

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Starlight Reveals the Nominations for the 20th Annual Blue Star Awards



Starlight's 20th Annual Blue Star Awards Ceremony will be held Thursday, May 26, 2022.

KANSAS CITY, Mo. – Each year, thousands of high school students across the Kansas City metro wait in anticipation for the announcement of the annual Blue Star Awards nominations. After a hiatus due to the pandemic, Starlight leadership, staff, and board members were able to return to in-person presentations to reveal this year's nominations on Thursday, April 28. In the 2021-22 Blue Star Awards season, 49 schools and more than 3,700 metro area students participated, making the program one of the largest and most respected high school musical awards show in the nation.

“This year celebrates the 20th annual Blue Star Awards Ceremony,” Alex Jones, Starlight’s Vice President of Community Engagement, said. “Each year, thousands of community students put an immense amount of energy and enthusiasm into the creative process of putting on a musical. Their passion and commitment continues to inspire us, and we look forward to celebrating all of the nominees at the Blue Star Awards Ceremony on May 26 at Starlight Theatre.”

Modeled after Broadway’s Tony Awards®, Starlight’s annual Blue Star Awards recognize achievement and excellence in musical theatre among Kansas City area high school students. Winners will be announced in 24 categories and more than \$8,000 in scholarships will be awarded at the Blue Star Awards Ceremony, which will also feature 11 onstage performances. A number of Blue Star Awards alumni will return to the Starlight stage as guest presenters.

The 20th annual Blue Star Awards Ceremony will take place Thursday, May 26, 2022, at 7:30 p.m. at Starlight Theatre. Tickets are free but reservations are required. To reserve tickets, visit

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kcstarlight.com or call the box office at (816) 363-7827. There will be limited concessions available for purchase.

2021-22 Blue Star Awards Nominees

Outstanding Orchestra

Blue Springs		<i>Shrek The Musical</i>
Blue Valley		<i>Anastasia</i>
Blue Valley Northwest		<i>Disney's Freaky Friday</i>
Liberty		<i>Oklahoma!</i>
Olathe West		<i>The SpongeBob Musical</i>
Park Hill		<i>The Addams Family: School Edition</i>
Shawnee Mission East		<i>The Wedding Singer</i>
Shawnee Mission West		<i>The Drowsy Chaperone</i>

Outstanding Actor in a Featured Role

Grain Valley	Jack Temples as Christopher Belling	<i>Curtains: School Edition</i>
Leavenworth	Connor Shockey as Oz Guard	<i>The Wizard of Oz</i>
Liberty	Andrew Hand as Andrew Carnes	<i>Oklahoma!</i>
Liberty North	Tyler Parsons as Pepper	<i>Mamma Mia!</i>
Oak Park	Tony Coronado as La Cienega	<i>Bring It On</i>
Park Hill	Kevin Johnson as Lurch	<i>The Addams Family: School Edition</i>
Saint Thomas Aquinas	Patrick Dors as Eugene Florczyk	<i>Grease</i>
Shawnee Mission West	Caden Moffitt as Underling	<i>The Drowsy Chaperone</i>

Outstanding Actress in a Featured Role

Central	Estelle May as Ali	<i>Mamma Mia!</i>
Heritage Christian Academy	Emma Hildebrand as Dragon	<i>Shrek The Musical</i>
Heritage Christian Academy	Mallory Terrell as Dragon	<i>Shrek The Musical</i>
Lansing	Toni Hudalla as The Witch	<i>Big Fish</i>
Lee's Summit	Merrilee Parker as Yente	<i>Fiddler on the Roof</i>
Olathe South	Julianna Bowles as Katie/Charon/Newscaster/Squirrel	<i>The Lightning Thief</i>
Saint Thomas Aquinas	Kristen Strathman as Patty Simcox	<i>Grease</i>
Summit Christian Academy	Emma Coats as Charlotte	<i>Rodgers + Hammerstein's Cinderella</i>

Outstanding Hair & Makeup Design

Liberty North		<i>Mamma Mia!</i>
North Kansas City		<i>The Wiz</i>
Oak Grove		<i>The Addams Family: School Edition</i>
Olathe Northwest		<i>9 to 5 The Musical</i>
Olathe West		<i>The SpongeBob Musical</i>
Park Hill		<i>The Addams Family: School Edition</i>
Piper		<i>The Wizard of Oz</i>
Saint Thomas Aquinas		<i>Grease</i>

