce College is recognized as one of the most respected community colleges and transfer institutions in California. Established in 1947 and located on 426 picturesque acres in Woodland Hills, the College's comprehensive curriculum and support services enable its 18,000 students to earn associate degrees and certificates, prepare for university transfer, and gain career education proficiency. Pierce is one of the nine colleges of the Los Angeles Community College District, the largest district in the United States.

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