

# Section 1

National High School Heart of the Arts Award

# NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL HEART OF THE ARTS AWARD NOMINEE

(The deadline for returning the completed nomination to the NFHS is February 1, 2018)

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Name of Nominee: Dante Lorenzo DiFederico  
*(first, middle, last)*

## ***Individual Submitting Nomination:***

Name: Carrie Gettings- Bunnell H.S. School Counselor

Phone: (203) 385-4255 ext. 3314

E-mail: gettingsc@stratk12.org

Street Address: 1 Bulldog Blvd.

City, State, Zip Code: Stratford, CT 06614

Date: 01/30/2018

## ***State Association Endorsement:***

Name: [Tab here]

Title: [Tab here]

Signature: [Tab here]

# NOMINEE INFORMATION SHEET

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X  Student    Coach    Administrator    Official    Trainer    Performing Arts  
Administrator    Athletic Administrator    Other (Specify \_\_\_\_\_)

Name of Nominee: Dante Lorenzo DiFederico  
*(first, middle, last)*

Current Address: 49 Bullard Court  
*(street address)*

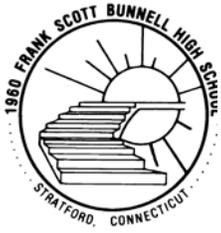
Stratford, Connecticut 06614  
*(city, state, zip)*

Phone Ⓜ203) 378-0732

E-mail: dantedife00@stratk12.org

School (if any): Frank Scott Bunnell High School

City: Stratford State: Connecticut



# Frank Scott Bunnell High School

One Bulldog Boulevard  
Stratford, Connecticut 06614-5998  
Phone: (203) 385-4250  
Fax: (203) 381-2014

Katie Graf  
*Assistant Principal*

Christopher J. Koch  
*Assistant Principal*

Frank Tatto  
*Assistant Principal*

Nancy C. Dowling, Ed.D  
*Principal*

It is an honor to nominate Dante DiFederico for this most distinguished "Heart of the Arts" award. Dante's accomplishments are vast and impressive! Academically, Dante is a straight "A" student and is a member of the National Honor Society. Dante is bright, positive and thoughtful. He is unique in his talents and his perspective. Artistically, Dante is the most talented performing arts student I have ever known in my 19 years as a school counselor. He is an amazing and accomplished actor, singer and musician. He attended the Regional Center for the Arts for over three years. His participation in RCA helped Dante find his "niche" with his peers who shared similar interests. Dante was the winner of the Bridgeport Connecticut Barnum's Got Talent Competition in 2015. He has performed in multiple productions through local and regional theater companies and RCA. He has performed in benefit concerts; he plays guitar, alto, saxophone and percussion. Dante has taken master voice classes, has received a scholarship for Broadway Method Academy intensive classes allowing him the opportunity to work with various Broadway employed artists. He was also a member of the Connecticut All- State Children's Choir and continues to accept jobs as a choral scholar at various venues. Dante takes acting classes, can tap dance, perform acrobatics, can speak multiple accents, and has received multiple recognitions. Simply put, he is amazing! He is currently rehearsing for the opening of "Newsies" in Stamford's Curtain Call KweSkin Theatre.

What makes Dante DiFederico so special is that he is incredibly humble, kind hearted, and grateful. When Dante was just five years old, his father died suddenly. He is being raised by his loving mother and extended family. At the time of his father's death, Dante and his mother lost their home and have experienced extreme financial hardship. Dante has assumed the role within his home as the "man of the house" in many ways. He carries responsibilities that many of his peers do not. Despite these hardships, Dante displays incredible resiliency and fortitude. Dante never thinks of himself as having "less", in fact he often says that he feels "very blessed" and fully supported by his family. Dante is incredibly selfless. His mom shared with me how a friend of Dante's recently passed away and it was his wish that Dante perform "Ave Maria" at his funeral. Dante not only learned the song but performed it acapella in Italian and did so in the most beautiful fashion. Dante also extends himself to the special needs community with performances at the Kennedy Center. Dante is a unique young man. He is an "old soul". Aside from his talents in the arts, it is these small gestures of polite humanity that set Dante apart from his peers. There is no doubt in my mind that Dante *will* go the distance in the performing arts industry. He is that talented and that special!

Sincerely,

Carrie E. Gettings  
School Counselor



NEW ENGLAND  
ASSOCIATION  
OF SCHOOLS  
AND COLLEGES  
ACCREDITED MEMBER

# NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL HEART OF THE ARTS AWARD NOMINEE

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The deadline for returning the completed nomination  
to the MIAA Office is Friday, January 19, 2018.

Name of Nominee: SYDNEY LOUISE BERKELEY  
(first, middle, last)

## Individual Submitting Nomination:

Name: DANIEL SPRINGER, VISUAL ARTS CHAIR, DENNIS-YARMOUTH  
REGIONAL HIGH SCHOOL

Phone: 508 398-7630 x 7218

E-mail: SPRINGEDDY-REGIONAL.K12.MA.US

Street Address: DYRHS 210 STATION AVENUE

City, State, Zip Code: SOUTH YARMOUTH, MA 02664

Date: 12/1/2017

## State Association Endorsement:

Name: Peter Smith

Title: Associate Director

Signature: Peter Smith

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# NOMINEE INFORMATION SHEET

The deadline for returning the completed nomination to the MIAA Office is Friday, January 19, 2018.

- Student    Coach    Administrator    Official    Trainer    Performing Arts Administrator  
 Athletic Administrator    Other (Specify \_\_\_\_\_)

Name of Nominee: SYDNEY LOUISE BERKELEY  
(first, middle, last)

Current Address: ONE CENTER STREET  
(street address)  
YARMOUTH PORT, MA 02675  
(city, state, zip)

Phone: 774-327-2978 OR 5086332745

E-mail: NETTIE007@COMCAST.NET OR ABERKELEY@COMCAST.NET

School (if any): DENNIS-YARMOUTH REGIONAL HIGH SCHOOL

City: SOUTH YARMOUTH State: MA

# NOMINATION FORM

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The deadline for returning the completed nomination to the MIAA Office is Friday, January 19, 2018.

1. Please describe nominee's current involvement in high school. If applicable, please list any accomplishments or honors attained.

IN THE LAST TWO YEARS, SYDNEY HAS BLOSSOMED AS A STUDENT AND A ROLE MODEL. HER CURRENT GPA IS @ A 3.82 & SHE IS ROUTINELY ON HIGHER HONORS. AS AN ACTIVE MEMBER OF OUR NATIONAL ART HONOR SOCIETY CHAPTER, SHE HAS DEVOTED NUMEROUS HOURS TO COMMUNITY SERVICE PROJECTS. SHE IS KIND AND GENEROUS TO HER PEERS & RESPECTFUL OF HER TEACHERS.

2. Please list nominee's actions or accomplishments that deem him or her worthy of the "National High School Heart of the Arts Award."

SYDNEY HAS STRUGGLED TO OVERCOME SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL CHALLENGES EARLY IN HIGH SCHOOL AND WORKED THROUGH THEM (WITH A SUPPORTIVE STAFF) TO GET TO A PLACE WHERE SHE CAN ACTUALLY SHARE HER STRUGGLE BY SHOWING HER ART. WITH HER OWN INITIATIVE, SHE REQUESTED AND WAS GRANTED PERMISSION TO CREATE AND CURATE A SOLO EXHIBITION OF HER WORK THAT SHOWCASES HER JOURNEY OF SELF-ACTUALIZATION (HER WORDS). HER WORK & HER TRIUMPH MAKE HER DESERVING OF "HEART OF THE ARTS" RECOGNITION.

# NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL HEART OF THE ARTS AWARD NOMINEE

(The deadline for returning the completed nomination to the NFHS is February 1, 2018)

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Name of Nominee: Devin Patrick O'Brien

*(first, middle, last)*

## ***Individual Submitting Nomination:***

Name: Matthew Petrucci

Phone: 1-631-592-3100

E-mail: mpetrucci@hhh.k12.ny.us

Street Address: 50 Vanderbilt Pkwy

City, State, Zip Code: Dix Hills, NY 11746

Date: 1/30/18

## ***State Association Endorsement:***

Name: Kristen Jadin

Title: Director of Special Programs

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_



# NOMINEE INFORMATION SHEET

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**Student**     Coach     Administrator     Official     Trainer     Performing Arts  
Administrator     Athletic Administrator     Other (Specify \_\_\_\_\_)

Name of Nominee: Devin Patrick O'Brien  
*(first, middle, last)*

Current Address: 32 Cottontail Road  
*(street address)*

Melville, NY 11747  
*(city, state, zip)*

Phone: 1-203-228-8579

E-mail: devinobrien@icloud.com

School (if any): High School East, Half Hollow Hills

City: Dix Hills                      State: New York

# NOMINATION FORM

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1. Please describe nominee's current involvement in high school. If applicable, please list any accomplishments or honors attained.

Devin moved here from Connecticut during his senior of High School. He immediately immersed himself into our school and culture. His abilities in art **and** piano playing led him to not only make friends but take on active role in school activities. During the Holiday season, he helped me with our Helping Hands fundraiser, by making and 'selling' paper hands to raise money for families in need. Then, to my surprise, as we were displaying them, he jumped on the piano and played some tunes to the joyous surprise of nearby classes! He is a real class act and maintains a job at Starbucks as well. He is featured on their website too! He informed me he also draws their signs for them to help publicize their specials!

2. Please list nominee's actions or accomplishments that deem him or her worthy of the "National High School Heart of the Arts Award."

Devin is an all-star all around, good kid with a positive attitude. We have a student, whom only speaks Chinese (his native language) and Devin was so kind to help him out in Art class so the student understood. Once the musical director heard that he played piano, he was approached to play the piano for the Spring Musical! He is also currently helping me with the set design and scenery for the play. Devin is also assisting with our Go Red fundraiser by making posters and aiding the clubs with making a huge red paper chain link display. I cannot speak highly enough about him. I haven't a more dedicated, polite, and creative student artist (in one of my classes) in a long time, and I have been teaching for 14 years. Believe it or not, since he transferred so late from Connecticut, he is actually in a class that is predominantly 9<sup>th</sup> grade freshmen, and he doesn't mind one bit. He is a great role model.

I know he was involved with art and art clubs in Connecticut too.

# NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL HEART OF THE ARTS AWARD NOMINEE

(The deadline for returning the completed nomination to the NFHS is February 1, 2018)

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Name of Nominee: Cecelia Egan  
(first, middle, last)

## **Individual Submitting Nomination:**

Name: Jen Wasson / Chris Kavanagh

Phone: 401-434-0113 ext 130

E-mail: jwasson@bayviewacademy.org

Street Address: 3070 Pawtucket Avenue

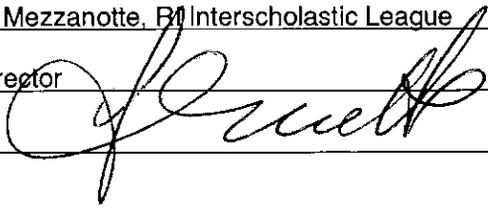
City, State, Zip Code: Riverside, RI 02915

Date: 1-25-18

## **State Association Endorsement:**

Name: Thomas A. Mezzanotte, RI Interscholastic League

Title: Executive Director

Signature:  \_\_\_\_\_

# NOMINEE INFORMATION SHEET

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Student    Coach    Administrator    Official    Trainer    Performing Arts  
Administrator    Athletic Administrator    Other (Specify \_\_\_\_\_)

Name of Nominee: Cecelia Egan  
*(first, middle, last)*

Current Address: 3070 Pawtucket Avenue  
*(street address)*

Riverside, RI 02915  
*(city, state, zip)*

Phone: 401-434-0113 ext 130

E-mail: jwasson@bayviewacademy.org

School (if any): St. Mary Academy Bay View

City: Riverside State: RI

# NOMINATION FORM

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1. Please describe nominee's current involvement in high school. If applicable, please list any accomplishments or honors attained.

**Please see attached.**

2. Please list nominee's actions or accomplishments that deem him or her worthy of the "National High School Heart of the Arts Award."

Please see attached.

In the past thirty five years, the stage at St. Mary Academy Bay View has seen its share of sequins and sparkles cross from wing to wing. Four years ago, a new source of flash caught the spotlight - the spokes of then sixth-grader Cecelia Egan's wheelchair. Egan, now a freshman, has performed in countless theatrical productions as a member of The Bay View Players. In bringing her story and her courageous heart to the performing arts, she has redefined her place in the school community and has inspired a deepening of the program's definition of "ensemble."