Outstanding Scenic Design & Construction, Tier I (\$0-1,999+)

Excelsior Springs		<i>Little Shop of Horrors</i>
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Lansing	<i>Big Fish</i>
Oak Grove	<i>The Addams Family: School Edition</i>
Odessa	<i>The Wizard of Oz</i>
Olathe South	<i>The Lightning Thief</i>
Raymore-Peculiar	<i>Footloose</i>
Raytown	<i>9 to 5 The Musical</i>
Shawnee Mission West	<i>The Drowsy Chaperone</i>

Outstanding Scenic Design & Construction, Tier II (\$2,000+)

Blue Springs South	<i>Roald Dahl's Matilda The Musical</i>
Central	<i>Mamma Mia!</i>
Lee's Summit West	<i>The SpongeBob Musical</i>
Liberty North	<i>Mamma Mia!</i>
Olathe West	<i>The SpongeBob Musical</i>
Park Hill	<i>The Addams Family: School Edition</i>
Park Hill South	<i>Pippin</i>
Winnemtonka	<i>Seussical</i>

Technical Achievement Award

Liberty North	Emma Dyser for Lighting Design
Olathe East	Ashley Gaffney for Stage Management
Olathe North	Carly Welter for Scenic Design & Construction
Olathe South	Michael Rathman for Sound Design & Crew
Olathe South	Corwin Bower for Lighting Crew
Park Hill	Sarah Therese Gabriel for Publicity and House Management
Park Hill South	Abby Miller for Technical Direction
Raytown	Lucas Mayo for Lighting Design

Dream Production Award

Basehor-Linwood	Mattie Bonner for Lighting Design
Leavenworth	Audra Franke for Scenic Design
Olathe South	Molly McBride for Choreography
Olathe West	Emily Heflin for Scenic Design
Olathe West	Hailey Brooks for Hair & Makeup Design
Park Hill South	Aryahna LeGrand for Direction
Park Hill South	Grace Crigger for Scenic Design
Smithville	Sierra Quinn for Direction

Outstanding Artistic Contribution by a Student

Fort Osage	Taylor White for Choreography	<i>Disney's Freaky Friday</i>
Olathe East	Sydney Nicks & Phoebe Mock for Choreography	<i>Mamma Mia!</i>
Olathe North	Anna Szymanski for Direction	<i>Legally Blonde The Musical</i>
Olathe North	Eva Smith for Choreography	<i>Legally Blonde The Musical</i>
Olathe South	Jack McCurdy for Direction	<i>The Lightning Thief</i>
Olathe West	Olivia Keiter & Maddie Dohogne for Direction	<i>The SpongeBob Musical</i>
Raymore-Peculiar	Makiya Leslie-Hardison for Choreography	<i>Footloose</i>
Saint Thomas Aquinas	Reagan Arnold for Direction & Choreography	<i>Grease</i>

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Outstanding Technical Crew

Belton	Lighting Crew	<i>Rodgers + Hammerstein's Cinderella</i>
Blue Valley	Set Crew	<i>Anastasia</i>
Lee's Summit West	Set Crew	<i>The SpongeBob Musical</i>
Liberty	Costume Crew	<i>Oklahoma!</i>
Liberty North	Costume Crew	<i>Mamma Mia!</i>
Liberty North	Hair & Makeup Crew	<i>Mamma Mia!</i>
Liberty North	Lighting Crew	<i>Mamma Mia!</i>
Olathe South	Lighting Crew	<i>The Lightning Thief</i>

Outstanding Actor in an Ensemble Role

Blue Valley	Kegan McMasters as Ensemble	<i>Anastasia</i>
Lee's Summit West	Ben Bruner as Hip Hop Dancer/Pirate/Sardine/Townsperson	<i>The SpongeBob Musical</i>
Liberty North	MJ Cullum as Ensemble	<i>Mamma Mia!</i>
Olathe West	Oz Powell as Ensemble	<i>The SpongeBob Musical</i>
Olathe West	Tai Fenton as Ensemble	<i>The SpongeBob Musical</i>
Park Hill South	Gavin Dressler as Player/Bolero Dancer	<i>Pippin</i>
Saint Thomas Aquinas	Nico Ramirez as T-Bird	<i>Grease</i>
Shawnee Mission East	Sam Williamson as Suit #1/Ricky/Ensemble	<i>The Wedding Singer</i>

