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Marching Falcons make New York proud

The members of the Albany Marching Falcons knew they would have the distinction of being the only band from New York state to march in President Obama's first Memorial Day Parade in Washington, D.C., on May 25.

When they were finished, the trip got even more special.

Following the parade, the Marching Falcons had the honor of being the only band invited to perform at the First Annual "National Call to Service Rally" at the World War II Memorial.

It was a memorable ending to a memorable trip.



"Thanks to a great group of students and fantastic chaperones, the trip was an overwhelming success, creating experiences and memories that will last a lifetime for all involved," said band director Bryan Cady.

The marching band includes about 55 students in grades 4-12. Together with their teachers and chaperones, they enjoyed a momentous trip that included the once-in-a-lifetime performances and several excursions around the nation's capital.

While there, the group took in several concerts, including the National Memorial Day Chorus Concert at the Kennedy Center, which featured over 250 students from across the country. They also attended the National Memorial Day Concert on the West Lawn of the U.S. Capitol that featured General Colin L.



Powell (Ret.) and actors Gary Sinise, Joe Mantegna, Katie Holmes, Laurence Fishburne, and Dianne Wiest.

Performances at the concert included the National Symphony Orchestra, the U.S. Army Herald Trumpets, the U.S. Army Chorus and Ceremonial Band, The Soldiers Chorus of the U.S. Army Field Band, the U.S. Navy Band Sea Chanters, pianist Lang Lang and musician Katherine McPhee.

Students also were able to take in many of the traditional Washington, D.C., sights and memorials before performing in the National Memorial Day Parade on Monday. All three directors – Bryan Cady, John Halvorsen and Amanda Marshall – agreed that the students performed at their highest level for the assembled crowds of people.

“Thanks to a great group of students and fantastic chaperones, the trip was an overwhelming success, creating experiences and memories that will last a lifetime for all involved,” Mr. Cady said.

The marching band and its directors would like to sincerely thank the City School District of Albany, contributing members of the community, and supportive area businesses for helping to make this trip possible.