Cecelia, who lives with Friedreich's ataxia (FA), a degenerative neuro-muscular disorder which limits her mobility, has enthusiastically committed to the rigorous rehearsal and performance schedule expected of all Bay View Players. In so many ways, she integrates herself into the cast without calling attention to her need for assisted mobility. There is genius in both Cecelia's compensatory stage presence as well as in director Christine Kavanagh's vision for incorporating her needs - and both lull the audience into a gradual recognition of how remarkable Egan truly is. At first, Egan's chair seems like an extension of a character she's playing. She often abandons the chair in favor of propping herself up on a variety of set pieces - a piano, a sleigh or a collection of trunks - with assistance from fellow castmates and a voluntary alumna aide. It is physically intensive work, but the focus is never on the equipment. In fact, only when the chair surfaces again later in a performance does the audience begin to appreciate the monumental coordination it takes for Egan to make costume changes, entrances and exits alongside fellow cast members. Egan's smile, combined with creative choreography, helps to effortlessly integrate her wheelchair - her physical access point to the performing arts.

Egan's commitment to the rehearsal schedule is no small feat. A dedicated student, Cecelia carries a typical freshman course load. In addition, she maintains good grades even when she is traveling out of state for medical appointments. Her older sister Emma, a graceful and accomplished dancer, is also a veteran of the Bay View stage. Cecelia knew that committing to the program would require more from her than most. To put things in perspective, even a routine task like completing the rehearsal sign in sheet requires assistance from Cecelia's peers. A few years ago, Cecelia made the decision to stop working with a provided school aide across the academic day. In a self-initiated transition to greater independence, she turned instead to fellow members of The Bay View Players to ask only for the specific help she needed - a choice that both exposed her vulnerabilities and expanded her trusted support circle. A recent St. Mary Academy-Bay View graduate, Michaela Ferreira, stepped in to assist - attending all rehearsals and helping to accommodate Egan's needs and stage transitions. *"We developed an instant friendship and since then, we've worked together every year and I always look forward to Cabaret season. It's always no questions asked. I'm always coming back to Bay View to help Cecelia with anything she needs! Having the chance to work with and perform with her has been so wonderful. To see the genuine friendships that she has developed and the level of camaraderie that she helps bring to the performing arts has been truly inspiring,"* reflects Ferreira. With grateful hearts, fellow students attend to her physical needs, help her with hair and makeup, and do whatever is needed to help her feel included and fully involved. In this way, Cecelia has been an advocate for expanding artistic and interpersonal access to the performing arts for students with physical impairments.

Anticipating Cecelia's needs has benefited The Bay View Players, too. They are challenged to think beyond personal preparation, and to prioritize whole-cast goals. In this way, Egan's personal triumphs are shared by all who were part of her journey to the stage. Cecelia's mother Donna is proud of Cecelia's optimistic attitude: *"Cecelia's infectious smile, spirit and uncanny ability to emotionally impact others in such a profound positive way are inspiring. We knew this well before her diagnosis at age five. We also knew we would be tested as parents well beyond what we thought we were capable of handling, yet Cecelia's joyful disposition, inner strength, and determination – in a role-reversal way – guide and motivate us every single day. She is not defined by her disease; rather she sets out to realize her goals, humbly accepting help and accommodations. The Bay View Community has been an awesome environment for Cecelia to thrive and achieve. She lives each moment with authenticity, love, grace and gratitude!"* Indeed, Egan never expects others to flex to meet her - she actively seeks solutions to help bridge her abilities to the target role and she's humble and happy to brighten her place on stage.

Egan's impact on the Bay View Players ensemble and on loyal audiences cannot be quantified. Through her personal courage, she has proven that the stage welcomes anyone with the determination and openness to showcase a love of performing despite physical dependence on others. Egan's not camouflaged - she's showcased in a way that celebrates her daily victories over her challenges. Her story is an inspiration to those who already know her as well as those who have yet to see her in action. Most impressively, she has literally put her "wheels in motion" to make the performing arts more easily accessed and enjoyed by all.







# Section 2

National High School Heart of the Arts Award

# NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL HEART OF THE ARTS AWARD NOMINEE

(The deadline for returning the completed nomination to the NFHS is February 1, 2018)

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Name of Nominee: John Stroube

(first, middle, last)

## **Individual Submitting Nomination:**

Name: Julian Tackett

Phone: 859-299-5472

E-mail: jtackett@khsaa.org

Street Address: KHSAA, 2280 Executive Drive

City, State, Zip Code: Lexington, KY 40505

Date: January 31, 2018

## **State Association Endorsement:**

Name: Julian Tackett

Title: Commissioner

Signature: 

# NOMINEE INFORMATION SHEET

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Student    Coach    Administrator    Official    Trainer    Performing Arts Administrator    Athletic Administrator    Other (Specify \_\_\_\_\_)

Name of Nominee: John Stroube  
*(first, middle, last)*

Current Address: KMEA State Office, PO Box 1058  
*(street address)*

Richmond, KY 40476  
*(city, state, zip)*

Phone: 859-626-5635

E-mail: john@kmea.org

School (if any): Kentucky Music Educators Association

City: Richmond State: KY

# NOMINATION FORM

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1. Please describe nominee's current involvement in high school. If applicable, please list any accomplishments or honors attained.

Dr. John Stroube is the Executive Director of the Kentucky Music Educators Association. Prior to his current appointment, he was the KMEA Associate Director, before which he was the interim Assistant Director of Bands at the University of Louisiana at Monroe. Dr. Stroube was awarded a DMA in conducting and pedagogy at the University of Southern Mississippi in 2004 where he studied with Dr. Tom Frascillo. While at U.S.M. he served as a graduate assistant for the University Bands, and was also the Executive Administrator for the National Band Association, bearing responsibility for the daily operations of that organization's national office.

A graduate of Bowling Green High School, Dr. Stroube has a Bachelor of Music from Western Kentucky University and a Master of Science in Music Education from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. He has done additional study at Northern Illinois University, VanderCook College and Murray State University.

During Dr. Stroube's public school career he was the Director of Bands for the Murray Independent Schools from 1988 through 2001, prior to which he taught for eleven years in Illinois. High school bands under his direction were consistently granted Division I ratings at concert band festival. The marching band at Murray High School was rated "Superior" each year of his tenure and was second place in the Kentucky Class A Marching Band Championships in 1997. Dr. Stroube's public school experience includes responsibility for bands at all levels, middle school and high school choirs, and elementary classroom music.

As a member of the Kentucky Music Educators Association Dr. Stroube served as First District Band Chairman, and as a representative on the state Marching Band Board of Control. He is a member of the National Band Association, the International Clarinet Association, Phi Mu Alpha Sinfonia, and of Phi Beta Mu, for which he served as state secretary-treasurer for three years. In the spring of 1998, the music educators of the KMEA First District selected him as its high school teacher of the year.

When his administrative duties allow, Dr. Stroube enjoys conducting and playing clarinet. He has performed with numerous community bands and orchestras during his career. In 2009 he organized a community band in Richmond, and he programs concerts for that ensemble throughout the year. To help promote arts in his community, he served for five years on the board of the Richmond Area Arts Council.

2. Please list nominee's actions or accomplishments that deem him or her worthy of the "National High School Heart of the Arts Award."

Dr. Stroube has given his entire career to the advancement of the arts through band. A Director of Bands at one of Kentucky's smallest schools (following a lengthy career in Illinois), he always merited high ratings.

As noted above, he remains active on the local, state and national level in the promotion of band (and all of music and fine arts) in Kentucky schools.

He is a very visible presence in a very necessary aspect of the public education sector in the Commonwealth and we are proud to ask that he be recognized for his efforts.

# NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL HEART OF THE ARTS AWARD NOMINEE

(The deadline for returning the completed nomination to the NFHS is February 1, 2018)

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Name of Nominee: Joshua Isaiah St. Hill  
*(first, middle, last)*

## **Individual Submitting Nomination:**

Name: Madeline Michel

Phone: 434-249-2491

E-mail: mmichel@k12albemarle.org

Street Address: 978 Wolf Trap Rd

City, State, Zip Code: Charlottesville, VA 22911

Date: 1/4/18

## **State Association Endorsement:**

Name: Madeline Michel *Travis Ellis*

Title: VHSL Theatre Coach *Director of Activities*

Signature: Madeline Michel *Travis Ellis*

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# NOMINEE INFORMATION SHEET

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XStudent  Coach  Administrator  Official  Trainer  Performing Arts Administrator  
 Athletic Administrator  Other (Specify \_\_\_\_\_)

Name of Nominee: Joshua Isaiah St. Hill  
*(first, middle, last)*

Current Address: 1130 Arden Drive  
*(street address)*

Charlottesville, VA 22902  
*(city, state, zip)*

Phone: (240)329-7879

E-mail: joshuaisaiah78@gmail.com

School (if any): Monticello High School

City: Charlottesville State: Virginia

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## NOMINATION FORM

1. Please describe nominee's current involvement in high school. If applicable, please list any accomplishments or honors attained.

Joshua St. Hill is a 16-year-old young black man who has found himself disturbed and frightened by the past year's spate of blatant racist rhetoric, police brutality and incivility. He began writing a one act play in April titled, "A King's Story." After the events of July and August in Charlottesville, in which white supremacists invaded the town, leaving one person dead and nineteen injured, Josh began to edit his play to reflect the horror of his community. These events burst upon the national scene and led to a national discussion about Nazism and white supremacy, made more inflammatory when the President commented on the issue, maintaining that there were "fine people on many sides." Josh's studied these events as carefully as he had studied other events leading up to them, like the removal of Civil War statues, the controversy of Colin Kaepernick, and the reports of police brutality in Ferguson, New York, Baltimore, Florida and many other locations in the country. The result of Josh's research is a beautiful, nuanced story that does not offer simplistic solutions nor does it reduce the issues to black and white. His play, in which he takes on the lead role of a young man whose best friend is shot by police, has garnered many awards and honors and receives standing ovations wherever it is performed.

2. Please list nominee's actions or accomplishments that deem him or her worthy of the "National High School Heart of the Arts Award."

Josh has rallied the entire community around his efforts. Everywhere we bring his play, audience members come up to him and want to hug him. There are tears and gratitude for the work he has done. Josh is able to cross racial barriers to reach out to every sub group of our school. His work is sensitive and balanced, with a strong sense of love and peace at its core.

Josh's play was awarded top six honors out of eighty plays at the Virginia Theatre Association Conference held in October, 2017 in Norfolk, Virginia. His play won first place at the sub-regional VHSL competition held at Monticello High School on November 4, 2017. Josh has been awarded best actor awards at both the subregional and regional competition held at Turner Ashby High School on November 18, 2017. Last Sunday, January 7, Josh's play was presented at Live Arts Community Theatre in Charlottesville. It is the first high school play that has ever been presented there. It was chosen because this play addresses problems that have the potential to inspire discussion and greater understanding among community members. After the show on Sunday, Josh took part in a talkback discussion with the audience and explained his inspiration for writing this play. He answered questions like a pro, and was given more than one standing ovation for his efforts. Josh has also been invited to serve on a panel with Professor AD Carson at UVA's Rotunda on January 26. This panel will discuss hip-hop and its effect on social and political issues that face young people today. Josh has been a hip hop artist for several years and has been influenced by some of the more socially conscious rappers like Tupac, Mos Def, J Cole and Kendrick Lamar. The play will be presented at UVA in Minor Hall on March 1, as a culmination of Black History Month. Josh's play will also be featured in a Dutch documentary on the topic of racism in America to be released in April. The ICU film company, a Dutch version of PBS, spent a day with the cast and crew to film segments of the play. Here is a link to their website:

<http://icudocs.tv/index.php/en/>

Josh has been a member of the track and basketball teams in past years but is now focusing on his writing and performance. He is a strong student, takes AP classes, and maintains a strong 3.8 GPA. He takes AP English, dual enrollment psychology and all honors classes. His plan is to go to college and continue writing and performing.

I cannot imagine a person more deserving than a young man who turns pain and suffering in his hometown into a beautiful and inclusive work of art. Josh's family supports him every step of the way. His father, a manager at State Farm Insurance and his mother, a migrant from West Africa, have been a strong influence upon Josh. Both of them have come from economically struggling

families and have imbued Josh with the commitment to give back to his community. They are a devoutly religious family that has been involved in their local church, and Josh has been an active participant in the 100 Black Men mentorship group. Josh is the person I call upon to mentor the struggling black freshmen I meet in some of my classes. He is deeply motivated by mentoring others the way he has been mentored.

