

Buchholz High student one of six national finalists in U.S. Navy musical competition

A Buchholz High School student has been named a finalist in the prestigious U.S. Navy Band Young Artist Solo Competition.

Sophomore Madelyn Urbine will be traveling to Washington D.C. later this week to compete in the final round of the competition on February 11. As a finalist, she'll be performing an ensemble selection with the Navy's Concert Band.

To earn her spot as a finalist, Urbine submitted a video recording of an audition piece. She was one of only six high school students nationally selected based on their auditions. The grand prize winner will perform as the featured soloist with the Concert Band in May.

According to the U.S. Navy Band website, "past winners have gone on to attend highly prestigious music schools and perform in top-tier orchestras."

"It's one of the most prestigious honors any young musician can receive," said Buchholz band director Noah Graben. "This is one of the premier bands stationed in Washington D.C. They offer this opportunity to recognize and spotlight some of the most talented musicians in the United States."

"I'm really excited to meet the Navy band and have the opportunity to solo at such a high level because I've never performed on a scale like that before," said Urbine.

Urbine didn't start playing the French horn until she started taking band at Ft. Clarke Middle School under director Everett McConn. She'd never played an instrument before.

"I really like the group experience and how we all just get to work together to create beautiful music," she said.

Graben says Urbine's musical ability after just five years of playing is exceptional.

"She's just an unbelievable young talent," he said. "The most impressive thing about her is her discipline and her dedication. The amount of time that she spends rehearsing, practicing and just demonstrating passion for the art blows me away."

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