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Two Starlight Blue Star Award Winners Perform At



WATCH ONLINE

July 15, 2021

JimmyAwards.com

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THE 2021 NATIONAL STUDENT TALENT SHOWCASE TO BE PRESENTED VIRTUALLY
Cheer on nominees from Kansas City as they compete for national awards

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New York, NY and Kansas City, MO – July 14, 2021 – The Broadway League and Starlight Theatre are pleased to announce that the 12th annual Jimmy Awards® ceremony will be presented online on **Thursday, July 15, 2021**. Fans can watch the ceremony by going to JimmyAwards.com on July 15 beginning at 7:30PM ET **or 6:30PM local time**. The event, hosted by Corbin Bleu with a special appearance from Mandy Gonzalez, will remain available for online viewing for 72 hours ONLY, through Sunday, July 18. More details will be posted to JimmyAwards.com prior to the event.

The Jimmy Awards are presented by The Broadway League Foundation. Apples and Oranges Arts is the livestream and video production partner. The official media partner is WABC-TV.

Starlight hosted its 19th annual Blue Star Awards Ceremony in May, one of the largest high school musical theatre awards programs in the nation. Each year, the Blue Star Awards program serves nearly 5,000 area students who contribute either on the stage or behind the scenes to their school's musical theatre productions. This year's awards ceremony featured more than 90 area high school students that were nominated among seven categories. Of the winners, Justin Cooley of Olathe East High School won the Blue Star Award for Outstanding Actor in a Lead Role, and Ava Wolesky of Liberty North High School won the Blue Star Award for Outstanding Actress in a Lead Role. As winners of these categories, Ava and Justin were invited to participate in the Jimmy Awards.

"We will be enthusiastically cheering on Ava and Justin as they represent Starlight and Kansas City at this year's Jimmy Awards," said Alex Jones, Vice President of Community Engagement at Starlight. "These two passionate young artists have impressed us from the moment we met them, and we are thrilled that they are participating in this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity."

For the 2021 Jimmy Awards, all coaching, rehearsals and activities took place online. The program culminates with two talented students presented with the 2021 Best Performance by an Actress and Best Performance by an Actor awards, with a total of 20 awards and scholarships available to participants. Winners will be selected by a panel of Broadway industry experts.

"We are thrilled that the Jimmy Awards will once again celebrate talented high school performers, despite the challenges of this past year. For 2021, the Jimmy Awards are going all-virtual, which gave us the chance to provide more opportunities for participation," said Charlotte St. Martin, President of the Broadway League. "Fans from every state in the US and every corner of the globe, we will have the chance to cheer on all the talented nominees, see amazing performances and be part of this wonderful celebration of arts education."

Additionally, the Inspiring Teach Award will be presented by WELLS FARGO to Katelin Ruzzamenti Knight, Salt Lake School for the Performing Arts, Salt Lake City, UT, and Benjamin Pesenti, Elmont Memorial High School, Elmont, NY. These teachers will be honored for the encouragement and inspiration that led their students to win the coveted Jimmy Award for Best Performance by an Actress and Best Performance by an Actor at the most recent Jimmy Awards ceremony, in 2019.

The 2021 Jimmy Awards will involve 72 nominees from 36 participating regional programs around the US. Student performers qualify to compete in the national program by winning top honors at regional high school musical theatre competitions presented by Broadway League-member performing arts centers. Each year, more than 100,000 students participate in these events.

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Founded in 2009 by Nederlander Alliances LLC, Pittsburgh CLO and Broadway Education Alliance, the mission of the **Jimmy Awards®/National High School Musical Theatre Awards®** is to raise the profile of musical theatre in schools, recognize dedicated teachers and inspire the next generation of performers and enthusiasts. The program has been the catalyst for more than \$4,000,000 in educational scholarships to date, and many past student participants have appeared in leading or supporting roles in Broadway, Touring and West End productions.

The Jimmy Awards are presented by the Broadway League Foundation in honor of legendary Broadway producer/theatre owner James M. Nederlander, and are supported by many leading theatre industry organizations. To get more information about the Jimmy Awards/National High School Musical Theatre Awards program, or to make a tax-deductible donation to support the program, visit JimmyAwards.com.

The Broadway League Foundation acts as the philanthropic arm of the Broadway League. Part of the Foundation's mission is to enlighten and increase the public's knowledge, appreciation and awareness of the theatrical arts. Since its founding in 1993, it has supported projects to help preserve Broadway's heritage and introduce new audiences to Broadway theatre. The Foundation is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization.

Starlight opened as a theatre in 1950 and became a nonprofit organization in 1951. The largest and oldest performing arts institution in Kansas City, Starlight 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.

THE BROADWAY LEAGUE (Charlotte St. Martin, President), founded in 1930, is the national trade association for the Broadway industry. The League's 700-plus members include theatre owners and operators, producers, presenters and general managers who present in nearly 200 markets in North America. Each year, League members bring Broadway to nearly 30 million people in New York and on tour across the U.S. and Canada. The Broadway League has recently added a new category for International membership to collaborate with professionals from around the world who produce and present Broadway quality theatre. The Broadway League annually co-presents the Antoinette Perry "Tony" Awards®, one of the most coveted awards in the entertainment industry.

Key League programs and resources include: Kids' Night on Broadway®, The Jimmy Awards®, Stars in the Alley®, Internet Broadway Database® (ibdb.com), Broadway.org, SpotlightonBroadway.com, Commercial Theater Institute (with Theatre Development Fund), as well as numerous conferences and forums for our members. Broadway Bridges® is aimed at giving every New York City public high school student the opportunity to see a Broadway show before graduation. Careers.Broadway is a one-stop resource for anyone who wants to know what to do, where to look and how to build a career on Broadway. TheatreAccess.NYC (co-produced

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with TDF) is the one-stop website of accessible Broadway performances for theatregoers with disabilities. Broadway.org is the League's official on-line headquarters for Broadway in NYC, on tour and internationally.

For more information visit BroadwayLeague.com or follow @BroadwayLeague on Twitter and visit us at Facebook.com/BroadwayLeague. Follow @Broadway on Instagram for more Broadway content.

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