Here are some links to news coverage Josh has received:

[http://www.dailyprogress.com/news/local/charlottesville-rallies-make-way-into-mhs-student-script/article\\_94933da4-b200-11e7-b87b-2b8f0a89c4d3.html](http://www.dailyprogress.com/news/local/charlottesville-rallies-make-way-into-mhs-student-script/article_94933da4-b200-11e7-b87b-2b8f0a89c4d3.html)

[http://www.dailyprogress.com/news/local/controversial-monticello-high-play-opens-to-broad-support/article\\_67c08552-c042-11e7-8058-4bc89306c83b.html](http://www.dailyprogress.com/news/local/controversial-monticello-high-play-opens-to-broad-support/article_67c08552-c042-11e7-8058-4bc89306c83b.html)

[http://www.dailyprogress.com/opinion/opinion-editorial-student-play-helping-us-find-healing/article\\_f0d91f70-f724-11e7-a499-133704e73128.html](http://www.dailyprogress.com/opinion/opinion-editorial-student-play-helping-us-find-healing/article_f0d91f70-f724-11e7-a499-133704e73128.html)

[http://music.virginia.edu/making\\_noise\\_josh-st-hill](http://music.virginia.edu/making_noise_josh-st-hill)

Here is a link to his play:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pijGKW1cdIU>

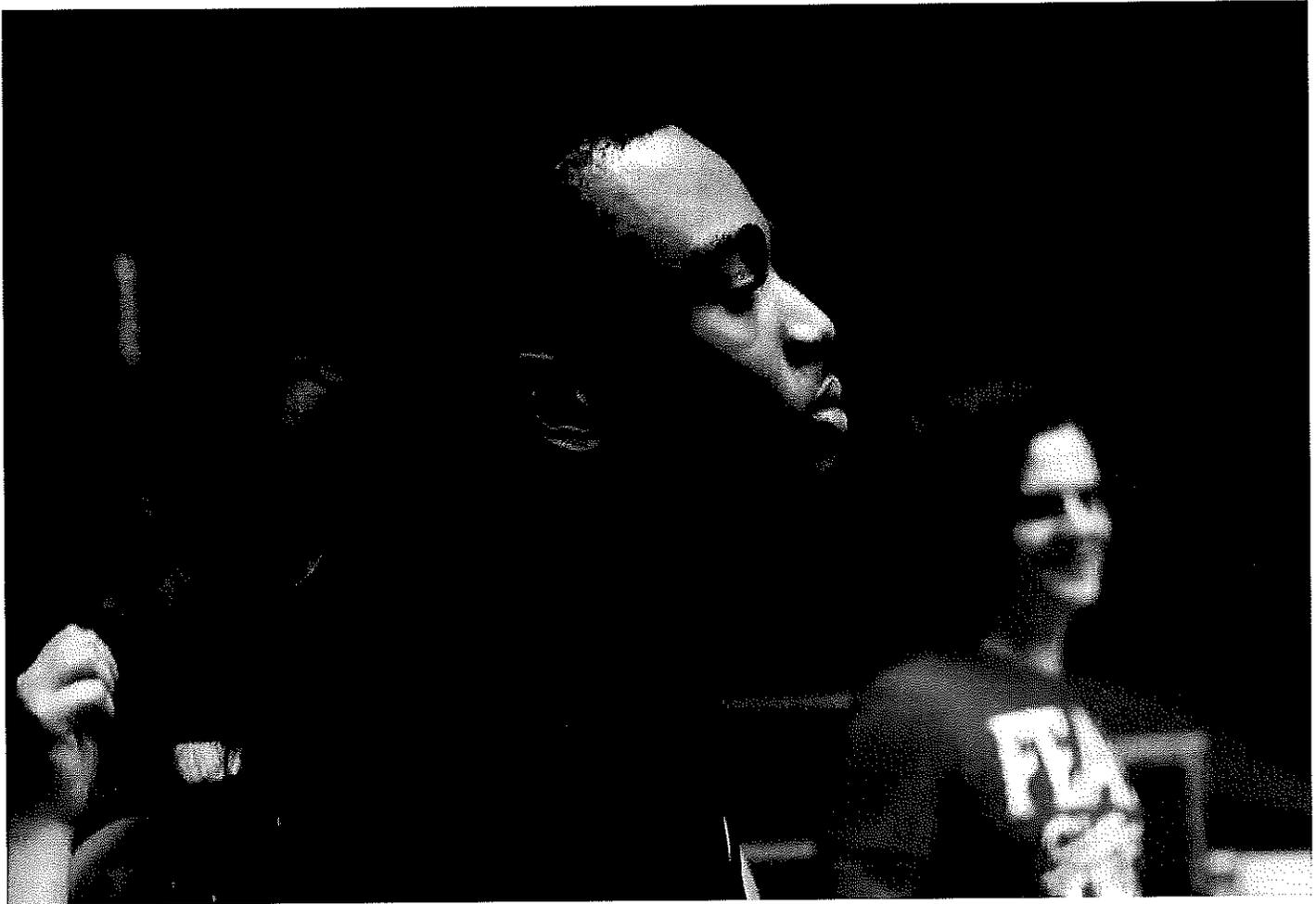


[http://www.dailyprogress.com/news/local/charlottesville-rallies-make-way-into-mhs-student-s-script/article\\_94933da4-b200-11e7-b87b-2b8f0a89c4d3.html](http://www.dailyprogress.com/news/local/charlottesville-rallies-make-way-into-mhs-student-s-script/article_94933da4-b200-11e7-b87b-2b8f0a89c4d3.html)

SPOTLIGHT

## Charlottesville rallies make way into MHS student's script

BY MICHAEL BRAGG Oct 15, 2017



Josh St. Hill, a junior at Monticello High School, prepares for a rehearsal of his play, "A King's Story."

[Buy Now](#)

Zack Wajsgas/The Daily Progress

It started off as a play to address a nationwide issue of police brutality and the killings of unarmed, young black men.

But when white supremacists and neo-Nazis descended upon Charlottesville this summer, Monticello High School junior Josh St. Hill knew that what happened in his own backyard and that placed the city in the national spotlight needed to be a part of his play, as well.

Titled "A King's Story," St. Hill's story focuses on the death of fictional character James King, a black teenager in Charlottesville who is shot and killed by a white police officer. In the play, King is unarmed and carrying a small amount of marijuana.

The story follows what has become an all too similar cycle of events: initial news reports of the shooting, finger pointing, character analysis and pundit screaming matches on TV news — was he an honor roll student, was he dealing the pot that was found on him, labeling him as a thug, etc.

The play focuses on how a community responds to politically explosive and violent events, the kind that have rattled Charlottesville, as well as cities such as Ferguson, Missouri; Baltimore; and Cleveland.

But the main focus of the story is on the character of Elijah — played by St. Hill — who was King's best friend. He struggles to keep calm and not to let his emotions get the best of him as he navigates a school setting also struggling with the sudden death of a classmate.

The theme of the play falls in line with others performed — and written — by Monticello drama students, where they are often given a voice to shine a light on subjects that are personal and meaningful to them.

"People are always asking, 'why are you guys doing the same plays?' And our answer to that then was, 'because it's still happening,'" St. Hill said. "And then July 8 rolls around, Aug. 12 rolls around and we're like, 'see? It's still happening.'"

"Nobody wants bad things to keep happening," he added. "Nobody wants to see somebody die, but to see that happening in your own backyard, I feel like it's just going to open up people's eyes even more to understand the message and the rawness of this play."

In between scenes, St. Hill inserted hip-hop to directly address the audience about what just happened on stage, expressing the message of the play in another artistic format.

"I try to interpret music into this because I know sometimes if people can't get it when you're just talking in the scene, they might get it through a lyric that's hitting them because I know a lot of people that operate that way," he said.

St. Hill has been rapping for years, influenced by artists such as J. Cole, Kendrick Lamar, Tupac and André 3000. He's taken part in cyphers between MHS and Albemarle High students, as well.

St. Hill and his peers hope those who see the show can see the subject matter through their perspective.

"I just want them to take away that it hurts when you see people like you not being treated the same way as other people who don't look like you," said Kayla Scott, a junior at Monticello who plays the role of Lisa, James' girlfriend. Throughout the play, she's able to show the nostalgia in James' absence while being a critical voice to Elijah's reactions and outbursts.

"You're a citizen of this country and you're supposed to be protected, but you feel like the people who are supposed to protect you are not protecting you," Scott said. "So, I just want everybody to know that we need to be on the same page. We don't feel equal."

\*\*\*

Giving MHS drama students a voice has been a mission for Madeline Michel, the school's theater teacher. In the past, her students have put on other shows dealing with racial issues, including "Memphis" and "In the Heights."

Just last year, they staged a production of a now former student's play that focused on the controversies of buildings and other landmarks that bear the names of Confederate leaders.

"I let them do what they need to do until they need me," Michel said of the writing and creative process.

St. Hill, who was the lead in last year's musical, came to Michel with the idea of a play chronicling the ensuing events and fallout of police brutality, but Michel didn't expect it to take place in Charlottesville.

"That's what was on his mind, you know? You have to let kids write about what they care about, and what their fears and dreams are," Michel said.

As the summer went on and she and other students met with St. Hill to go over drafts of his play and fine-tune it, the real-life tensions in Charlottesville made their way into the final product.

"For me to just sit and be silent because I feel some type of way for it doesn't make sense to me," St. Hill said. "I feel like I have to say something. I feel like I have to spread some type of message to people — or else, what am I doing?"

\*\*\*

Monticello senior Amaya Wallace is making her directorial debut for "A King's Story." One of the biggest challenges for her early on was making sure she was able to communicate the message of the play to the cast in the most meaningful way possible.

"I know Josh and everyone else in the cast is really passionate about this and passionate about educating people and telling people how they feel, and I think this goes more than politics," Wallace said. "It goes to human emotion and just being scared, being worried, but also being empowered."

The subject matter is heavy and at times can be uncomfortable, but that's what the students wanted. For St. Hill, it was important to present the play's message in its truest form.

"There's a lot of shows and things to tackle issues like this, but I feel like at times they're sugarcoated, or at times they're like played down just a little bit so they can appeal to maybe little kids [who] will be seeing it or something like that," he said. "But us, it has to be raw. It has to be real. You can't downplay anything. This is what's happening and this how we're handling it."

"A King's Story" will be performed Wednesday for the MHS community. Michel said she thinks every administrator in the county school division should see the play to "better understand what kids in high school are thinking."

The public showing will be at 7 p.m. Nov. 3 at MHS. Admission is free, but donations are encouraged. The donations will go toward scholarships within the drama department.

St. Hill hopes the play can change people's minds on the subjects the script tackles.

"If I can do that, I'll be happy," he said. "Even if I can change one mind and everybody else hates me, I'll still be happy. I can still go home and sleep at night."

Michael Bragg is a reporter for The Daily Progress. Contact him at (434) 978-7265, mbragg@dailyprogress.com or @braggmichael on Twitter.