Outstanding Actress in an Ensemble Role

Blue Valley	Charlie Trent as Odette/Swan Lake Dancer/Ensemble	<i>Anastasia</i>
Grain Valley	Katie Hobbs as Johnny Harmon	<i>Curtains: School Edition</i>
Grandview	Danielle Voboril as Leopard/Aerialist/Ape/Jungle Ensemble	<i>Disney's Tarzan</i>
Heritage Christian Academy	Olivia Crews as Tap Dancing Rat/Fairytale Creature/Duloc Ensemble	<i>Shrek The Musical</i>
Lee's Summit West	Danielle Omer as Hip Hop Dancer/Pirate	<i>The SpongeBob Musical</i>
Liberty	Grace Fisher as Vivian	<i>Oklahoma!</i>
Platte County	Kaitlyn Seim as Nancy	<i>Bye Bye Birdie</i>
Raymore-Peculiar	Makiya Leslie-Hardison as High School Student of Bomont	<i>Footloose</i>

Performance Scholarship

Bishop Miege - Cara Parisi
 Blue Valley Northwest - Maggie Bunch
 Free State - Julia Ruddy
 Heritage Christian Academy - Emma Hildebrand
 Liberty - Grace Fisher
 Liberty North - Ava Wolesky
 North Kansas City - Lilly Gerend
 Oak Grove - Bryleigh Giffin
 Oak Park - Alexyus Johnson
 Oak Park - Kylie McLane
 Olathe East - Kate Meives
 Olathe South - Carter Stelting
 Olathe South - Molly McBride
 Olathe West - Amberleigh Nicole Worley

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Olathe West - Brandon Heflin
 Olathe West - Genevieve Anderson
 Olathe West - Kalista Brown
 Park Hill South - Emma Andrews
 Park Hill South - Jack Blackburn
 Raymore-Peculiar - Kennedy Kinnick
 Raymore-Peculiar - Ronald Graves
 Raytown - Jessica Johnson
 Raytown - Lucas Mayo
 Raytown - Phenix Watson
 Raytown - Reiko Groves
 Smithville - Sierra Quinn
 St. Teresa's Academy - Keira Prior
 Truman - Breana Smith
 Truman - Cecilia Rancatore
 Truman - Kyleigh Hendrix
 Truman - Paige Gonzales
 Winnetonka - Alyna Mathews

Community Impact Award

Leavenworth
 Platte County

Outstanding Costume Design & Construction, Tier I (\$0-\$1,199)

Blue Valley Northwest
 Excelsior Springs
 Fort Osage
 Olathe North
 Park Hill
 Platte County
 Raymore-Peculiar
 Shawnee Mission East

Disney's Freaky Friday
Little Shop of Horrors
Disney's Freaky Friday
Legally Blonde The Musical
The Addams Family: School Edition
Bye Bye Birdie
Footloose
The Wedding Singer

Outstanding Costume Design & Construction, Tier II (\$1,200+)

Belton
 Lee's Summit West
 Liberty North
 Oak Park
 Olathe South
 Olathe West
 Park Hill South
 Winnetonka

Rodgers + Hammerstein's Cinderella
The SpongeBob Musical
Mamma Mia!
Bring It On
The Lightning Thief
The SpongeBob Musical
Pippin
Seussical

Outstanding Ensemble

Blue Springs
 Blue Valley
 Lee's Summit West
 Liberty

Shrek The Musical
Anastasia
The SpongeBob Musical
Oklahoma!

