

SFYS, MDC musicians join in concert at Carnegie Hall

By: Lewis C. Matusow | March 27, 2018

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Members of the South Florida Youth Symphony warm up for their recent performance at Carnegie Hall in New York. Pictured (l-r, first row) are Concert Master Guanluca Nagaro, 16, of Alonzo and Tracy Morning High School, and Andrea Guariguata, Miami-Dade College; (second row) Moana Fugiwara, Miami-Dade College, and home-schooled Gabrielle Bush.

The South Florida Youth Symphony (SFYS), one of the nation's premier youth music organizations, recently traveled to New York City to perform at Carnegie Hall, the "Mecca" of music in America.

Nearly 60 musicians from the SFYS and Miami Dade College (MDC) Orchestras formed the South Florida Music Consortium for the prestigious Carnegie Hall National Instrumental Festival, an event featuring some of the top youth groups in the nation.

"This was a triumphant performance," said Marjorie Hahn, SFYS executive director. "These kids, many of which had never even been out of Miami-Dade County or flown on a plane, played fantastically in an incredible performance. This was a once-in-a-lifetime experience and they rose to the occasion."

The Consortium was able to make the Carnegie Hall trip, due in part to a generous donation of \$35,500 from the Gloria Estefan Foundation, and support from Miami Dade College.

In addition to their performance in historic Carnegie Hall, which included selections from Mozart, Dvorak, Copland and Beethoven, members of the Consortium visited several popular tourist attractions, including the Statue of Liberty, Ellis Island, Julliard, 9/11 Memorial, Times Square and Central Park.

"We took the kids to a wide variety of places because we wanted to make sure that this was an encompassing, meaningful experience for them, not just a musical performance," said Alberto Bade, director of the Miami-Dade College Film Score Orchestra who conducted two of the Carnegie Hall pieces.

"Having them visit the Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island gave them a historical perspective; visiting the 9/11 Memorial was a very moving experience, and introducing them to the Julliard school helped to continue the musical encouragement," he added.

For members of the Gold-Medal winning SFYS, the trip provided a lifetime of memories.

"This was just unbelievable," said Concert Master and first violinist Guanluca Nagaro, 16, of Alonzo and Tracy Morning High School. "I never thought I would ever get to play in Carnegie Hall or experience a trip like this. This just shows me that my music teachers and instructors at the Youth Symphony were right — if I keep practicing and striving to get better, my music can take me anywhere."