



Munster students make Carnegie debut

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by KASS STONE

Carnegie Hall is one of the cathedrals of performing arts in America.

For many entertainers, to play at the legendary New York City theater is the pinnacle of their career. It signifies they are among the greats in their field.

Celebrities such as Louis Armstrong and Robin Williams have played at the historic venue.

On Sunday, the names of a group of Munster High School choir students can be added to that list.

Members of the four upper-level Munster choirs were invited to join with members of high school choirs from New York, Texas and Wisconsin to sing Mozart's "Requiem Mass in D Minor" in a Palm Sunday concert at Carnegie Hall.

The choir will perform with the New England Symphonic Ensemble, under the direction of conductor Patrick Gardner.

Munster choir director Tim Bartlett said his students were recommended to participate in the concert by Nancy Mink, a choir conductor for St. Mary's College in South Bend and director of the Northwest Indiana Symphony Choir.

Bartlett and his students learned they would be performing in New York early in the school year and have been rehearsing the "Requiem" ever since.

"They have had to be able to read and learn a whole Mozart requiem, which is a lot of music. This Mozart 'Requiem' is actually one of the classics of the choral repertoire," Bartlett said.

Katie Franklin is one of the Munster choir members making the trip to New York. For the senior, the trip is possibly a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to perform on one of the most renowned stages in the world and a chance to travel to New York for the first time.

"I'm just really excited," Franklin said. "I've never been to New York, and I'm looking forward to it. And Carnegie Hall is an amazing place, so I've heard.

"I've been counting down the days since the beginning of school," she said. "We found out that it could happen last school year, but we didn't know for sure, but when we found out, we were all really excited about it. We didn't know we were going to go for sure until some time this summer, when we got a letter in the mail, and I've been really excited since then."

Bartlett, who will be accompanying his students to New York, is confident in their ability to perform "Requiem" at a level consistent with the reputation of the theater they will be singing in.

"Mozart is challenging, but not too challenging for a good high school program," he said. "Half of the students going there have already performed half of the 'Requiem' for the school concert, so I know they can do it."

