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**For Immediate Release**

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**SC District of National Association of Teachers of Singing advances 13 students to Semifinals of NATS National Student Auditions in Denver**

*Mid-Atlantic Region advances 40 students, more than any other Region*

**South Carolina — June 1, 2017** — Thirteen singers from South Carolina have advanced to the semifinal round of the National Association of Teachers of Singing National Student Auditions. Each of these students are ranked in the top fourteen of the nation in their respective categories and will advance to compete in the Semifinal round in Boulder, Colorado.

In order to participate in NATS Student Auditions, a singer must be a student of a current NATS member. The singer's participation category is determined by a variety of factors – including musical style, the amount of time he or she has studied voice, age, and year in school. More than 80 NATS chapters hold NATS Student Auditions each year from the organization's 14 regions. Top performers have an opportunity to advance to the national round of auditions.

South Carolina NATS held District Auditions for Music Theater and Contemporary Commercial Music in October at SC State University in conjunction with the SCNATS Fall Workshop. Classical and the Hall Johnson Spiritual category Auditions were held in February at the College of Charleston. Singers in eligible categories advanced to the Mid-Atlantic Region competition held at UNC-Chapel Hill in March. The Mid-Atlantic Region advanced 40 students to the National Semifinals – more than any other Region in the Nation – and includes members from the SC, NC, VA, and DC-MD districts.

Students who advanced to the Preliminary National round at Region competition, submitted videos to YouTube for evaluation. Up to fourteen semifinalists were selected for each of the fourteen categories. Categories range in age from High School through Advanced College. The Semifinal and Final rounds will be held live at the NATS National Workshop July 20-22 to be held in Boulder, Colorado at the University of Boulder.

To learn more about NATS Student Auditions, visit [http://www.nats.org/national\\_student\\_auditions.html](http://www.nats.org/national_student_auditions.html).

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**South Carolina NATS  
National Student Audition Semifinalists  
Congratulations to our students and teachers!**

**Category 5 – Lower College Music Theater Women**

Mariel Zmarzly    Teacher    DEIRDRE FRANCIS, SC

**Category 6 – Lower College Music Theater Men**

Cory Simmons    Teacher    TOMMY WATSON, SC

**Category 9 – Upper College Music Theater Women**

Meagan Carlson    Teacher    JILL TERHAAR LEWIS, SC

Hannah Jessup    Teacher    KRISTEN WUNDERLICH, SC

Mary Ott    Teacher    ROBERT TAYLOR, SC

Katelyn Soto    Teacher    DEIRDRE FRANCIS, SC

**Category 10 – Upper College Music Theater Men**

Joseph Bowman    Teacher    TROY CASTLE, SC

Luke Holt    Teacher    CATHERINE SIARRIS, SC

Andrew Poston    Teacher    DEIRDRE FRANCIS, SC

**Category 12 – Upper College/Independent Studio Men**

Joseph Bowman    Teacher    TROY CASTLE, SC

Jason Hamilton    Teacher    TROY CASTLE, SC

**Category 13 – Advanced College/Independent Studio Women**

Elisa Chodan    Teacher    TROY CASTLE, SC

**Category 14 - Advanced College/Independent Studio Men**

Daniel Griffin    Teacher    TROY CASTLE, SC