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MUSIC ACCOLADES ABOUND

Foxboro music ensembles and musicians have been racking up awards during the months of March and April, winning top honors at numerous state and regional festivals. Individual musicians have also excelled, earning spots in the All-State and Junior District Festivals, in addition to the strong Foxboro representation at the January 2009 Southeastern Senior District Festival. Steve Massey, Director of Music for the Foxboro Public Schools, says “the outstanding results for all the Foxboro ensembles and individual musicians in these festivals are a tribute to the hard work, dedication, and musicianship of our outstanding students and their directors. It continues to be a privilege and a joy to work with these exceptional young musicians and their excellent directors and private teachers.”

MICCA Festival Results: The Foxboro High School Concert Band, under the direction of Steve Massey, and the Foxboro High School Symphony Orchestra, under the direction of Mary Ellen DesJarlais, both won **gold medals** in the 33rd annual Massachusetts Instrumental & Choral Conductor Association’s (MICCA) Concert and Choral Festival held on April 3 – 5, 2009. Adjudicators praised both groups for their outstanding musicianship. Daniel Lutz, Director of Bands at the University of Massachusetts Lowell, and George Parks, Professor of Music at the University of Massachusetts Amherst, told the students that their outstanding reputation had preceded them and was well-deserved.

As a result of winning gold medals, these two groups will perform at the “Stars at Symphony” Showcase on Saturday, April 25th at Symphony Hall in Boston – the Orchestra will perform at 11:20 am and the Concert Band at 12:10 pm. The performances are free and open to the public.

Other Foxboro ensembles earned silver medals in the MICCA competition – the 7th Grade Band, under the direction of Ted Hagarty; the 8th grade band, led by George Murphy; and the Foxboro High School String Orchestra, directed by Mary Ellen DesJarlais.

The MICCA festival was held at eight locations throughout the state, including Foxboro High School. 145 instrumental and 84 choral groups representing nearly 11,500 thousand elementary to high school students participated in this year’s festival, according to MICCA president Steven Yavarow. The purpose of the festival is to encourage performing groups and their directors to strive for the highest level of musical excellence, and to receive feedback on their performance from adjudicators who come from throughout the United States. Groups do not compete against

each other, but rather against a standard of excellence. Groups who perform at a superior level receive a gold medal; those at the excellent level receive a silver medal; and bronze medals are awarded to groups that play at a good level. Medals of merit and participation are also awarded.

After performing for the adjudicators, each group attends a clinic to receive feedback from one of the judges on how to improve their performance further. At the FHS site, adjudicators included Glen Hemberger, Director of Bands and Assistant Department Head, Southeastern Louisiana University; Daniel Lutz, Director of Bands at the University of Massachusetts Lowell; Jeffrey Meyer, Director of Orchestras, Ithaca College; and George Parks, Professor of Music at the University of Massachusetts Amherst.

Festivals of Music: Foxboro High School Music Ensembles also won numerous awards at the Festival of Music competition in Williamsburg, Virginia on Saturday, April 18, 2009. The FHS Wind Ensemble and FHS Jazz Ensemble both received first place in class, and were selected best overall in their class for the entire festival. The Jazz Ensemble Rhythm section won the most outstanding section award, and Brendon Thomas (jazz saxophone) and Matt Muirhead (jazz trumpet) received the outstanding soloist awards. The FHS Symphony Orchestra led by Mary Ellen Desjarlais, and the FHS A Cappella Choir led by Leanna Pink, also received first place in class honors. The FHS Concert Choir, also under the direction of Leanna Pink, received second place in class.

State Jazz Finals Results: The Foxboro Jazz Ensemble and Jazz Lab Band won **gold medals** at the state jazz finals on March 21st in Framingham, Massachusetts. This annual festival is sponsored by the Massachusetts unit of the International Association of Jazz Educators (IAJE). Outstanding musician awards were given to Jazz Lab Band members Alix Flaherty, Celine Haddad and Matt Muirhead. Ian Ayers and Matt Muirhead received outstanding musician awards for the Jazz Ensemble.

Individual Accolades: In addition to these outstanding group results, individual musicians in the Foxboro music program have also excelled.

Five musicians participated in the annual All-State Music Festival in Boston on March 26-28, 2009, placing them among the best high school musicians in the entire state. Performing with the All-State Concert Band included: Julia DiCanzio, 12th grade, French horn; Rob Mortenson, 11th grade, tuba; Anna Opatka, 11th grade, bassoon; and Sam Plasmati, 12th grade, percussion. Matt Muirhead, 11th grade, trumpet, performed with the All-State Jazz Band. Conducted by the Massachusetts Music Educators Association (MMEA), the All-State Festival is the culmination of a series of district-level festivals and competitions held each year. High school musicians throughout the state first audition for the district-level festivals held in January. Depending on their score during that audition, musicians in each district are then invited to audition for the All-State Festival.

Thirteen students also participated in the Southeast Junior District Festival on March 6-7, 2009. Students in the choir included: Aheli Chattopadhyay, 8th grade, soprano; Amanda Coscia, 8th grade, soprano; Courtney Davis, 8th grade, soprano; Karina Deely, 8th grade, soprano; Emma Carleton, 8th grade, alto; Allison Fisher, 7th grade, alto; Meghan Fitton, 7th grade, alto; Maureen

Sharpe, 8th grade, alto. Foxboro students in the Southeast Junior District Concert Band included: Curtis Hudson, 8th grade, flute; Christine Cavallaro, 8th grade, clarinet; Christopher Zerrip, 9th grade, bassoon; Shannon Pearson, 9th grade, French horn; Edward Boger, 9th grade, Tuba.

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