

ENTERTAINMENT GUIDE
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Celebrating success by singing

By JOHN PITCHER

WORLD-HERALD STAFF WRITER

It's arguably America's most enduring myth.

The destitute young man, relying on nothing but his energy and ingenuity, works hard and ultimately realizes the American dream. He becomes rich.

Mario Frangoulis, the tenor who joins the Omaha Symphony this weekend for a pops concert, wasn't exactly poor. He's not even American.

Still, the popular vocalist embraces the ideals of Horatio Alger, the 19th-century dime novelist who wrote of hard-working Americans moving from rags to riches.

"I was separated from my parents when I was 4 and sent to live with relatives," said Frangoulis, who spoke recently by phone from New York City. "I think that's why I relate so much with Horatio Alger."

Frangoulis, 41, has performed more than 40 charity galas during his career. His Omaha concert will spotlight the Horatio Alger Association, which provides scholarships to young people who have faced adversity.

Lt. Benjamin Sandy, stationed at Offutt Air Force Base in Bellevue, received an Alger scholarship in 1994 to attend Dana College in Blair, Neb.

Sandy, 33, grew up in a single-parent home for most of his life. He was delivering newspapers at 4:30 a.m. by the time he was in sixth grade.

"The Alger scholarship, along with a track scholarship, allowed me to go to college," Sandy said.

Frangoulis likewise benefited from scholarships. In 1992, he received an Onassis Scholarship to attend the Juilliard School in New York City.

He went on to become the first Greek finalist in Italy's Luciano



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Greek tenor Mario Frangoulis, above, joins the Omaha Symphony under Ernest Richardson for a pops concert; 8 p.m. Friday and Saturday and 2 p.m. Sunday at the Holland Performing Arts Center, 1200 Douglas St. \$15 to \$80. 345-0606.

Pavarotti International Competition. Now a successful concert singer, he's helping a variety of philanthropic causes.

"It's our duty as artists to use our powers of communication to help others," he said.

■ Contact the writer:
444-1076, john.pitcher@owh.com