Your Time to Shine celebrates CPP's new status

Alexandria Waldron, Staff Writer | Posted: Monday, April 6, 2015 12:31 pm

Cal Poly Pomona received the All-Steinway School designation from Steinway & Sons at the Your Time to Shine concert celebration and ceremony, held in the Music Recital Hall on Thursday night.

Your Time to Shine was an event specifically created by CPP public relations students as a class project to formally acknowledge the university’s achievement of becoming an All-Steinway School.

The All-Steinway School designation is awarded to institutions where the only pianos used are Steinway & Sons. Steinway pianos are considered to be the world’s leading pianos due to their quality. Only 170 other educational institutions have the recognition of being an All-Steinway School.

“This was something I really wanted to bring to the university,” said Music Department Chair Iris Levine. “It is going to uplift the entire university, and I wanted this to happen.”

The Steinway Company offers several programs and services to help any institution that has the desire to become an All-Steinway School.

The College of Letters, Arts and Social Sciences worked with the music department to create the All-Steinway Initiative in fall 2013. They began to raise money to purchase new Steinway pianos for the university.

“Music serves more students on this campus than any other program,” said Teresa Kelly, the music department’s publicist. “This was a university initiative.”

Music students formed a grassroots effort called Students for Steinway to create awareness and raise funds for the All-Steinway Initiative. Students for Steinway organized a benefit concert at The Glass House in downtown Pomona last May, which was one of the largest student-organized fundraising events of the year. The concert raised a total of $1,335 towards the initiative.

“It took a lot of hard work from everyone,” said Levine. “It was important to let people know the positive impact their donation would make.”
In just under two years, the university raised the $1.5 million needed to purchase 29 new Steinway pianos. The last pianos were delivered last December, and this event marked the actual recognition of being an All-Steinway School.

“I’m thrilled to have had our president accept the recognition,” said Levine. “It was nice to be able to recognize everyone for their efforts with this initiative.”

CPP President Emeritus Michael Ortiz and his wife Betty were major contributors to the success of the All-Steinway Initiative. Both accompanied current CPP President Soraya Coley on stage during the ceremony to receive the designation plaque and be recognized for their efforts.

“Everybody really got behind it,” said Kelly. “It made it a really fun and special event.”

Several students and alumni performed at the event celebration, as well as a CPP Professor and Steinway artist Nadia Shpachenko.

“To have the audience be able to hear the variety of performances in recognition of this initiative is awesome,” said Levine.

Although the university has succeeded in acquiring the Steinway pianos, there is now a second phase to the initiative. The second phase, titled “Pursuit of Excellence,” was established to help the university raise another $1 million for a maintenance endowment.

“We know that there’s going to be connections to the community as we go forth with this,” said Levine. “It will bring people to Cal Poly who want to be able to play.”

The new Steinway pianos are located in all of the music department’s practice rooms and the Music Recital Hall for students to play and enjoy.