

Music students represent DSU in Washington, D.C. and Germany

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A choir student and four brass musicians – all from Delaware State University – continued their musical development on the respective stages of Washington, D.C. and in Germany.

James Henry DeShields represented DSU as he sang with the 2009 concert of the 105 Voices of History National Choir, which performed on Aug. 30 at the John F. Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C.



James Henry DeShields (right) is all smiles after his performance. With him is Dr. Curtis Powell, DSU director of choral activities, who attended the concert in Washington, D.C. in support of his student

The concert was the second annual performance of the 105 Voices of History National Choir, which combined 105 outstanding vocalists from historically black colleges and universities across the country to form a remarkable and powerful choir.

Mr. DeShields said it was a great opportunity for him to experience different singing styles.

“I learned that singing should not only be a pastime, but should also express one’s inner passion and talent,” Mr. DeShields said. “Under the direction of four national conductors, we, the 105 Voices of History National Choir were introduced to different conducting styles and techniques.”

The DSU Brass Quintet also had a memorable summer experience as one of the invited ensembles to attend and perform at the Lichtenberg Brass Festival at the renowned Haus Marteau Chamber Music Institute of Germany.

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The DSU musicians – Matthew Brown and Williams Pitts on trumpets, Antione Hughes on french horn, Shawn Walker on trombone and James Fair on tuba – were engaged in intensive daily music rehearsals with two other invited ensembles and individual musicians attending the festival. They also experienced the country’s hospitality while they stayed with German host families.



(Seated l-r) Matthew Brown, Shawn Walker, James Fair, Antione Hughes and William Pitts take their DSU Brass Quintet musicianship to a new level under festival instructor Jim Thompson watchful eye and sensitive ear.

The DSU Brass Quintet and the other two ensembles gave a pre-concert on Aug. 7 in downtown Hof, Germany to promote the festival concert the following evening.

During the concert the DSU Quintet performed a stirring rendition of “Remember Me,” in which they not only played their instruments, but also sang a verse.

“The concert took place on the ruins of a castle built on the highest spot in the center of the village,” said Dr. Patrick Hoffman, DSU assistant professor of music and the quintet’s director. “The weather all week had been perfect and continued into that night to create the perfect atmosphere for an open-air concert.”

Matthew Brown said that it was an amazing experience that he would will never forget. “It really benefited us as a group to tour on the other side (of the world),” Mr. Brown said. “The whole taste of the musicians over there is very baroque and classical; and their mentality of musicianship is on a very different level.”

Dr. Hoffman formed the DSU Brass Quintet during the 2008-2009 school year.

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