

For Immediate Release
March 28, 2012

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HCHS's Evans, Wills named to 2012 All-National Honor Ensembles Duo among elite group to Perform in Prestigious Student Music Ensemble

RESTON, VA – Two Harlan County High School musicians are among only 300 students from across the nation selected for the All-National Honor Ensembles Concert Band, Orchestra, Mixed Choir and Jazz Band.

HCHS seniors Tessa Evans and Emily Wills were selected for the honor. They will be rehearse and perform in late June with the All-National Honors Choir in Washington, D.C.

Under the direction of HCHS Choir Director Jeanne Ann Lee, Evans and Wills auditioned through audio recordings with extremely strict guidelines and difficult tasks to obtain this accolade.

The two students from Harlan County will join three from South Laurel High School to make up the Kentucky delegation for the Mixed Choir. All five of the students selected from Kentucky are in the Kentucky Music Educators Association's District 10, which encompasses Southeastern Kentucky.

Lee said she was elated to learn of the students' selection to the choir.

"This is a crowning achievement of two exemplary musicians," said Lee. "Their perseverance toward continued hard work over the long haul really proves that practice does make perfect garnering the rewards that are worth the wait. This is not only a lesson that has served these two students in music, but will carry them in their endeavors for the rest of their lives."

"These two are just fine young women. They really are. I couldn't be happier for them," she added.

Evans, a soprano, is the daughter of Don and Linda Evans of Evarts. She has been a three-year member of the Harlan County High School Choir, member of the Southeast Kentucky Music Educators All-Festival Choir, the Kentucky Music Educators Children's Choir, KMEA All-State Junior High Chorus, KMEA High School All-State Choir and the Kentucky Chapter of the American Choral Directors Association Honor Choir. She is also a member of the Harlan County High School Band and percussion ensemble. She has studied piano privately and furthered her accomplishments through the HCHS piano lab.

"I am very excited to sing at the Kennedy Center for the performing arts," said Evans. "I have always been interested in music and I am honored to have been chosen for the All-National Choir. I hope it will give me an expanded perspective on music that will help guide my future educational and career decisions."

Wills, an alto, is the daughter of Glen and Barbara Wills of Rio Vista. She has been a four-year member of the Harlan County High School Choir. She was selected for and participated in the Kentucky



Music Educators All-State Choir for two years, the Southeast Kentucky Music Educators Association's All-Festival Choir for two years. In addition, she has been a member of the HCHS Academic Team, serving as captain this year, music coordinator for the HCHS First Priority Leadership, a member of the HCHS winter guard and a two-year member of the National Honor Society.

She plans to attend East Tennessee State University and pursue a pre-physical therapy curriculum.

"As a senior, receiving this honor is a wonderful way to wind up my high school vocal career," said Wills. "I am very excited."

Anyone who would like to contribute financially toward the students' expenses for this trip may send it to the Harlan County High School, ATTN: All-National Honor Choir, 4000 North U.S. 119, Baxter, KY 40806.

NAfME established its National Honor Ensembles as the ultimate recognition of music student performance, beyond state and divisional levels.

"NAfME is pleased to offer this unique performance opportunity to a very select group of our nation's finest high school musicians," said John Kuhner, NAfME Eastern Division Immediate Past President and chair of the National Honor Ensembles Task Force.

"The students selected will rehearse with our inspiring conductors over four days, leading up to their performance at one of our country's most iconic performance venues, the Kennedy Center," said Kuhner. "The 2012 NAfME All-National Honors Ensembles will surely be a once-in-a-lifetime musical experience for some terrific high school musicians next year!"

The complete list of students is available online at www.nafme.org/events/view/2012-all-national-honor-ensembles For more information call 1-800-336-3768 or visit www.nafme.org.

The National Association for Music Education, among the world's largest arts education organizations, marked its centennial in 2007 as the only association that addresses all aspects of music education.

Through membership of more than 75,000 active, retired, and pre-service music teachers, and with 60,000 honor students and supporters, NAfME serves millions of students nationwide through activities at all teaching levels, from preschool to graduate school.

NAfME's mission is to advance music education by encouraging the study and making of music by all.

Since 1907, NAfME has worked to ensure that every student has access to a well-balanced, comprehensive, and high-quality program of music instruction taught by qualified teachers.