Heather Heyer's cause of death ruled as blunt force injury

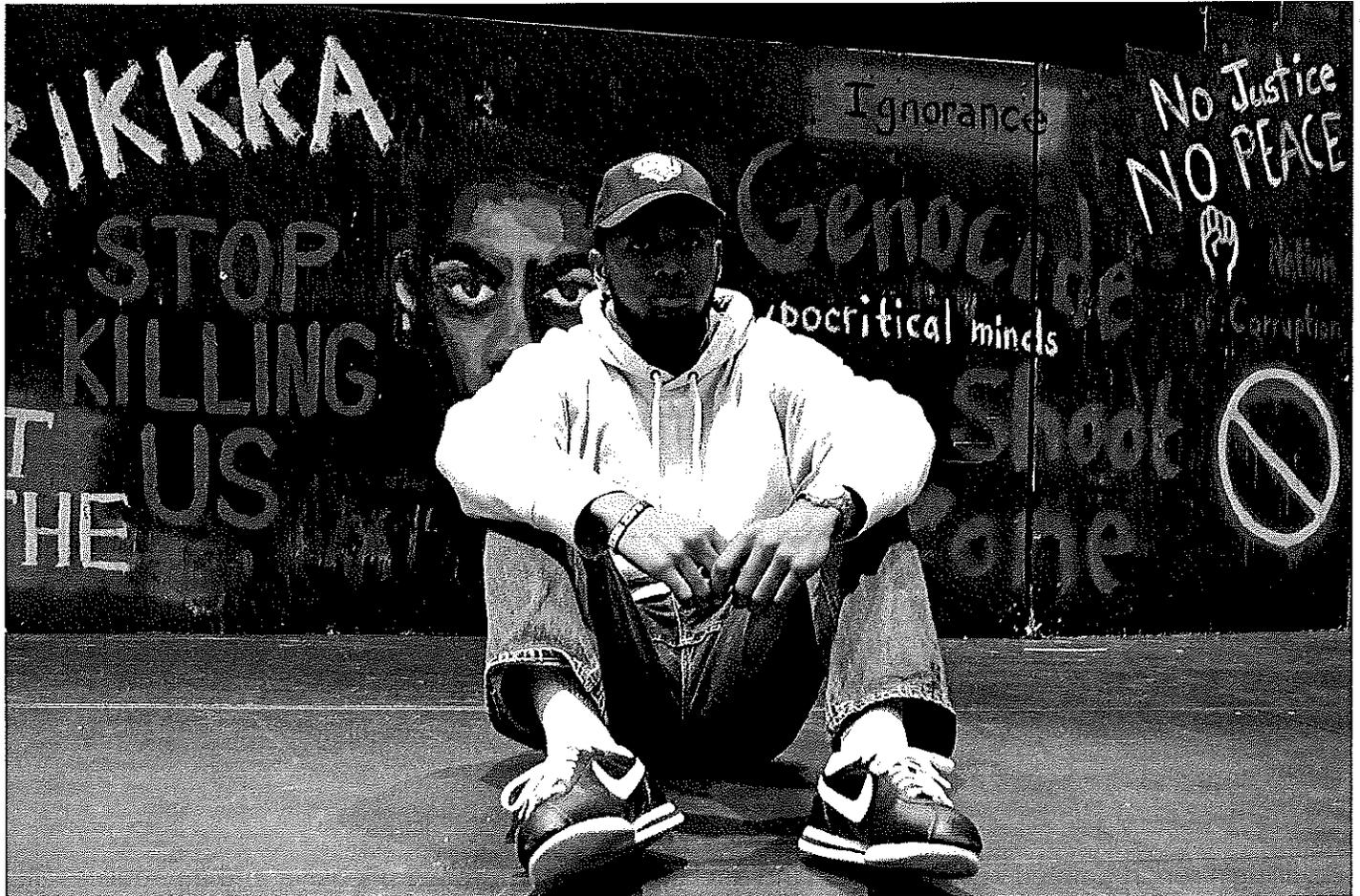
Opinion/Editorial: Dealing with rally trauma in creative ways

Michael Bragg

[http://www.dailyprogress.com/news/local/controversial-monticello-high-play-opens-to-broad-support/article\\_67c08552-c042-11e7-8058-4bc89306c83b.html](http://www.dailyprogress.com/news/local/controversial-monticello-high-play-opens-to-broad-support/article_67c08552-c042-11e7-8058-4bc89306c83b.html)

## Controversial Monticello High play opens to broad support

BY MICHAEL BRAGG Nov 2, 2017



Monticello High School junior Josh St. Hill sits in front of the set piece for his one-act play "A King's Story."

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MICHAEL BRAGG/THE DAILY PROGRESS

Although critics lashed out at his play for being too divisive and anti-police, Josh St. Hill and the rest of the Monticello High School drama department went on to premiere "A King's Story" on Oct. 25.

But what St. Hill, who wrote and stars in the play about a fictional black Charlottesville teenager who is shot and killed by police, saw that night was support.

The performance drew a standing ovation, and some audience members approached St. Hill to shake his hand, give him a hug and offer congratulations.

Those who have seen or read the play said it has the potential to kick-start community conversations over complex and sensitive topics on current events in America, and that it's essential that student voices are heard, especially in Charlottesville.

"A King's Story" is a one-act play that St. Hill, a junior, wrote over the summer and updated to include references to the white supremacist and white nationalist rallies in Charlottesville in July and August.

The main character, Elijah, loses his best friend, James King, when he is shot and killed by a white Charlottesville police officer. In the story, King is unarmed and in possession of a small amount of marijuana when he is shot.

"A King's Story" not only taps into the frustration and anger of Elijah, who wants to know why his friend was killed, but also how a community reacts to an officer-involved shooting.

St. Hill's work received most of its criticism after radio host Rob Schilling at WINA aired a story that focused on messages in the set design.

"You have a bunch of people now who haven't even seen the show commenting and saying, 'Wow, this show is, like, so biased, this show is so anti-America, this show it so anti-police,' and we're sitting here like, 'You guys haven't even seen the play,'" St. Hill said.

Schilling's report pointed out slogans on the backdrop that he deemed offensive and anti-police. St. Hill said the messages were not ones that he or the other actors endorse or believe.

"We have a set piece that isn't really what we think, but it reflects what would be happening in that fictional set, what people would be thinking," he said.

Since the report, the backdrop was changed slightly, with the addition of the common protest chant "no justice, no peace." St. Hill did not make any other changes to the set.

Though most of the criticism has been that "A King's Story" is anti-police, St. Hill said that is not the play's message.

“This isn’t anti-police in any way, shape or form,” he said. “There are great police officers. I know great police chiefs, sergeants. This isn’t bashing the police, it’s bashing the bad police. We’re not throwing everybody under one category.”

St. Hill said he hasn’t received any negative feedback directed at him personally, but Madeline Michel, a theater teacher at Monticello High, said she and social media accounts for the drama department have.

The goal of the production was not to offend people, Michel said, nor was it to push a political cause. She has long been an advocate of giving her students the freedom and the space to explore what they are thinking about and put it into artistic form.

Sometimes, the content students confront will be uncomfortable and based on difficult situations, she said, especially after Charlottesville’s deadly Aug. 12 white nationalist rally.

“I mean, every show just can’t be unicorns and rainbows, because life’s not like that,” Michel said. “These kids were really scared this summer. We have kids in this school who were hurt in that car terrorist attack, so they’re very aware of what’s been happening.”

But in the wake of it all, they also have received an outpouring of support from the community, including the parents of students in the drama department.

“I’m really grateful that they have the opportunity to have a stage to stand on and have their voice be heard, because our kids are thinking about a lot of things and they have a lot on their mind,” said Valerie Goodman, parent of an MHS drama student, after the Oct. 25 show. “They’re thoughtful and sensitive, and this gives them a way to express themselves peacefully and artistically and to be heard.”

Several parents wrote letters to the Albemarle School Board encouraging its members to support St. Hill, Michel and the rest of the students. Board Chairwoman Kate Acuff said the vast majority of the letters were positive — only one letter suggested the board halt the production.

“I think it’s important for students to have discussions ... about what happened on Aug. 11 and 12 and how that fits into the bigger picture of what’s going on in our country,” she said.

\*\*\*

Friday will be the first time James St. Hill sees his son's play, although he has read it and kept up with it as it went through the development process.

When the play drew negative reactions, St. Hill said he did not have a problem with it, nor did it seem to bother his son.

"For my son, we've always told him to speak your truth," he said. "And so, if you really believe in something, then you've got to stand behind your beliefs."

Anyone who sees "A King's Story" can find common ground within it, such as dealing with the pain of losing a close friend, he said.

"Those are universal themes that are beyond race, that are beyond police activity, in terms of some of the questions that will come about police shootings across the country," he said. "I just think that the play speaks to a more basic element of human beings, and once we're able to deal with it on that level, I think that folks will be pleased with the play."

St. Hill said a friend who works with the Albemarle County Police Department expressed concerns about the play containing some anti-police sentiment.

Efforts have been made within the county school division to set up a dialogue between Josh St. Hill and other students and county police officers.

"I think for us to have a sit-down with police officers who want to do good in the community, police officers who are doing good in the community, I think that's beautiful to have," St. Hill said.

\*\*\*

A public performance of "A King's Story," as well as another student-written one-act play, "Birthday Boy," is scheduled for Friday at Monticello High School.

Doors open at 7 p.m. and admission is free, but donations are encouraged to help fund scholarships within the drama department.

The Oct. 25 performance received \$700 in donations, Michel said, which went toward the department's recent trip to Norfolk for a Virginia Theatre Association contest. "A King's Story" placed in the top six in the statewide competition.

On Saturday, students will perform the play at a Virginia High School League theater event, which is being hosted at Monticello High this year.

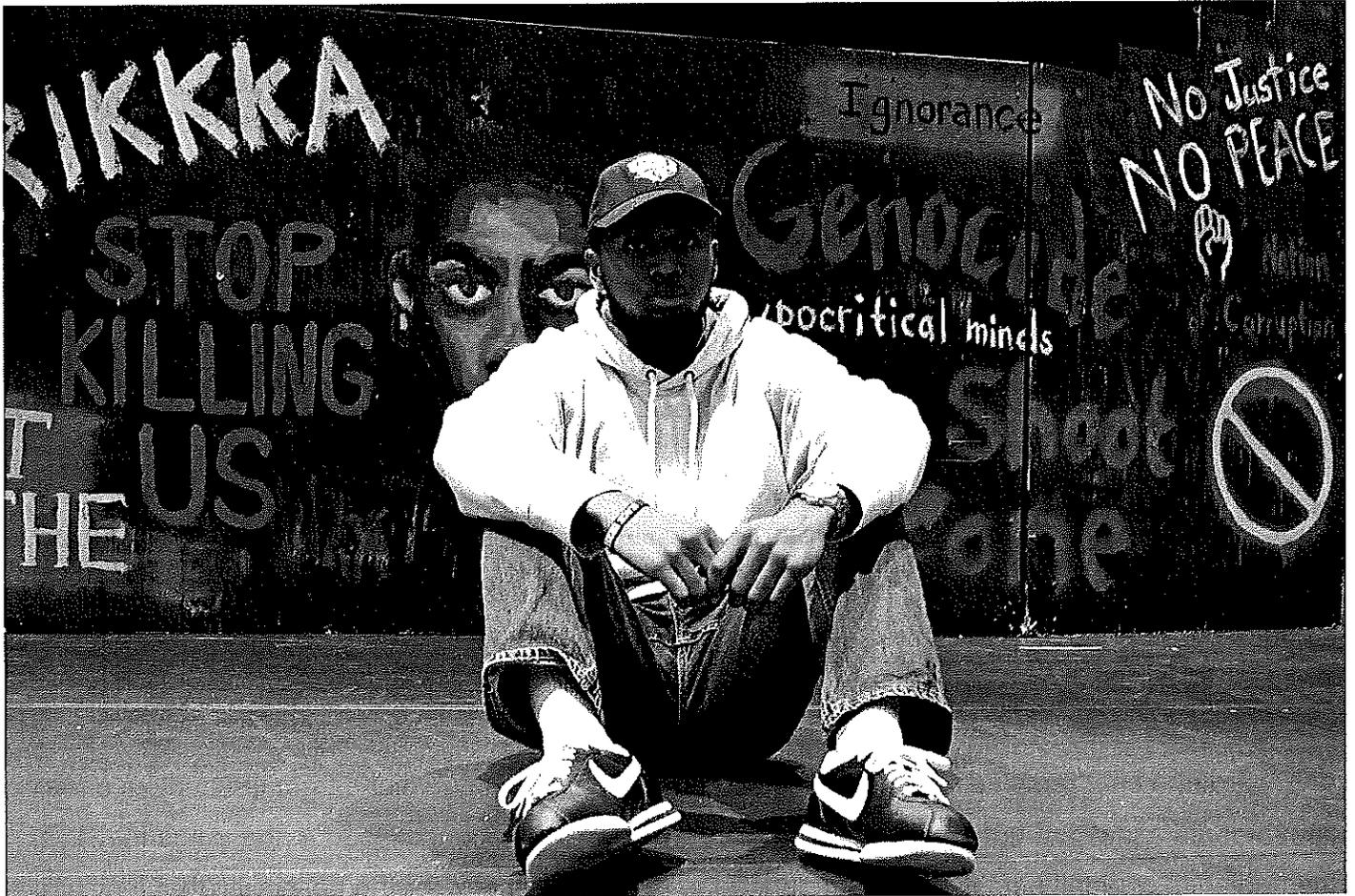
Michael Bragg is a reporter for The Daily Progress. Contact him at (434) 978-7265, mbragg@dailyprogress.com or @braggmichaelc on Twitter.

Michael Bragg

[http://www.dailyprogress.com/opinion/opinion-editorial-student-play-helping-us-find-healing/article\\_f0d91f70-f724-11e7-a499-133704e73128.html](http://www.dailyprogress.com/opinion/opinion-editorial-student-play-helping-us-find-healing/article_f0d91f70-f724-11e7-a499-133704e73128.html)

## Opinion/Editorial: Student play helping us find healing

The Daily Progress Jan 12, 2018



Monticello High School junior Josh St. Hill sits in front of the set piece for his one-act play "A King's Story." The play was reprised recently at Live Arts in Charlottesville.

