

Tate High's Orchestra Performed at the National Orchestra Festival
Receives High Marks in Atlanta

On March 9, the Tate High School String Orchestra traveled to Atlanta, Ga, to perform in the National Orchestra Festival, an annual festival, held in conjunction with the American String Teachers Association's National Conference.

In order to qualify, last spring the Tate High String Orchestra submitted a video recording of two contrasting pieces of music, as well as professional references from leading musicians who had worked with the Tate High Orchestra.

"This was a significant step for us and something I always wanted to do" said Catherine McConnell, the Tate High Orchestra director. "So, we were ecstatic when we found out that we qualified, and started practicing hard and raising funds right away!"

The orchestra also worked with members of the Pensacola Symphony Orchestra who, through the Tate Orchestra's connection with their "Behind the Scenes Partnership," professional feedback and musical details to the students during sectional rehearsals throughout the year.

The orchestra prepared a program of 7 pieces and performed for an panel of three nationally-renowned and esteemed orchestra adjudicators. The judges commented on the orchestra's high level of preparation and energy, awarding both Excellent and Superior ratings.

While at the National Orchestra Festival, the orchestra students were able to attend a variety of professional sessions focusing on different aspects of string performance and education, and also see another top orchestra perform. Following Tate's concert performance, the orchestra was able to participate in a 45-minute clinic led by a leading orchestra professor. His input was invaluable, and the session was a lot of fun.

“It gave me a brand new perspective of our orchestra. Before we went, I thought it would be just local orchestras from around our region,” said senior concert master Caroline Bruns. “I found out when we arrived that we would be observing an orchestra from Honolulu perform. This made me realize that we’re not just a little orchestra from Florida, but one that is good enough to perform at the same festival as those from across the country. My favorite part was seeing people from all over the United States who love orchestra as much as I do.”

One orchestra parent commented, “What a wonderful opportunity to join outstanding orchestras from around the country to share the talents from Tate High School.”

“We were blessed with an amazing opportunity,” said Tate freshman Micheala Bragg. “From that opportunity grew unity and an experience unlike any other. I will cherish it always.”

The Tate High Orchestra would like to thank several businesses in the community who helped to make this possible: ABC Supply Co., Inc; Technical Software Services, Inc.; Chavers Construction; the Silver Platter Foundation; Santa Rosa Energy Center; and Faith Chapel Funeral Home.

The Tate High Orchestra will perform next on May 7 at 700 p.m. in the auditorium at Booker T. Washington High School for the Ransom and Tate Orchestra String Pops Concert. Admission will be free and the event will be open to the public.

Photo information:

1. Tate High Orchestra concluding their National Orchestra Festival performance.
2. Tate High Orchestra members gather before attending the National Orchestra Festival Banquet in Atlanta, GA.

Go here, to read more about the festival:

https://www.astastrings.org/Web/National_Orchestra_Festival/Web/National_Orchestra

[_Festival/National_Orchestra_Festival.aspx?hkey=ed6814ff-7778-4787-b175-8b43493d5619](#)

Requests for additional information about ECSD should go to: Kim Stefansson, Public Relations Coordinator, kstefansson@escambia.k12.fl.us.

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