FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

400 Junior Musicians Raise the Roof in Chicago State University’s Convocation Center

CHICAGO (NOVEMBER 17, 2008)—Student musicians and vocalists from 80 area schools turned Chicago State University’s Emil and Patricia A. Jones Convention Center into Carnegie Hall on Saturday, November 1. Middle school and junior high school students from Cook and DuPage counties composed the 160-piece concert band, 100-piece orchestra, and 140-piece choir for the inaugural music performance in CSU’s Convocation Center. They performed as part of the Illinois Music Educators Association (IMEA) District 1 Junior Fall Music Festival.

“When the first rehearsal started at 9 a.m., it was really quite a treat to hear the sound of an orchestra in the arena,” said Dr. Mark Smith, chair of CSU’s music department. “Our new facility was a big hit with the visiting music directors.”

It was the first time that CSU has hosted an IMEA festival concert, and Smith believes that because the campus made such a strong impression on the participants it will be the start of many such concerts.

This past Saturday, November 15, CSU also hosted the IMEA Junior/Senior Jazz Fest. More than 100 of the region’s outstanding high school jazz vocalists and musicians performed in CSU’s Breakey Theatre and Jacoby Dickens Center. The students performed in junior and senior jazz ensembles, a senior jazz combo and the 32-voice senior vocal jazz ensemble.