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BY HOWARD MCEWEN | ENQUIRER CONTRIBUTOR

Symphonic Winds, Northern Kentucky University's wind and percussion ensemble, was selected one of seven bands to perform at the College Band Directors National Association Southern Regional Division Convention in Columbus, Ga., in February on the campus of Columbus State University.

"We were competing against some very high-profile programs," said Kurt Sander, chairman of NKU's music department. "The pool of university bands that applied to perform was exceptionally strong and included audition compact discs from 21 of some of the finest colleges and university programs throughout a 10-state region."

A blind selection was done by a panel of judges using CD recordings of each band's performances. The ensemble performed four pieces: Percy Fletcher's "Vanity Fair," "Zion" by Dan Welcher, the "Country Band" march by Charles Ives and Percy Grainger's "The 'Gum-Suckers' March."

ADVERTISEMENT The submitted recordings "demonstrated our best efforts," said Brant Karrick, Symphonic Winds director.

"The musical selections were varied and difficult," Karrick said. "The performances displayed outstanding technique and more importantly, musical expression, full of dynamics, good phrasing and musicianship."

While bands had to compete to earn a spot at the association's event, that's where the competition stops. The trip to Georgia will be more of a showcase.

"It certainly will be a plus for students who are interested in studying music at NKU in the future," Sander said.

"Our students will work extra hard to reach their maximum potential for this performance."

Most Symphonic Winds members are music and music education majors but can be concentrated in other academic fields.

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