

Wiles students continue rehearsals for Carnegie Hall performance

To paraphrase an old joke, getting to Carnegie Hall requires practice—and that includes practicing during your summer break.

While many of their fellow students are away for camps, family vacations and other activities, a group of twenty-four 4th- and 5th-graders from Wiles Elementary School continue to rehearse for their performance during the upcoming National Children's Festival Chorus, which will be held at Carnegie Hall on June 19.



The students were invited by Manhattan Concert Productions to audition for the Chorus after gaining attention for a string of successes at state-level competitions under their director, Wiles music teacher Carrie Olson. Those successes included having more students than any other elementary school named to the All-State Chorus and Orff ensembles over the last five years.

Although the prospect of taking her students to New York City for a prestigious event that draws top choruses from the U.S. and other nations was a bit intimidating, Olson decided to submit a video.

“They contacted me and I said ‘I’m going to go for it,’” she said. “We have such talented students and they worked so hard this year that I couldn’t see not giving them this opportunity.”

The students will actually be in the Big Apple from June 17th through June 20th. They’ll have four hours of rehearsal daily leading up to the concert, but will also have time for sightseeing and a trip to a Broadway show.

While the students are busy rehearsing the complex music they’ve received from the concert organizers, their families and teachers are busy fundraising to cover the costs of the students’ travel, room and board. They’ve set up a gofundme account at www.gofundme.com/help-wiles-chorus-to-carnegie-hall.

Olson says this once-in-a-lifetime experience is providing her students with an important lesson.

“It’s kind of surreal that they’re going to perform at Carnegie Hall,” she said. “I asked them what they were hoping to get out of it, and they said that they realize that with hard work, they can achieve anything.”

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