FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**NMAC announces Senior High Concert Choir as grant recipient**

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**Warren, MN –** The Northwest Minnesota Arts Council (NMAC) has announced that the East Grand Forks Senior High Concert Choir will be a recipient of an Arts Legacy grant. The “Artist in the Schools” grant will provide funding for the creation of an original piece of choral music that the choir will perform later this school year.

Senior High choir director Donovan Hanson applied for the grant in August in hopes of utilizing funds to bring a professional composer into the classroom to work directly with students on the commissioned work during a brief residency program.

The $2,000 award will be used to pay for the creation of a new composition specifically written for the EGF Concert Choir by Minneapolis-based composer and piano teacher Mitch Grussing. The funds will also support a residency program that will bring Mr. Grussing to East Grant Forks to rehearse with the students on the commissioned piece, and will cover mileage and other expenses involved in the residency program.

“I met Mitch as a college student and we have been close friends since that time,” Hanson said. “He is an extremely talented musician and I am excited to bring him into the classroom to not only work with our students on a brand new piece of music, but to show them one path that a career in music can take.

“When they hear the word ‘composer,’ many people think of historical figueres like Mozart or Beethoven, who are certainly relevant to our craft but somewhat distant from most students’ day-to-day experiences. My hope is that bringing a young and vibrant professional into their classroom will open the minds of students to consider a career in the arts for themselves.”

The piece has yet to be written, but the anticipated timeline for the debut of the new work is mid-February. The Concert Choir has been selected to perform at this year’s Midwinter Clinic of the Minnesota Music Educators Association (MMEA) in downtown Minneapolis. Having the premiere there will not only give the composer an easy opportunity to be present for the performance, but will allow the new piece to be heard by an audience largely comprised of other music teachers, who may choose to program it for their own choirs or who may approach Mr. Grussing about a commissioning project of their own.

The piece will be performed in East Grand Forks at a later date, most likely at the final choir concert of the school year on Monday, May 11th at 7 p.m. in the Senior High Performing Arts Center.

This activity is made possible by the voters of Minnesota through a grant from the Northwest Minnesota Arts Council, thanks to a legislative appropriation from the Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund.



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