



YHS wins six music awards

By [Jenna Nielsen](#)

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The Yosemite High School choir and band received high marks and a total of six awards at the 2006 Heritage Festivals Spring Program held at California State University, Fullerton, last weekend.

YHS received one gold and five silver awards for their performances.

Heritage Festivals was established in 1980 by a group of music educators and educational tour professionals who believed that bands, choirs and orchestras deserved new performing opportunities.

According to its Web site, Heritage Festivals strives to promote excellence among choirs, bands and orchestras by providing the best opportunity for learning by seeing, experiencing and interacting with other student performers and top music professionals.

The top honor, a gold award, went to the YHS Advanced Percussion Ensemble to rank them among the top percussion groups in the nation.

"The kids were really excited and this affirmed all of their hard work," said Randy Hyatt, YHS band director. "This was our third year participating in the event and each year we have continued to raise the bar."

The YHS Concert Band, Jazz Band and Wind Ensemble also received top honors with each receiving a silver rating for their performances.

"In addition to receiving awards and ratings I think our students benefited from listening to various ensembles from several schools," Hyatt said. "It was really neat for my students to listen to many groups and it was a great growing experience for us."

The YHS Concert Choir and Treble Ensemble also received silver ratings.

"I think this is significant and the students and the community should be proud," said Dr. Tony Mower, YHS choral director. "Both groups did quite well and the judges were very complimentary."

Mower said he was very pleased with the group's performance and the overall demeanor of his students.

"The rating the Treble Ensemble received was the rating I expected," Mower said. "I expect them to perform well and they generally do. And the Concert Choir has matured greatly over the year and I was pleased."



Members of the YHS choral and band groups performed in Anaheim this past weekend in the 2006 Heritage Festivals. The groups won a total of six awards, one gold and five silver, at the event. "The kids were very excited," said YHS band director Randy Hyatt. "To put it in their terms, it was 'sweet.'"

Photo courtesy Rick Slayton

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More than 30 schools attended the event, including schools from Alaska, Nevada, Oregon, New Mexico, Idaho, Ohio, New Jersey and Canada.

YHS had entries in six categories and was judged by a panel of university-level adjudicators.

The performance review rating systems used by the adjudicators are based on national standards and apply to all schools at any other festivals held throughout the U.S. The rating system also takes school size and attendance into consideration.

The YHS groups received their award plaques during an awards ceremony at Disneyland's Festival Arena on Saturday evening. More than 2,500 students from around the nation attended the event. YHS band and choir members returned to Disneyland on Sunday for some free time and reward for all their hard work.

"I think events like this help our kids to grow and continue to raise the bar," Hyatt said. "We get comfortable reading our own headlines at home and when we go away like this we see other challenges await us."



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