

# OBSERVER-DISPATCH

*Utica, NY*

## Singers to perform at Carnegie Hall

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By Nicole A. Hawley

NEW HARTFORD — Many musicians dream about performing at the famed historical Carnegie Hall, but few get the chance.

Eleven New Hartford Junior-Senior High School students and one Ilion High School student will get that opportunity when they travel to New York City to perform in an Easter concert in Carnegie Hall's Isaac Stern Auditorium.

Chorus director Stephen Paparo said this will be the second year his students have participated in MidAmerica Productions' Easter Sunday Concert.

"We did it about three years ago and had such a wonderful experience, (students) wanted to do it again," he said.

Two brothers helped convince Paparo to take his choir students to New York City again this year. Senior Nicholas Gerling, 18, was among the group of singers who performed in New York three years ago and said his younger brother Ryan Gerling, 16, wanted his opportunity to shine on the big stage.

"The first year we went, it was one of the best school trips I've been on," Nick Gerling said. "We had a lot of free time, and we were able to get more familiar with New York City and the big-city lifestyle."

Gerling said his experience performing in the city made him feel proud to represent his hometown school.

"It's not every day a small school like New Hartford gets to be part of such a large event," Gerling said. "And not every day can you say, 'I performed at Carnegie Hall.'"



New Hartford High School Choir

Students will spend four days in New York City, rehearsing for three days before performing Francis Poulenc's "Gloria" with 150 other singers.

"While in New York, we'll also get some free time to see a Broadway show and to do some sightseeing," Paparo said. "The kids really enjoy that, too."

Paparo said choir members will perform with the New England Symphonic Ensemble.

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The students will be performing not only with other high schoolers, but also college choirs and community groups from across the nation, Paparo said.

"It's an opportunity for the kids to meet other students (and musicians) from all over," he said. "For us to come together and perform at such a historic venue is just the icing on the cake."