

## **Wayne State Warrior Marching Band supports football team at Natl. Championship game Dec. 17**

DETROIT (Dec. 14, 2011) — Members of the Wayne State University Warrior Marching Band are brimming with excitement over an unexpected opportunity to travel to Florence, AL, this weekend and do what they do so well: help a Wayne State athletic team maintain its competitive spirit throughout a challenging matchup. For the first time in school history, the green and gold Wayne State Warrior football team will compete for an NCAA Division II national championship. The game kicks off at 11 am ET on ESPN2 and WDTK-AM 1400. The marching band found out just yesterday that it gets to make the trip.

Junior communication studies major, Christopher Shannon, of Rochester Hills, MI, is in his third year serving as a drum major for the band and has been particularly impressed by the relationship that exists between the band and the football team. "We have such a great rapport with the team and I am truly excited that we can go be a part of this historic event," Shannon said. "I think it's great that WSU is receiving national attention from this and I think the team has a good chance at bringing home 'Warrior gold!'"

Director of Warrior Bands, Janet McCaskill, agrees. "We are incredibly fortunate to have a fantastic relationship with Wayne State Athletics in general and the football team specifically," McCaskill said. "Football Head Coach, Paul Winters, is very supportive of our program and his players follow his example. There is respect for what we both do on game days."

The student members of the marching band have been excited about this season since day one of band camp, an annual pre-season training retreat. But the trip to the National Championship game has brought them even closer as a band family, allowing members to expand leadership roles within the ensemble, to make difficult decisions about their exam schedules (the final examination period begins today) and to channel their Wayne State spirit toward the biggest game in the football team's history. "You would be hard pressed to find students more excited or supportive of WSU!" said McCaskill.

Not unlike the football team, the band practices, often in the rain, for weeks on end yet maintains a strong work ethic and positive spirit. Students learned and performed seven separate shows for the season, several more than most of them did for their high school marching seasons. "They have believed in the football team, the university and themselves no matter the challenges," said McCaskill.

An opportunity such as performing at the National Championship raises students' level of performance, allows the band to be more competitive in recruiting future members and contributes significantly to Wayne State's image at a time when it's in a nationwide spotlight. "I am so excited that the Warrior Marching Band has this opportunity for national visibility," said Matthew Seeger, dean of Wayne State's College of Fine, Performing and Communication Arts. "A marching band is part of a vibrant campus community and is critical to supporting our athletics program. We can take great pride in our Warrior football team and great pride that we have wonderful student musicians to provide the sound track for their success."

There are 100 Wayne State Warriors on the 2011 football roster and seven of them are majors in the College of Fine, Performing and Communication Arts. They are profiled online at <http://www.cfpc.wayne.edu>

The band's trip to the big game was made possible by Wayne State's Office of the President with assistance from the Office of Special Events and Services. The band receives on-going support from Wayne State Athletics, the Dean of Students Office and the Department of Music, College of Fine, Performing and Communication Arts.

Wayne State University, located in the heart of Detroit's midtown cultural center, is a premier urban research university offering more than 400 academic programs through 13 schools and colleges to nearly 32,000 students.