

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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2021 Blue Star Awards Winners Honored At Starlight Theatre on May 20



Musical theatre students from area high schools received awards in seven categories at the 19th annual Blue Star Awards Ceremony.

KANSAS CITY, Mo. – The 2021 winners of Starlight’s Blue Star Awards were recently revealed in a ceremony held on Thursday, May 20. A year of many firsts, the 19th annual Blue Star Awards granted more than \$10,000 in scholarships—the most ever awarded in the program—and introduced a new category, the Dream Production Award.

For the 2020-21 Blue Star Awards, Starlight made adjustments to highlight broader work of schools and students with the opportunity to submit materials in seven categories. Categories ranged from areas of performance, technical achievement and theatre program support. More than 90 students in musical theatre received nominations.

Modeled after Broadway’s Tony Awards®, some of Starlight’s 19th annual Blue Star Award winners are Millie Bell of Olathe East High School—the first ever recipient of the Dream Production Award, which highlights the creativity of students working in the areas of design, direction and choreography. Elaine Watson and Nadia Higareda each received a Rising Star Scholarship, and Justin Cooley took home the Blue Star Award for Outstanding Actor in a Lead Role with Ava Wolesky receiving the award for Outstanding Actress in a Lead Role. See below for a full list of 2020-21 Blue Star Awards winners.

The 2021 Blue Star Awards are sponsored by Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Kansas City and CommunityAmerica.

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2020-2021 Blue Star Awards Winners

Dream Production Award

Millie Bell for Choreography
Olathe East High School

Rising Star Scholarship

Elaine Watson
Lee's Summit North High School

Rising Star Scholarship

Nadia Higareda
Liberty North High School

Community Impact Award

Winnetonka High School

Technical Achievement Award

Breanna Kristian for Stage Management and Properties Design
Olathe East High School

Technical Achievement Award

Grant Martin for Costume Design
Olathe East High School

Technical Achievement Award

Nathan Caskey for Lighting Design and Scenic Construction
Raymore-Peculiar High School

Performance Scholarship

Darcie Hingula
St. Teresa's Academy

Performance Scholarship

Elaine Watson
Lee's Summit North High School

Performance Scholarship

Emily Clark
Platte County High School

Performance Scholarship

Maddy Terril
Saint Thomas Aquinas High School

Performance Scholarship

Madelynn Darst
Platte County High School

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Performance Scholarship

Sydney Nicks
Olathe East High School

Outstanding Actor in a Lead Role

Justin Cooley as Dmitry – Olathe East – *Anastasia*

Outstanding Actress in a Lead Role

Ava Wolesky as Esmeralda – Liberty North – *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*

Congratulations to all of the winners. For information regarding all of Starlight’s community engagement programs, visit kcstarlight.com/engage.

Follow Starlight on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and TikTok @kcstarlight.

About Starlight

Opened as a theatre in 1950 and a nonprofit organization in 1951, Starlight is the largest and oldest performing arts institution in Kansas City and provides inspiring, one-of-a-kind experiences to its patrons. Starlight presents and produces Broadway musicals, concerts and Indoors shows in addition to offering extensive community engagement programming, including classes, scholarships and Starlight’s Blue Star Awards, one of the largest high school musical theatre award programs in the nation.

Located on 16 acres in Swope Park, Starlight’s historic, city-owned venue is the second-largest outdoor producing theatre in the country and includes rehearsal halls, a museum, club area for dining, concessions, gardens, fountains and a 10-story, climate-controlled stage. For more information, visit kcstarlight.com.

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