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Liberty North
Olathe West
Park Hill
Raymore-Peculiar

Mamma Mia!
The SpongeBob Musical
The Addams Family: School Edition
Footloose

Outstanding Lighting Design

Belton
Blue Valley
Excelsior Springs
Liberty
Liberty North
Olathe South
Olathe West
Park Hill

Rodgers + Hammerstein's Cinderella
Anastasia
Little Shop of Horrors
Oklahoma!
Mamma Mia!
The Lightning Thief
The SpongeBob Musical
The Addams Family: School Edition

Outstanding Actor in a Supporting Role

Blue Valley Ben Samuelson as Vlad
Blue Valley Northwest Brett Oplotnik as Adam
Fort Osage Supha Yates as Fletcher Blake
Lee's Summit Bryce Williams as Motel
Olathe South Guyon Grant as Grover/Mr. D
Piper Langston Bassett as Tinman
Shawnee Mission West Will Edeal as Robert Martin
St. Teresa's Academy Fritz Sullivan as Adam

Anastasia
Disney's Freaky Friday
Disney's Freaky Friday
Fiddler on the Roof
The Lightning Thief
The Wizard of Oz
The Drowsy Chaperone
Disney's Freaky Friday

Outstanding Actress in a Supporting Role

Blue Valley Hadley Way as Countess Lily
Lee's Summit Addi Baker as Hodel
Liberty Kennedy Naseem as Ado Annie
Liberty North Ava Wolesky as Rosie
Liberty North Lily Weaver as Tanya
Notre Dame de Sion Tess Tappan as Liesl
Olathe South Alana Shields as Annabeth
Olathe West Genevieve Anderson as Squidward

Anastasia
Fiddler on the Roof
Oklahoma!
Mamma Mia!
Mamma Mia!
The Sound of Music
The Lightning Thief
The SpongeBob Musical

Rising Star Scholarship

Blue Valley Northwest Maggie Bunch
Free State Mary Katherine Shultz
Lee's Summit North Sarah Keary
Lee's Summit West Cadence Mayrand
Oak Grove Bryleigh Giffin
Oak Park Kylie McLane
Olathe East Madeline King
Olathe South Alana Shields
Olathe South Carter Stelting
Olathe South Molly McBride
Olathe West Brandon Heflin
Park Hill Maddox Bane

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Park Hill South	Abby Miller
Park Hill South	Jack Blackburn
Platte County	Madelynn Darst
Raymore-Peculiar	Paige Showen

Outstanding Actor in a Lead Role

Bishop Miege	Peter Dessert as Bert	<i>Disney's Mary Poppins</i>
Blue Springs	Landon Hudson as Shrek	<i>Shrek The Musical</i>
Liberty	Patrick Sheeley as Curly	<i>Oklahoma!</i>
Olathe South	Raleigh Jonas as Percy	<i>The Lightning Thief</i>
Olathe West	Brandon Heflin as SpongeBob	<i>The SpongeBob Musical</i>
Park Hill	Maddox Bane as Gomez Addams	<i>The Addams Family: School Edition</i>
Park Hill South	Dani Vicknair as Leading Player	<i>Pippin</i>
Summit Christian Academy	Hudson Harris as Topher	<i>Rodgers + Hammerstein's Cinderella</i>

Outstanding Actress in a Lead Role

Blue Springs	Julianna Marshall as Fiona	<i>Shrek The Musical</i>
Blue Valley Northwest	Maggie Bunch as Katherine Blake	<i>Disney's Freaky Friday</i>
Liberty	Madeline Belcher as Laurey	<i>Oklahoma!</i>
Liberty North	Georgia Barge as Donna Sheridan	<i>Mamma Mia!</i>
Olathe East	Phoebe Mock as Donna Sheridan	<i>Mamma Mia!</i>
Olathe North	Ella Bentley as Elle Woods	<i>Legally Blonde The Musical</i>
Platte County	Madelynn Darst as Rosie Alvarez	<i>Bye Bye Birdie</i>
Shawnee Mission West	Faryn Clevenger as Janet Van De Graaff	<i>The Drowsy Chaperone</i>

Outstanding Overall Production

Blue Springs	<i>Shrek The Musical</i>
Lee's Summit	<i>Fiddler on the Roof</i>
Lee's Summit West	<i>The SpongeBob Musical</i>
Liberty	<i>Oklahoma!</i>
Liberty North	<i>Mamma Mia!</i>
Olathe South	<i>The Lightning Thief</i>
Olathe West	<i>The SpongeBob Musical</i>
Park Hill	<i>The Addams Family: School Edition</i>

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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.

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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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