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Daily Progress File

After the summer of our discontent, our community's self-esteem still smolders, so that it's hard to imagine how rays of hope might return.

Our best instincts tend toward optimism, however, and many of us have resolved that with time, and reason, we might better understand the forces that climaxed in anger and resentment on Aug. 12, 2017. We have faith that time will produce healing, and we pray that healing will manifest itself through togetherness across our community's diverse social spectrum.

Listening, learning, and eventually understanding are the steps by which we arrive upon empathy for others. The process isn't instinctive, and we acknowledge that working through it requires patience. So we wait, for the healing to begin.

We saw a bold presentation of community healing on Jan. 7 in the John Gibson Theater at Live Arts with the production of "A King's Story" by the Monticello High School drama department. Before a packed audience, the 25-member cast and crew performed the 35-minute play about racial injustice. Written by Monticello student Josh St. Hill and directed by his classmate Amaya Wallace, the drama touches on or probes numerous, familiar and uncomfortable narratives on how society looks upon race in Charlottesville and America.

Josh St. Hill wrote "A King's Story" last spring, and its plot echoes the 2012 Trayvon Martin case, now a national meme. The relevance and immediacy of this artwork became explosive in light of our summer of discontent.

As these impressive actors played their roles and spoke in voices we hear so often, the audience found itself deeply in sympathy with the suffering and in empathy with the courage to fight.

Madeline Michel, faculty drama sponsor for Monticello High School Drama, deserves the highest community praise for her work in encouraging the talent and expression of our youth. Mrs. Michel recognized an important example of artistic expression, and actively promoted it so that a larger audience could know the show.

Afterward, the cast remained on stage and fielded 30 minutes of questions from the audience. As the students answered questions about how and why their experiences lead to the truths they live, the audience couldn't help feeling abundant hope and joy for them, for the possibility that they will build a world of more love, and peace, and consideration. Those outcomes stem from listening, learning and eventually understanding.

Thank you, Monticello High School Drama Department, for sharing your story. And thank you, Live Arts, for inviting us to explore that.



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## Josh St. Hill: A Live Performance and in Conversation with A.D. Carson

**\*\* An Affiliated Event Presented by the University Library and Making Noise**

**January 26, 2018 - 5:00pm**

UVA Music Library in Old Cabell Hall

Free

### Josh St. Hill: A Live Performance and In Conversation with A.D. Carson

Presented by the University Library and Making Noise

Friday, January 26<sup>th</sup> at 5:00pm, reception to follow at 6pm

The University Library and the Making Noise Series presents a conversation with and performance by Josh St. Hill, Monticello High School student and artist. This free event takes place on Friday, January 26th at 5pm in the UVA Music Library in Old Cabell Hall on the historic lawn. A reception will follow at 6pm.

St. Hill wrote the award-winning "A King's Story, (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pjGKW1cdIU>)" which tells the story of a black teen murdered by the police. In addition to the brilliant writing, St. Hill was the lead actor and punctuated the story with powerful raps. We are excited to have St. Hill make noise with his consciousness-raising hip-hop in this event moderated by UVA Assistant Professor of Hip-Hop, A.D. Carson.

The only library located on the historic Lawn, the music library occupies the original coal furnace area of Old Cabell Hall and features an unusual Guastavino vault as the ceiling of its main floor reading room.

Old Cabell Hall

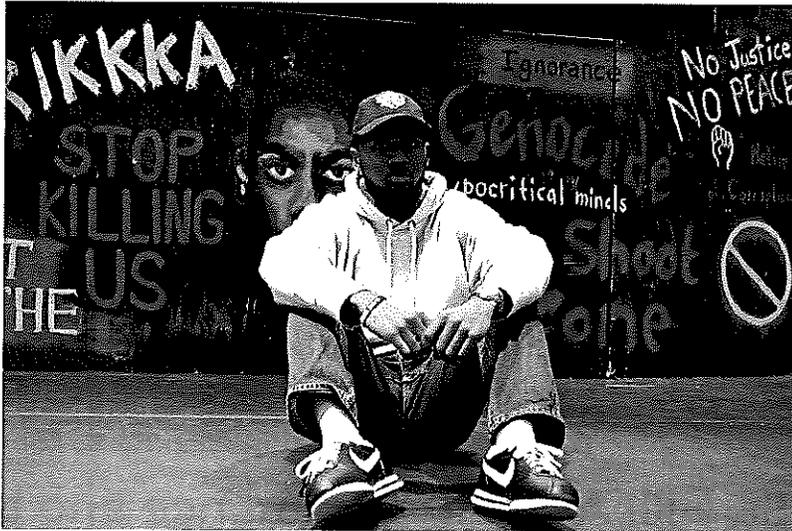


Photo by The Daily Progress

(<https://www.google.com/maps/place/Old+Cabell+Hall,+Charlottesville,+VA+22903/@38.033106,-78.504623,17z/data=!4rhl=en>) is located at the south end of the historic Lawn, directly opposite the Rotunda.

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# NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL HEART OF THE ARTS AWARD NOMINEE

(The deadline for returning the completed nomination to the NFHS is February 1, 2017)

---

Name of Nominee: William Edward Cornforth  
(first, middle, last)

## ***Individual Submitting Nomination:***

Name: Amy Minch

Phone: 304-243-0400

E-mail: aminch@k12.wv.us

Street Address: 1976 Park View Road

City, State, Zip Code: Wheeling, WV 26003

Date: [Tab here]

## ***State Association Endorsement:***

Name: Bernard Dolan

Title: Executive Director of the West Virginia Secondary School Activities Commission

Signature: Bernard Dolan

# NOMINEE INFORMATION SHEET

---

Student    Coach    Administrator    Official    Trainer    Performing Arts Administrator    Athletic Administrator    Other (Specify \_\_\_\_\_)

Name of Nominee: William Edward Cornforth  
*(first, middle, last)*

Current Address: 98 Edgwood Street Apt. E101  
*(street address)*

Wheeling, WV 26003  
*(city, state, zip)*

Phone: 304-281-6311

E-mail: bcornfor@k12.wv.us

School (if any): Wheeling Park High School

City: Wheeling State: WV

# NOMINATION FORM

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1. Please describe nominee's current involvement in high school. If applicable, please list any accomplishments or honors attained.

Bill Cornforth, or “Cornforth” as he is lovingly called by his students, is the heart and soul of the most highly decorated speech and debate program in the history of high school forensics in the state of West Virginia, perhaps even in the United States. The Wheeling Park High School speech and debate team has captured the West Virginia Speech and Debate Association state championship for the past 38 consecutive years, and Bill Cornforth has coached each one of those championship teams either as the head debate coach (1979-2004) or the head coach of the entire speech and debate program (2004-present). His teams’ accomplishments over the past 9 years at the National Catholic Forensic League (NCFL) tournament have earned Wheeling Park High School the NCFL Founders Award for Excellence in Speech. He has reached the status of Two Diamond Coach in the National Speech and Debate Association. Accomplishments of this magnitude are not achieved without the indefatigable efforts of a passionate leader, and he is that leader. In addition to coaching and teaching a full load of classes, Mr. Cornforth also leads the school’s successful theater program. Every year of his teaching career, he has directed at least one of the school’s two major theatrical productions, and he has served as technical director for both the fall play and the spring musical every year since 2004. He sponsors the Park Players club, and he created and coordinates “Class Act,” a night of performances by students who are coming up through the theater program but may not be ready for the major productions. To provide more opportunities for his students to hone their acting and technical theater skills, he co-directs Wheeling Park students in their annual entry to the WV State Thespian Festival One-Act Play Competition. To keep the school’s streak of state speech and debate championships alive, he coordinates the Middle School Speech and Debate Workshop/Tournament for Ohio County Schools. Through this program, he tasks the current speech and debate team members with teaching the middle school participants the rudiments of the various events. This ensures the continuation of a program of excellence at the high school level. At the state level, to make sure speech and debate remains vibrant, Mr. Cornforth has served and continues to serve in various officer positions with the West Virginia Speech and Debate Association (formerly the WV Interscholastic Forensic League). To give his students an opportunity to experience theater at its finest, he organizes an annual New York trip, giving his students the opportunity to see four Broadway plays in three days. He has championed equity and access for students long before those concepts became educational buzzwords. Mr. Bill Cornforth has created a legacy of excellence in the arts because his students know they are loved, valued, and respected. He is loved and beloved by his students in return. To borrow a quote from *The Wizard of Oz*, one of his many successful productions: ““A heart is not judged by how much you love, but by how much you are loved by others.””

2. Please list nominee's actions or accomplishments that deem him or her worthy of the "National High School Heart of the Arts Award."

Wheeling Park High School (WPHS) Head Speech and Debate Coach (2004-present)  
(38 consecutive state championships)  
WPHS Head Debate Coach (1979-2004)  
Director, WPHS Park Players Fall Play (1979-2004)  
Director, WPHS Park Players Spring Musical (2004-present)  
Technical Director for all Park Player Productions (2004-present)  
Park Players Club Sponsor  
Creator and Coordinator of Class Act (a showcase for rising thespians and upperclassmen)  
National Speech and Debate Association Two Diamond Coach  
National Catholic Forensics League Founders Award for Excellence in Speech  
WPHS Educator of the Year 2013  
WV Speech and Debate Association Officer (Offices Held: President, Vice President (current), and Treasurer)  
Co-Director, WPHS entry to the WV State Thespian Festival One-Act Play Competition

# Section 3

National High School Heart of the Arts Award

# NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL HEART OF THE ARTS AWARD NOMINEE

(The deadline for returning the completed nomination to the NFHS is February 1, 2018)

---

Name of Nominee: LaFrancis Davis  
*(first, middle, last)*

## ***Individual Submitting Nomination:***

Name: Ron Ingram

Phone: 334-263-6994

E-mail: ringram@ahsaa.com

Street Address: 7325 Halcyon summit Drive

City, State, Zip Code: Montgomery, AL 36117

Date: [Tab here]

## ***State Association Endorsement:***

Name: Steve Savarese

Title: Executive Director



Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

---

# NOMINEE INFORMATION SHEET

---

Student     Coach     Administrator     Official     Trainer     Performing Arts  
Administrator     Athletic Administrator     Other (Specify \_\_\_\_\_)

Name of Nominee: LaFrancis Davis  
*(first, middle, last)*

Current Address: 7331 Wimberly Lane  
Montgomery, AL 36117  
*(city, state, zip)*

Phone: 334-438-7390

E-mail: lafrancis.davis@mps.k12.al.us

School (if any): George Washington Carver High School

City: Montgomery State: AL

# NOMINATION FORM

---

1. Please describe nominee's current involvement in high school. If applicable, please list any accomplishments or honors attained.

**LaFrancis Davis is currently the Director of Bands at George Washington Carver High School in Montgomery, AL, a position he has held since 2015. He has spent the last 20 years teaching music and band at the high school level.**

**He was awarded the "Golden Apple" Award by WAKA TV 8 in Montgomery in October of 2017. The monthly award is presented to a teacher in a school by students, parents or other teachers.**

**Carver, a Class 6A urban school in Montgomery, had just 42 members when Davis arrived in 2015 and in just two and one-half years has grown to 106 who marched this past fall. He also started the band program at Southlawn Middle School, a feeder to CHS, working daily at both schools for a year. He convinced the school system to hire a band director for that school as well, and now the middle school has 90 students in the band.**

**His impact on the students has been incredible. A former standout football, track, basketball and baseball player and outstanding band student in high school, he has encouraged his music students to participate in sports as well. His current band has students that also participate on Carver's football, softball, basketball, track and baseball teams.**

**Reaching the rank of Lieutenant Colonel, in 10 years of active service in the U.S. Army, Davis served tours in Germany, Korea and the Middle East. While stationed at Ft. Knox (KY) and Fort Bliss (El Paso, TX), he volunteered his time at local schools teaching music and band.**

2. Please list nominee's actions or accomplishments that deem him or her worthy of the "National High School Heart of the Arts Award."

**To understand Carver High School band director LaFrancis Davis' passion for music, one has to understand his past. Growing up in Geneva County, located just north of the Florida border in Alabama, LaFrancis was a super athlete at Slocomb High School who excelled in football, basketball, baseball and track. Also, he was the first chair in the trumpet section for Slocomb's Marching Red Top Band.**

**In many schools, playing football and marching in the band poses a conflict. But things changed dramatically in 1978 when a young band director, Debra Lynn Long, took over the Red Tops program. The daughter of legendary Dr. John Long, who directed the nationally acclaimed Troy State University Band for five decades, brought a passion and energy to Slocomb that changed LaFrancis' life.**

**When he was in junior high playing football and being in the band wasn't a conflict. He could do both. As a sophomore he played on the junior varsity football team. Still no conflict. But by his junior year, he had become a very talented all-around athlete who emerged as one of the state's top running back prospects and had become one of the**

state's top trumpet players as well.

