



## **Saint Viator High School Band Strikes All the Right Notes**



At the 30<sup>th</sup> annual State of the Art competition on Saturday, Saint Viator High School band students won best woodwinds and narrowly placed second in their Class 2 AA division by less than a percentage point.

They were among more than 900 high school musicians from 20 Chicago area Catholic high schools who descended on Marian Catholic High School in Chicago Heights for the annual festival, sponsored by the Illinois Knights of Columbus.

This was the second of a three-year commitment by host school, Marian Catholic. In 2012, the competition moves to Saint Viator High School in Arlington Heights for a three-year run.

Saint Viator students opened their performance with the rousing “Southerner March” composed by Russell Alexander, a former arranger and euphonium soloist with the Barnum & Bailey Circus. They closed their set with the difficult “Paso Doble,” the 4<sup>th</sup> movement to Second Suite for Band by Alfred Reed.

Over the last 15 years, Saint Viator students have placed in the top three in their class 13 times and won their class five times. Last year, the band placed second in their class and earned the “Esprit de Corps” award, presented to the band which best represents the true spirit of the competition.

A panel of college and high school band directors judged each band on such elements as intonation, musical interpretation, articulation, dynamics and expression, with the most point value given to overall performance.

Tom Seaman, who has directed the band all 15 years at the competition, said his more than 80-member combined symphonic and concert bands should take pride in their accomplishments.

“They were one of only six bands to score more than 90 points (out of a possible 100), which is outstanding,” Seaman said. “More importantly, they brought smiles to the faces of a lot of people in the audience, and isn’t that what it’s all about?”

Catholic high school bands from the six dioceses of Illinois, as well as the Diocese of Gary, IN, were invited to participate.

Among those represented were: Marian Catholic, Brother Rice, Mother McAuley, Fenwick, De LaSalle, St. Laurence, Queen of Peace, Loyola Academy, St. Rita, Providence and Guerin Prep high schools.