

# #StirlingtoBranson

## Show Choir gets recongition from the original artist of their opening song

While lying in her bed doing homework, senior Elizabeth Stevens was talking to some of the Innovation girls in a group message. Senior Kiersten Cartwright sent the group a screenshot of a tweet from Lindsey Stirling, the composer of Innovation's opening song, "Shatter Me." Stirling had responded to a video of Innovation performing her song at their Davenport competition. "I flipped out," Stevens said. "I ran downstairs screaming, my parents thought something bad had happened, then I got into the living room and I started saying 'Oh my god! Lindsey Stirling just shared our video!'"

On Feb. 21, Adam Peters, a show choir clinician, tweeted out videos of Innovation's opening song, and on one of his tweets he tagged Stirling and she replied "Nice!" and retweeted the video. Then, on Feb. 23, Stirling shared the video on Facebook, and said "Shatter me for high school choir? Yes way!" The next day in choir, the room was buzzing from the news. "We were all extremely excited, what an honor," director Hannah Ryan said.

The video began to spread on social media sites including Facebook and Twitter. Links of their YouTube video were included in the posts, the video of their opener received 18,000 views. The choir received feedback from some of Stirling's fans in the comments. "Some of the comments were crazy," senior Abbey Carter said. "So many people liked what we were doing. It was really really cool."

After the choir's video began to spread, junior Carson Mithelman decided to start a hashtag called "#StirlingtoBranson" in hopes to get the artist to come them watch their regional competition in Branson, Missouri called FAME Branson. "I thought it would be kind of cool for her to see us live," Mithelman said. "So I started the hashtag Stirling to Branson, and it probably won't happen but it was kind of fun." Members of Innovation, other students and even some other choirs from around the state joined in on the hashtag.

Although Stirling did not make an appearance to see Innovation at their competition, Innovation was the Grand Champion of the event. They were also given the awards for Best Choreography and Best Vocals. Winning this competition qualified them for the national competition in Chicago, Illinois. However, they did not attend the competition due to lack of funding.

Even without Stirling's appearance at the show Innovation's victory did not go unnoticed. When the choir returned from Branson after being crowned Grand Champion, they were greeted by a crowd of fans. "We turned the corner and saw a packed parking lot," junior Trent Wignall said. "At first I didn't realize what it was, but then I saw the signs and realized it was for us. I was so happy and I feel genuinely blessed to be able to be a part of this program."

**Captions by:** Ashley Long and Abbie Craig  
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2. Junior Trent Wignall strikes a pose in the Innovation song "Little Secret" by Nikki Yanofsky at the Showzam competition. Showzam is held at the high school, so to avoid conflict of interest, Innovation performs for entertainment and does not enter the competition. (Photo by Ashley Long)

**Dominant.** Concluding Synergy's performace at Showzam, junior Sydney Walker reaches her arm out to start the wave at the end of the first row. Synergy closes each performance with the song "Old Scars/Future Hearts" by All Time Low. (Photo by Ashley Long)

1. At the Synergy preview showing, junior Tea Grady swings her arms to the side in the song "Bottom Of The River" by Delta Rae. The preview show was the show choir's first performance of the year. Only friends and family were invited to watch. (Photo by Ashley Long)

3. Junior Becca Swanson starts the opening song "Shatter Me" by Lindsey Sterling with her violin. "They picked the song before finding out there was a violinist in the school," Swanson said. "If there wasn't a violinist then they would have used another instrument. It was really terrifying performing at first since I wasn't really good at the song. Lidney Sterling is a dancer and a violinist so I knew I needed to be more dramatic and move around. I eventually figured it out and I really enjoyed playing up there. It was really exhilarating." (Photo by Kyle Kane)

4. Leading the boys with the song "Trespassing" by Adam Lambert, senior Drew Hendrickson sings his solo at the Waukee competition. Innovation was the Grand Champions of the Waukee competition with Best Vocals, Best Choreography and Best Female Soloist. (Photo by Makenzie Hill)

5. Performing the Innovation opening song "Shatter Me" by Lindsey Stirling, senior Eric Friesth conveys the emotion of the song to the audience. "I believe ["Shatter Me"] is about breaking through any hate or negativity you may receive," he said. "This speaks so strongly towards high school students because we're going to have days where we're done with the stereotypes about teens, the criticisms and high expectations from parents and teachers. All that negativity only leads us to want to break those thoughts down." (Photo by Abbie Craig)

6. Fixing her strap halters before Synder's performance, sophomore Kelsey Wilde wears the dress that would be worn in the opening song. In the background, sophomore Carson Jendro puts on his socks. "The dresses have to be hung a special way on the rack," Wilde said. "Dresses have to be unzipped. The gold and black dresses have to be put away inside out so the beads don't get caught on things. The gold dresses used to be long, so we had to cut them off." The performers only got 38 seconds to change between songs. (Photo by Ashley Long)

7. Finishing up the song "In The End" by Black Veil Brides, senior Sarah Henry forms her final pose at the senior performance. "Show choir is such a big part of our lives by senior year, so we all get emotional at the last performance," Henry said. "I have watched so many seniors cry and go through it. It was our turn this year and it was good to see so many people in our grade move on from high school." (Photo by Ashley Long)