Debra Lynn Long encouraged LaFrancis to keep playing football and to keep playing the trumpet. Assistant Coach Kenny Jones, who worked with the Fellowship of Christian Athletes, was also in his corner and head coach Dwight Tew agreed. So while LaFrancis was gaining yards in the first half as Slocomb's star running back, he then marched in his football uniform at halftime with the Mighty Red Top Band before returning to the backfield in the second half. He was also captain of the basketball team, qualified for the state track meet in the 400-meter dash and long jump and led his school's conference in stolen bases in baseball.

Still a strong advocate for multi-sports and activity participation, He said, "When a school bus left Slocomb High School, I was usually on it."

He rushed for over 1,400 yards as a senior and had 345 yards in his final game versus Geneva. A 400-yard effort was prevented, however, when a player ran off the opponents' sideline to tackle him on a long run that went undetected by the contest officials.

When he prepared to graduate, college football programs like Tennessee-Chattanooga, the University of North Alabama and Alabama State University made offers while others like Troy University wanted him as an invited walk-on. So did Troy University's National Bandmasters Hall of Fame band director Dr. John Long.

"I really wanted to play college football, but I also wanted to major in music. It was one of the most difficult decisions in my life, but because of my own band director's impact on my life and her love for music, I chose to attend Alabama A&M University, which had an outstanding music program.

He said a visit with his parents to the school to meet the Music Department Director Dr. Harry Bradford sealed the deal. "Dr. Bradford directed the band and his wife was the choral director for the school's choir. He put his arm around me and told my parents that he would personally look out for me. That was enough for me and my parents. And in my five years at Alabama A&M, he and his wife treated me like one of their own," Davis says.

He played trumpet in the fame A&M band, sang in the choir, was part of a special's men's ensemble and even formed a singing group with some fraternity brothers who were also in the band. LaFrancis also found the time to be in the Alabama A&M Army ROTC .

Upon graduation he joined the U.S. Army and rose to the rank of Lieutenant Colonel over the next 10 years on active duty. He worked first in basic training with troops, then served overseas with tours in Germany, Korea and the Middle East among his stops. He served in the Army Reserve for 4 ½ years after leaving the Army fulltime.

He said the organizational skills in the military have helped him tremendously as a high school band director. He said, though, that he planned to go into the corporate world once leaving the Army, but the Superintendent of Schools back in his home state of Alabama and home county (Geneva County) asked him to take over the struggling band at Coffee Springs High School not far from his home town of Slocomb.

He had 18 kids in the band when arrived, but had grown it to 42 (only 140 kids in the top four grades) two years later when the school burned down and was closed. He then moved to Geneva County High School – where he inherited another program where band was almost none existent. He resurrected that program growing it to almost 100. He encouraged six of his band members to play football, and when the head football coach demanded that they choose between the band and his team, the boys all chose band.

"The coach came to me and I explained how I had encouraged them to play. We worked it out and they rejoined the team. Two of them went on to play college football, and one

became the drum major for the Alabama A&M Marching Band and is now an assistant on the A&M staff.”

LaFrancis was offered the position at a school whose principal was the head football coach at Geneva when LaFrancis had that famous legendary 345-yard rushing effort. Once he learned the principal was the coach, well, he said, he realized that was not the place for him.

He then moved to yet another rural school, Hillcrest of Evergreen where he took over a band program that had few serious music students and turned them into an award winning marching band. He also directed the choir, the concert band and choir ensemble.

From there he took over the program at much larger Carver – where the program had dwindled down to just 42 members. In two short years he has seen the marching band grow to 106 and the middle school program he started at nearby Southlawn grow from zero to 90 students in just two years. He credits the great support he has received from an outstanding administration.

He writes music for his own students to play, and plays virtually every instrument – admitting he is stronger with the piano and the brass instruments. His own four children love music and are talented musicians.

He said “We try to make a difference wherever we can. I not only have had to teach the students but I also had to teach the parents as well. While music is what I do each day, it is not all that I teach. I tell the parents that music is 35% of what I do and mentoring the students is the other 65%. We are here to teach that whatever you do, you should do it with a zeal. Music is a great teacher itself. Children learn so much about themselves. Many of them come to me not really believing they can ever learn to play a musical instrument. And many of them leave here getting band scholarships. I encourage them to be involved, be a leader and enjoy the moment. Music is something that teaches us all about life. We all mark out own memories by the songs of our day. I am finding that the kids love to play the songs of my time and I also see their eyes light up when we play some popular songs from their time as well.

“I teach them to love all music, but to love playing the music and singing the songs even more. It is a language we all can understand and appreciate.”

He’s seen several of his students pursue careers in music, including some that are now band directors at the high school level. That makes him proud.

Does he regret passing up playing college football?

“I ran into Brad Baxter and Tony Bowick, two teammates at Slocomb who played in the NFL,” he said. “We were talking about our choices. They both told me they believe I would have played in the ‘the league.’ Maybe I would have, but I don’t regret my choices. God had other plans for me and I love what I do. Teaching music to the kids ... It doesn’t get any better than that.”

## **LaFrancis Davis named WAKA TV 8 Golden Apple Teacher Award Recipient**

Click on link for video

<http://www.alabamaneews.net/2017/10/17/golden-apple-lafrancis-davis/>

MONTGOMERY – Our Golden Apple Award Winner this week comes from the Montgomery Public School System. Carver High School Band Director LaFrancis Davis, is just as motivated today teaching band as he was over 21 years ago when he started, and that passion makes a difference to his students.

“It’s not a job, it’s a passion. I don’t look at teaching band as a job, I come to work to because I love to do it. It’s a passion for me. If you’re passionate about something you’ll do well at it,” says Davis.

Congratulations Mr. Davis!

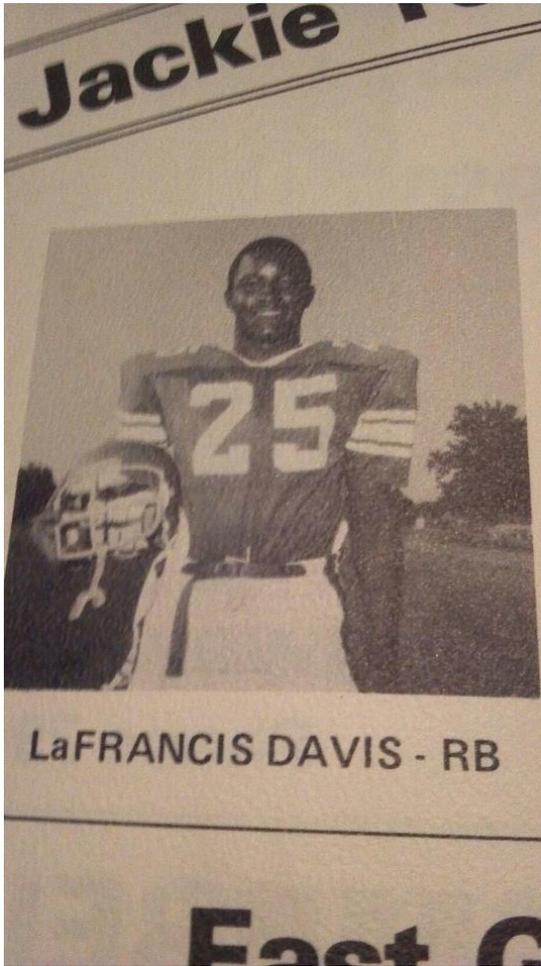


Al Legend © Photography

**LaFrancis Davis in his band room at Carver High School**



**LaFrancis Davis returned to his college Alabama A&M for a special reunion concert honoring his college choir director and college band director, Mr. and Mrs. Harry Bradford.**



**LaFrancis Davis the star running back at Slocomb in 1979**



**Band Director LaFrancis Davis striking his Heisman Trophy pose**



**Davis's current Carver band, up from 42 his first year to 106 in 2017**



**Davis, who rose to Lt. Colonel in the U.S. Army, is shown with his Hillcrest band playing at the dedication of the Conecuh County War Veterans' Memorial at Evergreen (AL)**

# NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL HEART OF THE ARTS AWARD NOMINEE

(The deadline for returning the completed nomination to the NFHS is February 1, 2018)

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Name of Nominee: Annie Muller

(first, middle, last)

## ***Individual Submitting Nomination:***

Name: Katherine H. Biddle

Phone: 727-298-1620

E-mail: biddlek@pcsb.org

Street Address: 540 S. Hercules Ave

City, State, Zip Code Clearwater, FL 33764

Date: January 29, 2018

## ***State Association Endorsement:***

Name: Kyle Niblett

Title: PR Specialist

Signature:



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# NOMINEE INFORMATION SHEET

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Student    Coach    Administrator    Official    Trainer    Performing Arts  
Administrator    Athletic Administrator    Other (Specify \_\_\_\_\_)

Name of Nominee: Annie Muller  
*(first, middle, last)*

Current Address: 113 Poinciana Lane  
*(street address)*

Largo, FL 33770  
*(city, state, zip)*

Phone: 727-798-4565

E-mail: anniemuller15@gmail.com

School (if any): Clearwater High School

City: Clearwater State FL

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# NOMINATION FORM

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1. Please describe nominee's current involvement in high school. If applicable, please list any accomplishments or honors attained.

Weighted grade point average: 4.7458; Unweighted grade point average: 4.0000  
Class Rank 3/429.

Extracurricular Activities: National Honor Society, Science National Honor Society, National Art Honor Society, Mu Alpha Theta, Students Rights and Responsibilities, Soccer, JV Volleyball, Cross Country and Tennis.

Girl Scout. Earned Girl Scout Silver Award—Completed 400+ volunteer hours—collected Art supplies for Grace House, a local homeless shelter for families, organized the supplies in their communal room, made a book of art projects and led an art lesson for the children at Grace House.

Made the Dean's List in 9<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> grade.

AICE Classes—Received AICE Diploma, Passed AICE Exams for AICE General Paper, AICE Art and Design, AICE International History, AICE Chemistry, AICE U.S. History, AICE English Language, AICE Global Perspectives and AICE Math.

AP Classes—Received a score of 5 on AP Human Geography Exam and a score of 3 on AP Spanish Language Exam.

2. Please list nominee's actions or accomplishments that deem him or her worthy of the "National High School Heart of the Arts Award."

9<sup>th</sup> grade: 1<sup>st</sup> place in Safe Driving Poster Contest sponsored by Anthony Telesca Foundation;  
1<sup>st</sup> place in school academy T-shirt design contest  
Word & Image Exhibition: "My Hero" at the Morean Arts Center

10<sup>th</sup> grade: Florida Art Education Association, Award of Emerging Artist  
The Scholastic Art & Writing Awards of 2016—Honorable Mention  
Word & Image Exhibition: "Imagine That" at the Morean Arts Center  
Art Show Finalist, Art Festival Beth-EL

11<sup>th</sup> grade: Visual Metaphor Exhibition at the Museum of Fine Arts  
Florida Art Education Association—Award of Excellence  
The Scholastic Art & Writing Awards of 2017—Honorable Mention  
Mainsail Young at Art  
Art Show Finalist—Art Festival Beth-EL

12<sup>th</sup> grade: Visual Metaphor Exhibition at the Museum of Fine Arts  
Florida State Fair Art Portfolio Contest for High School Seniors  
Word & Image Exhibition: "Did you Ever See..." at the Morean Arts Center...Award of Excellence  
Three Gold Keys, One Silver Key, One Honorable Mention and One Gold Key  
Portfolio in the Scholastic Art and Writing Competiton  
Art Show Finalist—Art Festival Beth-EL

# NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL HEART OF THE ARTS AWARD NOMINEE

(The deadline for returning the completed nomination to the GHSA is January 15, 2018)

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Name of Nominee: Michael J. Fairbanks

(first, middle, last)

## ***Individual Submitting Nomination:***

Name: Jennifer Floyd

Phone: 678-361-1699

E-mail: Jennifer.Floyd@cobbk12.org

Street Address: 2400 New Macland Rd

City, State, Zip Code: Powder Springs, GA 30127

Date: January 9, 2018

## ***State Association Endorsement:***

Name: [Tab here]

Title: [Tab here]

Signature: [Tab here]

# NOMINEE INFORMATION SHEET

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Student    Coach    Administrator    Official    Trainer    Performing Arts Administrator    Athletic Administrator    Other (Specify \_\_\_\_\_)

Name of Nominee: Michael J. Fairbanks  
*(first, middle, last)*

Current Address: 3415 Redwood Forest Ln  
*(street address)*

Powder Springs, GA 30127  
*(city, state, zip)*

Phone: 770-780-5046

E-mail: ljfairbanks@gmail.com

School (if any): McEachern High School

City: Powder Springs State: GA

# NOMINATION FORM

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1. Please describe nominee's current involvement in high school. If applicable, please list any accomplishments or honors attained.

