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CONTACT: Wendy V. Long, Public Relations
(413) 685-1003

WRITTEN BY: Kilee Holmes, Intern

Gateway students take on UMASS

Huntington - On Saturday January 13, area students congregated to showcase their musical prowess in the annual Western Massachusetts Music Educators Senior District Festival. Four Gateway students—Dawson Atkin, Kilee Holmes, Charlotte Kazalski, and Alexandra Russell—auditioned and were selected to take part in the festival. Russell was the sole representative for the Gateway Choir, while Atkin (baritone sax), Holmes (clarinet), and Kazalski (flute) represented the Concert Band.

In addition to having a 5-hour rehearsal prior to the festival premiere, held at the UMASS Fine Arts Center, all four were eager to perform in front of family and friends. The overall experience gave students the opportunity to further themselves as musicians, and make new friends with talented youths from diverse backgrounds, yet similar interests. Curt Ebersole, conductor of the band, described working with the Senior District students as his fuel, for he also found the experience to be educational and enriching.

A special thanks to Beth Guertin, Gateway Concert Band and Jazz Band Director, and Jerilyn Beauregard, Show Choir and Concert Choir Director, for the help that surpasses musicality, and gives students the motivation to pursue activities like Senior Districts.

Atkin and Kazalski also received All State Recommendations through their auditions for the Western Mass Festival. They will audition on Saturday, January 20.

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*Photo (left to right): Charlotte Kazalski, Alexandra Russell, Kilee Holmes and Dawson Atkin – Gateway musicians who performed at the Western Massachusetts District Music Festival January 13.*