

30 finalists audition to perform at the CWS



KELSEY STEWART/THE WORLD-HERALD

Violinist Kaitlyn Maria Filippini, 25, of Omaha was among the finalists to try out Saturday at TD Ameritrade Park for a chance to perform the national anthem during the College World Series in June.

Star-spangled opportunity

BY KELSEY STEWART
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The national anthem echoed through north downtown Saturday morning. Thirty times.

Inside an empty TD Ameritrade Park, finalists auditioned for the chance to sing the anthem at the College World Series in June.

The 30 finalists included instrumental musicians, vocalists and choral groups. They were chosen from nearly 100 applicants who previously submitted auditions online.

Judges were looking for interpretation, accuracy, pitch, quality and "a baseball feel," said Katie Karmazin, national anthem coordinator. Seventeen performers will be selected and announced next week.

"It's such a huge national event," Karmazin said. "It's great support of the community."

Roommates and former bandmates Julie Crowell and Darci Boyer submitted a taped audition and were shocked to receive an email telling them they were finalists.

"It would be such an amazing opportunity," Crowell said. "The College World Series has become such a phenomenon."

The auditions didn't just draw locals. Chuck Stanley flew in from Houston. The 30-year-old is an Onawa, Iowa, native who grew up singing and playing baseball.

"I grew up coming to the College World Series, so it would be great to be on the field doing the national anthem," Stanley said.

Violinist Kaitlyn Maria Filippini played "The Star-Spangled Banner" at the final game at last year's College World Series.

"It was such a great experience. I was so spoiled," Filippini said. "I'm really glad I had the chance to



Darci Boyer, left, and Julie Crowell, both of Omaha, said they were shocked to be among the finalists. "It would be such an amazing opportunity," Crowell said.

audition again."

Filippini, 25, has been playing the violin since she was in fourth grade.

Last year, the importance of the event didn't hit her immediately.

"When the baseball teams line up, that's when it sets in that it's a big deal," Filippini said. "The College World Series is such a huge deal for Omaha."

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