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SUU Percussion Students Place in State Championship

Written by Ashley H Pollock

Southern Utah University, Cedar City, Utah: Southern Utah University's Percussion students recently participated in the Utah Day of Percussion. Each year, students from the Department of Music join in this conference in the various competitive events.

Jordan Nielsen, a junior percussion performance major from Price, Utah, said, "Preparing for this competition meant a lot of personal practice and instruction from Dr. Vartan. There are a large variety of new and different musical pieces."

Students worked hard to become a percussion program of high caliber and compete against schools of all sizes and skill levels. SUU's Jordan Nielsen won the State Championship title in the instrument of Timpani in the College category. Marissa Brown placed third in Timpani in the state and Tylor Williams placed third in Marimba in the state.

Dr. Lynn Vartan, Director of Percussion at SUU, said, "Our percussion program continues to be a huge and powerful presence against very strong programs like the University of Utah and BYU, among others!"

Marissa Brown, a senior music major from Farmington, Utah, said, "I picked a very hard piece a few years ago that I wanted to learn in the future. I couldn't handle it until this semester and it is my last semester of school. I started working on this piece in January to get ready for the competition and had to get very creative since my piece calls for some interesting noises such as rolling with a superball mallet, and dropping a cymbal on the ground. Preparing for the competition was a little tricky to practice for since I couldn't take the big drums home to practice during spring break. But I contacted a local high school in my area back home and they worked with me on getting some practice times and allowing me to come use instruments in their school."

Brown went on to say, "For those interested in percussion I would invite you to join the SUU Percussion Ensemble. You can be involved no matter your level of experience or your major. It even counts as a half credit class. If you stick to it like I did, you can eventually play the pieces you always dreamed of playing."

For more information about the percussion program at SUU, please visit
www.suu.edu/pva/music/percussion.

About the College of Performing and Visual Arts

The Southern Utah University College of Performing and Visual Arts is comprised of nationally accredited departments of Art and Design, Music, and Dance. The College also offers programs in Theatre Arts, graduate programs in Arts Administration and Music, as well as a Center for Shakespeare Studies. The College offers 16 different degree areas, including liberal arts Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Science degrees; professional Bachelor of Music and Bachelor of Fine Arts in art and theatre degrees; and Master of Fine Arts in Arts Administration, Master of Arts in Arts Administration, Master of Music Education and Master of Music in Music Technology graduate degrees. More than 60 full- and part-time faculty and staff are engaged in teaching and mentoring nearly 600 majors in the College. Over 1,100 students enroll each year in over 195 arts classes on the SUU campus. The College presents over 100 performances, lectures, presentations, and exhibitions each year. The College's affiliate organizations include the Southern Utah Museum of Art (SUMA), Utah Shakespeare Festival and SUU's Ballroom Dance Company. For more information about the College of Performing and Visual Arts, visit www.suu.edu/pva.

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