Michael is characterized by his academic achievement, but he has also continued to be actively involved in school activities and his community. He is a member of the Tri-M Music Honor Society, a national organization for exceptional musicians. He has been a member for three years and serves as on the welcoming committee. Throughout his life, Michael has learned the importance of giving back. He has done so graciously for many years. As a member of the GA Rising Seniors Bowl he has given the opportunity to feed the hungry at homeless shelters. He also helps with coaching youth players and volunteers with Hosea Feed the Hungry and Homeless by folding clothes, serving food and making baggies for children in need. He recently spoke at Russell Elementary School at the Boys to Men Rights of Passage Ceremony about leadership, living your best life and giving back to those who have helped you along the way. His speech left the audience captivated and inspired. In addition to his work in the community, he has attained many honors along the way. On November 25<sup>th</sup>, he was awarded the honor of being the Atlanta Falcon's Power Player. The honor is bestowed upon a student athlete from the state of Georgia that demonstrates strong leadership skills both on and off the the field. The program encourages student-athletes to continue to be leaders in their communities. He was also awarded Defensive Player of the week and received the prestigious Golden Helmet Award which is given to the Player of The Year!

2. Please list nominee's actions or accomplishments that deem him or her worthy of the "National High School Heart of the Arts Award."

I have had the pleasure of knowing this young man for approximately four years. Knowing Michael has truly been a life-changing experience. He has been a cellist in my Chamber Orchestra for all four years, which is the highest ensemble at McEachern. As a student he has always managed to excel in each endeavor that he has ever attempted. Michael has maintained a rigorous academic schedule with a 4.08 while making plays on and off the field. I fully believe in Michael's potential and his prospects for finest success. His enthusiasm is infectious, his ability to reach and his high regard for others is outstanding, and his energy and initiative to pursue what he believes in very strong. I have found him to be very responsible and dependable. I believe that the combination of his academic attributes, leadership and his outgoing personality will set a wonderful role model for his fellow peers. On October 11, 2016 Michael and five other amazing orchestra athletes (known as the McEachern Six) were given the opportunity to share their story of leadership on and off the field, in the AJC (Atlanta Journal Constitution). The work ethic and discipline it takes to be an athlete carries over into being a tremendous classical musician. Michael has shown the future MHS football instrumentalist that you can do it and have it all. As he so eloquently stated in the article, "football can't have it all".

<http://www.myajc.com/lifestyles/football-and-violins-hard-hitting-cobb-students-make-music/ARufS85LSNvar5uM5TnMaN/>

I have had the opportunity to see Michael develop into a mature student, peer, and friend. He is the personification of leadership and hard work. I hope you take this opportunity to participate in his academic and leadership development and award him the National High School Heart of the Arts Award.

# Section 4

National High School Heart of the Arts Award

# NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL HEART OF THE ARTS AWARD NOMINEE

(The deadline for returning the completed nomination to the NFHS is February 1, 2018)

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Name of Nominee: Kevin Nolan Ferry

(first, middle, last)

## ***Individual Submitting Nomination:***

Name: Craig Anderson

Phone: 309-663-6377

E-mail: canderson@ihsa.org

Street Address: 2715 McGraw Drive

City, State, Zip Code: Bloomington, Illinois, 61704

Date: January 31, 2017

## ***State Association Endorsement:***

Name: Craig Anderson

Title: IHSA Executive Director

Signature: Craig Anderson

# NOMINEE INFORMATION SHEET

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Student    Coach    Administrator    Official    Trainer    Performing Arts Administrator    Athletic Administrator    Other (Specify \_\_\_\_\_)

Name of Nominee: Kevin Nolan Ferry  
*(first, middle, last)*

Current Address: 301 West Broadway  
*(street address)*

Monmouth, Illinois, 61462  
*(city, state, zip)*

Phone: 309-299-6578

E-mail: knferry@mr238.org

School (if any): Monmouth-Roseville High School

City: Monmouth State: Illinois

# NOMINATION FORM

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1. Please describe nominee's current involvement in high school. If applicable, please list any accomplishments or honors attained.

Kevin Ferry is currently a teacher and advisor at Monmouth-Roseville High School in Monmouth, Illinois. His duties include:

- Music Teacher
  - Choir Director
  - Men's Glee Club Director
  - Women's Glee Club Director
  - Madrigals Director
  - Assistant Football Coach
- He has led three IHSA high schools to nine total trophies in the IHSA Music Sweepstakes, including three state championships, four runner-up finishes and two third-place finishes thus far in his career.

2. Please list nominee's actions or accomplishments that deem him or her worthy of the "National High School Heart of the Arts Award."

Kevin Ferry isn't defined by his vision impairment, but rather by the unique vision he has developed in how to build a successful high school music program, and more importantly, to teach, coach and inspire his students.

"If you come into my music classroom," said Ferry. "You will find that I am more of a coach than a teacher. I run my choir more like I am coaching a football team."

Despite being legally blind from Juvenile Macular Degeneration, the Maquon, Illinois native enjoyed a well-rounded high school experience at Spoon River Valley High School in London Mills. Ferry, who essentially has no tunnel vision (with limited sight coming out of the side of his eyes), was active in both the arts (band, choir, musicals, plays, scholastic bowl) and athletics (football, basketball, track & field) during his high school career.

"I had a great high school experience because of my wonderful teachers," said Ferry. "One of the best inadvertent compliments that I ever received was from my history teacher Bob Tasker, who literally forgot on every test that I needed a version with larger print. No one thought of me as or treated me any differently."

With his other senses heightened, he adapted in everything that he did. A linemen in football, he looked to block the shadows in front of him, memorized band steps faster than his peers, caught a basketball by hearing the bounce pass hit the floor, and held sheet music inches from his face in one hand while gripping a trumpet in the other.

Ferry knew by his junior year of high school that he wanted to teach music as a career. He cites the impact his high school choir teacher Paula Helle and band director Fred Herink on him.

"I wanted to do what Paula and Fred did," said Ferry. "I knew how much I was getting from them and I wanted to give kids that same experience. Music always came naturally to me and a job sitting at a computer all day wasn't really an option. I could always sing and felt like that was the path to follow."

Ferry initially believed that his calling was to teach music at the collegiate level. After earning his undergraduate degree in Education from Culver Stockton College (Canton, MO), where he again kept his schedule chock full of extracurriculars (band, choir, Delta Upsilon, Cheerleading), he headed to Illinois State University to pursue a Master's Degree.

In addition to his studies, Kevin accepted a part-time job teaching choir at Bloomington Central Catholic High School, an experience there would change his outlook and plans.

Kevin immediately responded to teaching high school students and the students reciprocated. Despite being hired to teach two high school choir classes per week, with the administration's blessing, his schedule quickly ballooned to teaching choir every day, along with different groups coming to work with him before and after school, on top of practicing with the band at lunch. During his two years at Central Catholic, the school's music program placed 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> in the state in the IHSA Music Sweepstakes, which remain the only IHSA music trophies the school has won in its history.

"Kids feel really appreciated and wanted when they work with Kevin," said Monmouth-Roseville teacher and speech coach Melissa Agar. "He is tenacious in recruitment. He is great at spotting talent, but everyone is welcome. If you are willing, he will find a spot for you and that acceptance is important for kids at this age."

Ferry acknowledges that recruiting within his own hallways is a necessity.

"Every kid has to take English and Math and Science when they are in school, but not every kid has to take band or choir," said Ferry. "Kids want so much to have structure, discipline and success in their lives. They gravitate to it. There is a place for everybody in our music program and my job is to find where they fit in and try to make them as successful as possible."

The experience at Central Catholic established that Ferry belonged in a high school setting, and after finishing at ISU, he went closer to home when he accepted a position at Avon High School as a K-12 music teacher, while also assisting with the football and track & field programs.

His presence in the high school arts programs was again felt almost immediately. The school of roughly 120 students went from having 28 students in the choir in year one to winning an IHSA Music Sweepstakes Class D State Championship in year two. Local economic factors led to a steady decline in the high school enrollment, dropping to about 70 students in 2009, but the music program's participation and success swelled. There were over 60 students in the choir by 2007, at which point the school had won three IHSA Music Sweepstakes state titles (2002, 2003, 2005) and finished as runner-up on three occasions (2004, 2006, 2007). Ferry also enjoyed great success in his duties coaching with the football and track & field teams, which were part in parcel to his success in music.

"Many of the kids know him and trust him from sports," said Monmouth-Roseville marching band director Kyle Barshinger. "They know how hard he works and the energy he brings and that they have success when they work with him. Kids are willing to step outside their comfort zone and try things like choir or musicals because of his involvement. If you look in Kevin's choir classes on a Friday, you might see 30 guys in football jerseys in there. I think he's always been proud of that diversity."

Ferry moved on to Monmouth-Roseville High School (approx. 500 students) in 2009 and the result was exactly what you expected. On day one, 63 students were split between two choir classes, while today he teaches four daily choir classes to 125+ students. In addition to being the junior high and high school choir directors, he oversees the school's famed madrigal singers, treble singers and junior high madrigals just to name a few. He also found the time to earn his Master's Degree in Educational Leadership from Western Illinois University.

"He genuinely cares about his students and who they are as people," said Cecilia Fasano, a Monmouth-Roseville grad who matriculated to the University of Notre Dame in 2016, where she plays trombone in the Band of the Fighting Irish and sings with the Notre Dame Liturgical Choir. "He communicates extremely effectively with people from all walks of life. He understands that different people need different types of inspiration and encouragement. He is incredibly patient,

but also not afraid to tell people things that they might not want to hear.”

Some of that frankness was no doubt developed on the football field, a sport he stayed involved with at Monmouth-Roseville, while also coaching field events and his own daughter’s softball team. His ability to crossover has continued to pay dividends for his students.

“Before meeting Mr. Ferry, I was exclusively an athlete,” said 2011 Monmouth-Roseville grad Garren Randolph. “Mr. Ferry established the performing arts as the ‘cool’ thing to do at MRHS. He encouraged me to step out of my comfort zone and try the performing arts. He believed in me enough to cast me in our madrigal and in our school’s spring musical, *Grease*. Without Mr. Ferry, I would have never been a part of any of this, and those two activities ended up being, by far, my favorite things that I participated in during high school.”

Not surprisingly, the school’s Vocal Music Program has now won five consecutive Class B IHSA Vocal Solo & Ensemble state titles. Additionally, they notched their first IHSA Music Sweepstakes trophy in 2013, taking third in Class B, which is recognized as one of the deepest classes in the IHSA competition.

“All the hard work, the road getting there is what I love,” said Ferry. “It really is about the kids. For them to get to wear the state t-shirts and medals now, or get to say in 40 years that they were among the best in the state, that is something that can never be taken away from them. We strive for perfection, but it doesn’t define me or what I do.”

That’s not the only thing that doesn’t define Kevin, as its now been over 1,000 words since we mentioned that he has a vision impairment. That is because if you ask him, the Kevin Ferry story isn’t one about overcoming insurmountable odds or obstacles, but rather simple adaptation.

“My visual impairment doesn’t define me,” said Ferry. “It’s not who I am. You adapt, you overcome. Anyone with a disability will tell you the same thing. You work around it.”

So what does define him?

When it comes to his students, it’s instilling passion and appreciation for the arts.

“My expectation is not to have a bunch of my students go on to be music teachers,” said Ferry. “What I hope is that when my students have kids, they want their own children to be a part of a band or a choir or a glee club, in part because of the experience they had here with me.”

## **Monmouth-Roseville High School Teacher Kevin Ferry Named IHSA Nominee For NFHS Heart of the Arts Award**

Kevin Ferry isn't defined by his vision impairment, but rather by the unique vision he has developed in how to build a successful high school music program, and more importantly, to teach, coach and inspire his students.

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musical, *Grease*. Without Mr. Ferry, I would have never been a part of any of this, and those two activities ended up being, by far, my favorite things that I participated in during high school.”

Not surprisingly, the school’s Vocal Music Program has now won five consecutive Class B IHSA Vocal Solo & Ensemble state titles. Additionally, they notched their first IHSA Music Sweepstakes trophy in 2013, taking third in Class B, which is recognized as one of the deepest classes in the IHSA competition.

