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NEWS RELEASE

AS 250TH ANNIVERSARY OF MOZART'S BIRTHDAY APPROACHES, PROFESSOR WINS PRESTIGIOUS NEH GRANT TO OFFER VIENNA INSTITUTE

DAYTON, Ohio – Next year marks the 250th anniversary of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's birthday, and Richard Benedum plans to celebrate in a big way.

Benedum, professor of music at the University of Dayton, has received a \$269,244 grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities to offer "Mozart's World," a five-week summer interdisciplinary institute in Vienna, Austria, for 30 teachers to study the music of Mozart in its cultural and historical context.

In all, he has received approximately \$2.5 million in funding from the NEH, Ohio Arts Council and foundations over the past 15 years to bring Mozart alive for teachers. He has either directed or co-directed 10 Mozart seminars or institutes in Vienna since 1990. He also has co-directed 10 mini-institutes on the operas of Mozart, Beethoven and other composers for teachers in Ohio and Florida. He wrote the script for and produced a series of six 30-minute radio broadcasts featuring excerpts from Mozart's letters interspersed with music that aired on about 150 National Public Radio stations.

"It's possible to get to know a historical figure in a somewhat personal way and to think of those people as friends," Benedum said in a 1992 interview. "Mozart is no longer alive but he has left a large legacy through which we can get to know him."

Benedum has taught Mozart classes at the University of Dayton since he joined the faculty in 1973, and his interest in the musical icon has not dimmed. "The more I learn, the more I realize I don't know," he says. "My fascination with Mozart will continue for the remainder of my life."

Benedum's newest NEH grant is part of \$19.8 million awarded for 124 projects. Created in 1965 as an independent federal agency, the National Endowment for the Humanities supports learning in history, literature, philosophy and other areas of the

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humanities. NEH grants enrich classroom learning, create and preserve knowledge, and bring ideas to life through public television, radio, new technologies, museum exhibitions, and programs in libraries and other community places.

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For media interviews, contact **Richard Benedum** at (937) 229-3986 or Richard.Benedum@notes.udayton.edu. For assistance in scheduling an interview, call **Teri Rizvi** at (937) 229-3241.