Creighton Music Grad Receives Award

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Reporter

Damian Espinosa, Creighton's first music major, recently won the Collegiate Professional Achievement award from the Music Educators National Conference. He now studies piano with a Russian émigré.

His academic advisor, Dr. Marilyn Kielniarz, sent her letter of support to MENC headquarters. The panel gave Espinosa the award based solely on his academic record and Kielniarz's recommendation—they had never even heard him play.

Espinosa's talent and major is piano, and so he has a Bachelor of Arts degree in Music.

"I am trained as a classical musician," said Espinosa, but he also plays jazz and other styles.

"I don't know if I'd call myself a singer." Espinosa said, even though he and two other classmates sang with the Omaha Symphony last year, but " I definitely enjoy doing it."

He sang Mahler's Symphony 8 and said that working with the people in the symphony was a great experience.

Espinosa was first involved in choral activities at Creighton. He has only high praise for the new Lied Education Center for the Arts and says that better equipment and additional part-time teachers will greatly aid a program with the potential to be re ally strong.

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> - Dr. Marilyn Kielniarz, professor of music

Espinosa, a December 1995 graduate, began taking music classes in anticipation of a major being accepted. Espinosa took a chance and continued taking music classes, almost on faith, said Kielniarz. It wasn't until Espinosa was a junior that a major was accepted, however.

While at Creighton, Espinosa was president of Sigma Nu Fraternity as well as treasurer of MENC. Espinosa holds a Business Certificate from Creighton. "For the first music major, he sets pretty high standards," his academic advisor, Dr. Kielniarz said.

Espinosa is currently studying classic Russian piano pieces with a Russian émigré and doctoral student at the University of New Mexico in Albuquerque. He also studies music theory.

According to Espinosa, he's "just waiting tables," while looking for teaching positions at private school in the area. But he also is a substitute piano teacher at UNM prep school. He sings in weddings and at cocktail parties now but says he still prefers playing piano. He is in the church choir in Albuquerque.

Of all his past glories and current accolades, Espinosa said, "I did my best." He says he felt he also had big shoes to fill.

A graduate degree in music theory will make Espinosa more marketable, said Kielniarz. Espinosa said he eventually hopes to teach at the college level.