

HEADED TO THE BIG APPLE: Edwardsville's Choir gets prestigious NYC invite, raises funds for trip

by Dan Brannan, Content Director
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EDWARDSVILLE - The Edwardsville High School choir has been invited to perform at Carnegie Hall in New York City with Composer/Conductor Eric Whitacre.

The performance is planned to take place on Sunday, April 28, 2019, in Isaac Stern Auditorium at Carnegie Hall under the baton of Eric Whitacre. These outstanding

musicians will join with other choristers from around the world to form the Distinguished Concerts Singers International, a choir of distinction. Composer Whitacre will lead the performance and will serve as the clinician for the residency.

“Because of the difficulty of the music, we have limited the tour to juniors and seniors,” Emily Ottwein, the Edwardsville High School choir director, said. “We were just given the list of the music to learn last week. We have begun the process of learning the 10 songs by the composer, Eric Whitacre, which were chosen for the performance.

“We were invited a couple of years ago — they had seen a recording of the choir on YouTube when we performed a song by a different composer who was the guest conductor. It was exciting to get the phone call then, but the turn-around time was too quick for us to make that concert. They used that same audition recording for this concert. It was a song by Dan Forrest called “Always Something Sings — based on a poem by Ralph Waldo Emerson).”

Ottwein said she and her group are so excited about the opportunity.

“They will be singing with a group of 150 people from around the world who were also invited,” she said of her choir. “They will be singing incredible music — Eric Whitacre is one of the best contemporary composers of choral music — and they will be singing his music with him conducting in Carnegie Hall! What a once-in-a-lifetime event! While we are in New York, we will get a chance to do some sight-seeing as well. It will be an opportunity for these students to experience the world in a different way. I know they will come back different than when they left and carry those memories throughout their lifetime.”

Dr. Jonathan Griffith, Artistic Director and Principal Conductor for Distinguished Concerts International New York City (DCINY) said the Edwardsville High School choir was chosen because of the quality and high level of musicianship demonstrated by the singers and the exceptional quality of their audition recording.

“It is quite an honor just to be invited to perform in New York,” Griffith said. “These wonderful musicians not only represent a high quality of music and education, but they also become ambassadors for the entire community. This is an event of extreme pride for everybody and deserving of the community’s recognition and support.”

The singers will spend five days and four nights in New York City in preparation for their concert.

“The singers will spend approximately 9-10 hours in rehearsals over the five-day residency,” said Griffith. “Not all of the time is spent in rehearsals, since there is so

much history and culture to see in New York City. However, the performance is the primary reason the invitation was extended.”

The Edwardsville Choir Boosters are hosting a trivia night to raise funds set for 7 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 6, at Father McGivney High School. The theme will be called “A Night in the Big Apple.” Tables are \$200. Proceeds will go toward the trip to New York, and other expenses. To reserve a table contact Steve Frank at Stephen.Frank66@gmail.com or 618-974 8874.

The Edwardsville Choir will be singing one of the songs for the New York concert at its fall concert, scheduled for 7 p.m. Thursday, Oct. 4, at the EHS Auditorium.