



SANTA MONICA-MALIBU UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

## SANTA MONICA-MALIBU UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT NEWS RELEASE

CONTACT: Gail Pinsker  
310.450.8338, ext. 70230  
[gpinsker@smmusd.org](mailto:gpinsker@smmusd.org)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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### JAMS Student Grayson Fitzgerald Selected to Perform at Carnegie Hall

Grayson Fitzgerald, an eighth grade student at John Adams Middle School (JAMS) in the Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District (SMMUSD), has been selected as a junior finalist for the 2022 middle school honors performance series at Carnegie Hall. Grayson will perform as a string bassist in June with the middle school honors orchestra, which will be conducted by Ms. Angela Woo, JAMS director of instrumental music. Participation in one of the three honors junior ensembles is limited to the highest-rated middle school performers from around the world.

Grayson was nominated for the honors performance series earlier this year and was recently accepted by the honors selection board. Acceptance to the elite group is a direct result of his talent, dedication, and achievements.

Grayson has studied music for five years and is a member of his school's highest instrumental music groups: chamber orchestra and wind ensemble, (where he plays the string bass, as well as the Jazz Band (where he plays guitar). In 2022 he was also selected to participate in the California All State and All Southern Honors Orchestras. In response to his selection as a junior finalist with the honors performance series, Grayson said, "The invitation to perform with other student musicians from around the world at Carnegie Hall is an amazing way to end this school year, my time in middle school, and to celebrate the return to performing music in person. I feel incredibly honored and excited to participate, and I can't wait to experience Carnegie Hall, spend time in New York City, and for all the opportunities to come that playing music will provide throughout my life."

"I could not be prouder of Grayson and his acceptance to the 2022 Honors Performance Middle School Orchestra," said JAMS Director Woo. "To perform in Carnegie Hall is a transformative experience for any musician, and I'm thrilled for Grayson to have the opportunity to stand on the same stage as many of the "giants" of the music world such as Peter Tchaikovsky, George Gershwin, and Leonard Bernstein. Having been invited to conduct with the Honors Performance Series in 2019 and 2020, I can say that it is a special privilege to share in Grayson's musical journey, starting with his arrival to SMMUSD as a 6th grader where he first learned to play the



*Grayson Fitzgerald*

string bass at JAMS, to his culminating performance as a middle school musician in Carnegie Hall.”

Grayson will join student performers from 39 states, the District of Columbia, and Canada for a special performance at the world-famous Carnegie Hall, a venue that marks the pinnacle of musical achievement. He is raising funds to pay for this music adventure through GoFundMe: <https://gofund.me/78389d46>.

The junior finalists will come together in New York City for five days in June. They will have the opportunity to learn from world-renowned conductors, work with other junior finalists, and get a taste of New York City. The three-day program will culminate in a middle school honors group performance on Saturday, June 18, 2022, and is open to the public. Tickets can be purchased through the Carnegie Hall box office.

“After having performances worldwide impacted for over a year, we are excited to be returning to the stage at Carnegie Hall. Being selected to the honors performance series is something each junior finalist should be extremely proud of accomplishing,” said Marion Gomez, program director for the honors performance series. “We process thousands of nominations annually, selecting only the most talented performers. Working with these conductors and performing at Carnegie Hall is a once-in-a-lifetime experience that these musicians will never forget.”

The honors performance series was created to showcase accomplished individual middle school performers on an international level by allowing them to study under master conductors and perform in the celebrated venue, Carnegie Hall. Learn more by visiting [www.honorsperformance.org](http://www.honorsperformance.org).

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**SANTA MONICA-MALIBU UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT**  
1651 16<sup>TH</sup> Street, Santa Monica, CA 90404  
ph: 310.450.8338; fax: 310.581.1138  
[www.smmusd.org](http://www.smmusd.org) Follow us on Twitter: @SMMUSD