

Army taps DG South senior for All-American Marching Band

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DOWNERS GROVE – Downers Grove South High School senior Larissa Gurnic will have the opportunity to put her music and marching skills to the test this winter.

Gurnic has been named to the 2016 U.S. Army All-American Marching Band.

She was one of 125 members nationwide to be selected for the marching band from more than 1,300 students who applied for a position with the band.

As part of the recognition, Gurnic will get to perform during the U.S. Army All-American Bowl on Jan. 9 at the San Antonio Alamo Dome. Gurnic needs to send in videos tracking her performance and show she's working on her music.

Gurnic, who plays tuba and sousaphone, has been playing music since she was in fourth grade. She said being a part of this band is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity.

"It's a great honor to be one person from the entire country to do this," she said.



Larissa Gurnic



Family congratulates Downers Grove South senior Larissa Gurnic during an Oct. 19 ceremony celebrating her being named to the 2016 U.S. Army All-American Marching Band.

The U.S. Army and Bowl Games of America held a ceremony in Gurnic's honor Oct. 19, celebrating her accom-

plishment and officially welcoming her to the band.

The audition process was a com-

petitive one. Gurnic said she had to send in three video auditions: One of her playing, one of her playing and marching and one as a video biography. She also had to be nominated by one of her teachers in order to take part.

She sent in her application in May and after a "couple months of anxiety" she found out in August she got in. She had been at a marching band camp when she got the news.

"It didn't really hit me until I got home," she said.

Glenn Williams, chairman of the fine arts department at Downers Grove South High School, nominated Gurnic for the recognition. He's proud of what she's done.

"I think it says a lot about her character that she put in the time" to complete the audition tapes, he said. "I'm thrilled for her."

Leah Gurnic, Larissa's mom, said she's happy her daughter's hard work is being recognized.

"We're speechless. We couldn't be more proud of her," she said.

This is the ninth year of the program. Downers Grove South has a bit of a dynasty in place, having a student make the band for three of the past four years.

Photo provided