The purpose of the ISU Honor Choir is to provide an opportunity for talented high school singers to perform in a select choir under the leadership of ISU faculty. The ensemble will be a balanced group consisting of roughly 100 members, chosen by live audition from among the finest high school musicians in the state.

Date and Schedule of Events

The Honor Choir Festival will begin on Sunday, February 14, 2010 at 12:00 p.m. with check-in, sectional rehearsals, and the first full rehearsal. Full rehearsals will be held on Sunday and Monday with a final Festival Concert on Monday evening, February 15 in the Martha-Ellen Tye Recital Hall. Students will have the opportunity to interact with ISU music students and faculty, and will also hear performances by ISU's large choral ensembles.

Auditions

The audition fee for the Festival will be $8.00 for each student. This must accompany the audition registration form.

Regional auditions will be held in the following communities on the indicated dates:

- Monday, October 26  3:30 – 8:00 p.m.  Johnston High School
- Tuesday, October 27  8:15 – 10:00 a.m.  Fort Dodge High School
- Tuesday, October 27  12:15 – 3:00 p.m.  Denison High School
- Tuesday, October 27  5:00 – 8:30 p.m.  Council Bluffs Lewis Central HS
- Saturday, October 31  10:00 – 2:00 p.m.  ISU, Music Hall
- Monday, November 2  10:00 – 12:15 p.m.  Waverly-Shell Rock High School
- Monday, November 2  2:15 – 3:15 p.m.  Cedar Rapids Prairie High School
- Monday, November 2  4:00 – 10:00 p.m.  Iowa City City High School
- Tuesday, November 3  8:00 – 9:45 a.m.  Iowa City City High School
- Tuesday, November 3  10:15 – 3:15 p.m.  Iowa City West High School
- Tuesday, November 3  5:00 – 6:30 p.m.  Grinnell High School
- Tuesday, November 3  8:00 – 10:00 p.m.  Indianola High School
Auditions will be scheduled in five-minute intervals. Auditionees should sing a prepared solo. It need not be memorized. (Singing “last year’s contest solo” would certainly be appropriate.) Bringing an extra copy of the music for the adjudicator is not necessary. Included in the choral audition will be sight-reading and possible tonal memory exercises. Students who need/desire an accompanist should PROVIDE THEIR OWN. Auditions will be conducted by Dr. Rodde. PLEASE MAKE EVERY ATTEMPT TO ATTEND AUDITIONS AT ONE OF THESE SITES. If you have students who are interested but who cannot appear for auditions at these locations and times, we will certainly attempt to make special arrangements.

To secure audition times, please return the enclosed form postmarked by Thursday, October 8 to:

Honor Choir  
149 Music Hall  
Iowa State University  
Ames, IA 50011-2180

Upon receipt of this list, your students will be assigned audition times (please note the column asking for "preferred time"), and a master audition schedule will be mailed to you on Monday, October 19. We will work very hard to schedule your students as closely as possible to their preferred time.

Housing/Meals

As with All-State and State Music Contests, participating students must make their own housing arrangements. After the selections for this year’s choir have been made, you and your students will receive a list of motels that have agreed to hold rooms and provide discounted rates for the festival weekend. High school students are responsible for their transportation to and from Ames. Meals for all students participating in the Honor Choir will be provided at no charge by ISU. Please note that Iowa State University bears no responsibility for supervision of the students away from the University.

About the Conductor

James Rodde is the Moen Professor of Music and Director of Choral Activities at Iowa State University. He conducts the Iowa State Singers, the 145-voice Iowa Statesmen, and teaches choral conducting and literature. A native of Minneapolis, he received the Bachelor's degree in Music Education from Augsburg College and completed the M.A. and D.M.A. degrees in Choral Conducting at the University of Iowa.

Choirs under his direction have been honored with performances at distinguished music conferences, including the 1993, 1997, 2005, and 2009 ACDA National, the 2008 NCCO National, and 1992 MENC National Conventions. An active clinician, Dr. Rodde has led several All-State and regional festival ensembles, including the 1996 and 2002 North Central ACDA Men's Honor Choir. Recent engagements include the 2005 Wisconsin, the 2006 Texas, Iowa, South Dakota, and the 2008 Colorado and Nebraska All-State Honor Choirs.

For the past decade he served as the NC-ACDA Repertoire and Standards Chair for Male Choirs and is the Artistic Director of the Des Moines Choral Society and the Ames Chamber Artists.