

Downers Grove South sousaphonist joins legacy of All-American musicians

By **NATHAN LURZ**
nlurz@shawmedia.com

DOWNERS GROVE – In what's becoming a near-annual tradition, a Downers Grove South High Schooler joined the ever-growing ranks of DGS students taking part in the annual U.S. All-American Marching Band.

Senior Noah Tunney, a sousaphone player, was selected as one of only 125 students from across the country to take part in the band, which is comprised of more than 1,300 students who were nominated and auditioned.

Tunney said he was originally inspired to audition for the band after seeing and hearing about the three South students who've taken part the past four years.

"Three years ago, my section leader was accepted," he said. "I saw all the opportunities that opened up for him. ... It was my drive way before."

Tunney's music career began as a third-grade violin player, but he transitioned to band as soon as he was able. He was too small to play a tuba or sousaphone at first, so he played the baritone.

"I loved it – it's just a part of my life now," he said.

The assembly of the band is part of the annual U.S. Army All-American Bowl, a Jan. 7 game in San Antonio fea-



Downers Grove Mayor Martin Tully (from left), Illinois Music Education Association Executive Director Darcy Nendza, Downers Grove South senior Noah Tunney and state Rep. David Olsen celebrate Tunney accepting a spot on the U.S. Army All-American Marching Band.

David Toney - For Shaw Media

News to your phone

Visit <http://shawurl.com/texts> to sign up for news and weather text alerts from Suburban Life.

turing top high school football talent.

Tunney was honored during a special Downers Grove South event Oct. 4.

Glen Williams, fine arts department chair at DGS, said he nominated Tunney because he embodied all the traits the Army aspires to reward as a part of the band: duty, honor and courage.

"He embodies those in a joyful manner," Williams said. "He's the kid who if

I've got a rehearsal at 7 in the morning or 9 at night, he's exactly the same every single time. He's giving his best, he's got a smile on his face. It's that consistency and pursuit of excellence."

Tunney said he had already connected with musicians from across the country in his section. He added that being surrounded by talented, hard-working musicians would be an opportunity to reinforce one of his favorite parts about being in a marching band.

"I like being part of something that's bigger than me," he said. "I don't make up a band, a lot of people make up a band. It's cool to be united with a bunch of people striving for the same goal, to achieve excellence."