



Outstanding local high school orchestra student Kathleen McFarland selected to perform at world-famous Carnegie Hall

by Dan Brannan, Content Director
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EDWARDSVILLE – Edwardsville High School student Kathleen McFarland is going to grace the stage of the world famous **Carnegie Hall** in New York City during its 125th anniversary season in February with the High School Honors Symphony Orchestra.

McFarland was selected to be a part of the 2016 High School Honors Performance Series at Carnegie Hall and had to rise above several other top-notch competitors. Participation in one of the five Honors Ensembles is limited to the highest-rated high school performers across the world.

Earlier this year, Kathleen auditioned on viola for the Honors Performance Series and was accepted after a review by the Honors Selection Board. Acceptance to the elite group is a direct result of the talent, dedication and achievements demonstrated in her application and audition recording. McFarland will join other performers from the United States, Guam, four Canadian provinces, Armenia, China, Hong Kong, Japan, Mexico, Oman, the Philippines, Qatar, South Korea and the United Arab Emirates for a special performance at Carnegie Hall, a venue that marks the pinnacle of musical achievement.

Program Director Morgan Smith said, “Being selected to the Honors Performance Series is something each Finalist should be extremely proud of accomplishing. We processed more than 18,000 nominations this year and have selected nearly 750 of the most talented student performers from around the world. Working with these conductors and performing at Carnegie Hall is a once-in-a-lifetime experience that these musicians never forget.”

Victoria Voumard, orchestra director at Edwardsville High School, said McFarland is “a talented, hard working and determined student.”

“I’m extremely proud of her for this honor,” Voumard said. “I know how hard she has worked for this and her diligence has paid off. She plans to major in viola performance and attend a music conservatory. This orchestra will facilitate connections with other outstanding musicians that will benefit for years to come.”

McFarland is a member of the Edwardsville High School Symphonic, Concert 1 and Concert 2 Orchestras, Webster University’s Preparatory Program and is in her second year performing with the St. Louis Symphony Youth Orchestra. For the past 13 years, Kathleen has attended Southern Illinois University Edwardsville’s Suzuki Program.

With the Suzuki Tour Group she has shared her musical voice in Ireland, Germany, Switzerland, and Austria. Kathleen has had many accomplishments, such as: playing principal viola in ILMEA All-District, All-State, winning the John and Kay Kendall junior division concerto competition, receiving best All-State string seminar award from Millikan University, and performing at the World Chess Hall of Fame. She has studied under the direction of Linda Bristol, Laura Reyecraft, Chris Tantillo, Vera McCoy-Sulentis, Vera Parkin and Victoria Voumard.

Finalists will come together in New York City for five days in February 2016. They will have the opportunity to learn from world-renowned conductors, work with other finalists, and get a taste of New York City. Two performances, an Honors Choral Performance and an Honors Instrumental Performance, will take place Sunday, Feb. 7, and are open to the public. Tickets can be purchased beginning 60 days prior to the performance through the Carnegie Hall box office.

The Honors Performance Series was created to showcase accomplished individual high school performers on an international level by allowing them to study under master conductors and perform in the celebrated venue, Carnegie Hall. The Honors Performance Series is proudly presented by WorldStrides, the nation's leading educational travel organization. Learn more by visiting www.honorsperformance.org and www.worldstrides.com.