“All the hard work, the road getting there is what I love,” said Ferry. “It really is about the kids. For them to get to wear the state t-shirts and medals now, or get to say in 40 years that they were among the best in the state, that is something that can never be taken away from them. We strive for perfection, but it doesn’t define me or what I do.”

That’s not the only thing that doesn’t define Kevin, as its now been over 1,000 words since we mentioned that he has a vision impairment. That is because if you ask him, the Kevin Ferry story isn’t one about overcoming insurmountable odds or obstacles, but rather simple adaptation.

“My visual impairment doesn’t define me,” said Ferry. “It’s not who I am. You adapt, you overcome. Anyone with a disability will tell you the same thing. You work around it.”

So what does define him?

When it comes to his students, it’s instilling passion and appreciation for the arts.

“My expectation is not to have a bunch of my students go on to be music teachers,” said Ferry. “What I hope is that when my students have kids, they want their own children to be a part of a band or a choir or a glee club, in part because of the experience they had here with me.”

***##H##A***

**Matt Troha**  
**Illinois High School Association**  
**Assistant Executive Director**  
**Office: 309.663.6377**  
**Fax: 309.663.7479**  
**[mtroha@ihsa.org](mailto:mtroha@ihsa.org)**  
**The Future Plays Here!**

**PLAY SMART.  PLAY HARD.**



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# Section 5

National High School Heart of the Arts Award

# NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL HEART OF THE ARTS AWARD NOMINEE

(The deadline for returning the completed nomination to the NFHS is February 1, 2018)

---

Name of Nominee: Austin Althouse

(first, middle, last)

## ***Individual Submitting Nomination:***

Name: Jason Menard

Phone: (316) 747-3310

E-mail: jmenard@usd396.net

Street Address: 910 E 1st Street

City, State, Zip Code: Douglass, KS 667039

Date: 1/19/18

## ***State Association Endorsement:***

Name: Gary Musselman

Title: KSHSAA Executive Director

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_



# NOMINEE INFORMATION SHEET

---

Student    Coach    Administrator    Official    Trainer    Performing Arts Administrator    Athletic Administrator    Other (Specify \_\_\_\_\_)

Name of Nominee: Austin Althouse  
*(first, middle, last)*

Current Address: 420 Riverview Street  
*(street address)*

Douglass, KS 67039  
*(city, state, zip)*

Phone: (316) 734-5394

E-mail: 19aalthouse@usd396.net

School (if any): Douglass High School

City: Douglass State: Kansas

# NOMINATION FORM

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1. Please describe nominee's current involvement in high school. If applicable, please list any accomplishments or honors attained.

Student at Douglass High School

No better way to describe other than to please watch this video:

<https://www.ksdetasn.org/resources/1580>

2. Please list nominee's actions or accomplishments that deem him or her worthy of the "National High School Heart of the Arts Award."

No better way to describe other than to please watch this video:

<https://www.ksdetasn.org/resources/1580>



## Kansas State High School Activities Association Heart of the Arts Award – 2017

**School:** Douglass High School

**Category:** Student

**Name of Nominee:**

Austin Althouse  
Douglass High School  
420 Riverview Street  
Douglass, KS 67039  
(316) 734-5394  
19aalthouse@usd396.net

**Individual Submitting Nomination:**

Jason Menard  
Douglass High School  
910 E 1st St  
Douglass, KS 67039-0000  
jmenard@usd396.net

- 1. Please describe nominee's current involvement in high school. If applicable, please list any accomplishments or honors attained.**

No better way to describe other than to please watch this video:

<https://www.ksdetasn.org/resources/1580>

- 2. Please list nominee's actions or accomplishments that deem him or her worthy of the "Kansas State High School Activities Association Heart of the Arts."**

No better way to describe other than to please watch this video:

<https://www.ksdetasn.org/resources/1580>

# NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL HEART OF THE ARTS AWARD NOMINEE

(The deadline for returning the completed nomination to the NFHS is February 1, 2018)

---

Name of Nominee: Georgina Akim Simon  
*(first, middle, last)*

## ***Individual Submitting Nomination:***

Name: Amy Doherty, MSHSL

Phone: 763-569-0495

E-mail: adoherty@mshsl.org

Street Address: 2100 Freeway Blvd.

City, State, Zip Code: Brooklyn Center, MN 55430

Date: January 26, 2018

## ***State Association Endorsement:***

Name: Dave Stead

Title: Executive Director

Signature: 

# NOMINEE INFORMATION SHEET

---

X Student  Coach  Administrator  Official  Trainer  Performing Arts  
Administrator  Athletic Administrator  Other (Specify \_\_\_\_\_)

Name of Nominee: Georgina Akim Simon  
*(first, middle, last)*

Current Address: 2550 W. St. Germain Street  
*(street address)*

St. Cloud, MN 56301  
*(city, state, zip)*

Phone: 320-223-3617

E-mail: simo0681@umn.edu

School (if any): St. Cloud Technical High School (currently University of Minnesota)

City: St. Cloud State: MN

# NOMINATION FORM

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1. Please describe nominee's current involvement in high school. If applicable, please list any accomplishments or honors attained.

Georgina graduated from St. Cloud Technical High School (St. Cloud Tech) in the spring of 2017, and is now enrolled at the University of Minnesota – Twin Cities. Her accomplishments in high school include the following:

G.P.A. 3.9

State Speech Tournament finalist – Serious Interpretation of Drama

Two-time National Speech Tournament competitor

National Speech Tournament semifinalist (14<sup>th</sup> place)

Lead in school musical – “Seussical”

Three-sport athlete (volleyball, basketball, track and field)

Choir participant

Advanced Placement Honors student

International Club participant

Culture and Climate group member (created after serious race- and culture-based tension and incidents within the community)

St. Cloud Tech Centennial Banquet speaker

Mentor of special education students

Community volunteer (homeless shelter, food shelves, etc.)

St. Cloud Times 2 Under 20 Award winner

Hennepin Theatre Spotlight Education Showcase, Minneapolis, 2017

2. Please list nominee's actions or accomplishments that deem him or her worthy of the "National High School Heart of the Arts Award."

MSHSL staff first became aware of Georgina Simon during her emotional performance at the State Speech Tournament in 2017. Competing in the category of Serious Interpretation of Drama, she presented a clip from "Ruined" by Lynn Nottage that focused on the traumatic plight of vulnerable women in the Democratic Republic of Congo during civil war. It was captivating, but painful. Viewers were transported beyond a classroom in Minnesota, and many were left in tears. We later learned that Georgina's speech theme connects to her future life and career goals.

It turns out Georgina's talents extend well beyond speech classrooms and stages. As you can see above, Georgina was a well-rounded and extremely accomplished high school student. She competed in three sports, was involved in culture groups, starred in the musical, and performed in the choir. She still made time for charity work and "put her heart into action," as the St. Cloud Times referenced when they awarded her with the 2 Under 20 award.

Georgina's parents are from South Sudan. They fled war and crossed the border to an Ethiopian refugee camp, and were selected to come to the United States through a lottery system nearly 20 years ago. Her parents wanted to be able to provide education and opportunities for their children, and Georgina – who hopes to earn a Ph.D. in the future - has undoubtedly made the most of that chance.

Through her 2017 speech performances, Georgina educated and increased awareness of the suffering of women in war-torn Africa, and she has a similar future of increasing awareness ahead of her. Georgina is majoring in clinical psychology at the University of Minnesota. She has a goal of providing mental health services in underdeveloped countries, reducing stigma surrounding mental illness, and increasing awareness in emerging countries. Georgina's unforgettable speech performance was just a step toward her visions of bettering the world around her, something Minnesotans are confident that she will accomplish.

St. Cloud Times

2 Under 20: Young Leaders who are making their community a better place

St. Cloud Times presents the 2 Under 20 Class of 2017

Jenny Berg, [jberg@stcloudtimes.com](mailto:jberg@stcloudtimes.com)

They demonstrate focus and vision, commitment and compassion.

The winners of the St. Cloud Times 2 Under 20 awards have already chalked up admirable achievements that show leadership. Likewise, the three runners-up make you proud to live in Central Minnesota.

But it's not just about "doing." The selection committee saw that these young leaders are putting their hearts into their actions.

The Times presents Alex Bertsch and Georgina Simon as the 2 Under 20 Class of 2017. Runners-up are Anthony Kampa, Anna Panek and Aidan Speckhard. Times reporter Jenny Berg spoke to each of them for stories; you also will find the videos created by Times photojournalist Jason Wachter.

The 2 Under 20 awards are in their third year and are presented in conjunction with the St. Cloud Times 5 Under 40 awards. Winners in both programs were selected by a committee made up of last year's 5 Under 40 winners and two Times employees. Read about 5 Under 40 winners online Friday or in the Jan. 7 edition of the Times.

For tickets to the Jan. 23 reception honoring all 10 emerging leaders, go to <https://tickets.sctimes.com/>.

**'Ambitious' Tech grad aims to improve  
mental health care worldwide**

## GEORGINA SIMON, TECHNICAL HIGH SCHOOL

When Georgina Simon's parents immigrated to the United States from a refugee camp in Ethiopia almost two decades ago, they dreamed of giving their children a better education and more opportunities.

Simon has taken advantage of every one of those dreams: She became a three-sport athlete, was the star of a musical and traveled to nationals for speech during her years at Technical High School.

She graduated from Tech in 2017. Now, she's attending the University of Minnesota and plans to major in psychology. But she's not planning to stop her education there.

"My dad told me I have to beat him," Simon said. "Ultimately, my goal is a Ph.D."

Simon's dad recently obtained his master's degree. After emigrating from Ethiopia, both of Simon's parents began working and her father continued his education. Now he teaches English-learners.

"I've known what I wanted to do all my life was to get as far as I could through education," she said. "My ultimate goal is to be a clinical psychologist and to go into places in the world — mostly underdeveloped — that could use mental health facilities. I want to make them accessible because the stigma of mental illness around the world isn't the same as the Western world views it. I want to help people."

This might sound like a lofty goal for an 18-year-old. But Simon is just getting started.

"I like to see myself as a very driven person," she said. "If I have an idea, I set out for it."

That fierce ambition is evident in Simon's high school career. She played volleyball and basketball and ran track. She also participated in speech, choir, the high school musical, International Club, and a special culture and climate group formed after students protested in 2015.

Her passion and optimism is one of the reasons Simon was nominated for the 2017 class of the 2 Under 20 award.

"The resiliency, being a risk-taker ... she put herself out there and tried a little bit of everything to find her passions," said Willie Jett, district superintendent. "She's always had that persona where she just lights up a room. She just takes command of a room. She's contagious in a great way."

Jett and Bruce Mohs, a school board member and chair of Tech's centennial celebration committee, nominated Simon for the award.

Mohs said he met Simon backstage at a Tech culture show. He later asked her to speak at the centennial celebration in July; she and another member of her class, Luke Truitt, represented the students of today. Ayan Omar, who teaches language arts at Tech, represented the teachers of today.

"In some ways, they stole that banquet. They were so darn fabulous," Mohs said.

Simon's ambition was evident to Mohs, too.



**Georgina Simon Wednesday, Dec. 20, at Technical High School.**  
(Photo: Jason Wachter, [jwachter@stcloudtimes.com](mailto:jwachter@stcloudtimes.com))

"This young woman has this sense that all things are possible. There's nothing that discourages her," he said.

Simon credits her optimism and determination to her parents.

"My parents are from South Sudan and — I don't know if people know this — but South Sudan was war-torn for a very long time," she said.

Her family was members of the Anyuak tribe, which resided near the Ethiopian border. During the war, many of Simon's family members sought refuge in Ethiopia. Through a lottery system, Simon's parents were able to come to America.

"They sacrificed a lot of things for me to gain the opportunities that I have today," she said.

"For them to come to this country — leaving their home where they grew up and all that they knew — so that their kids ... could get a better education than they ever could, or to get job opportunities so they can be successful in the future, or to even just have fun doing activities and whatnot, they've done so much for me and I really appreciate that."

Simon is the oldest of five children. Her closest sibling in age is her 16-year-old brother, and the youngest is her 1-year-old sister.

"(My parents) just have this determination in them for their family to be better than they ever could, which I think is really selfless," Simon said.

Simon has proven to be selfless in her own right, whether mentoring special education students at school, volunteering at food shelves or homeless shelters with a church youth group, or helping other students in her activities.

"I value community involvement because it gives the people in the community a way to bond and engage with each other," she said.

Her passion for helping people started at a young age; granted, it has evolved over the years.

"Very young me — say 6-year-old me — wanted to be a pediatrician or some kind of doctor, but I noticed as the years have gone on that I don't do well with blood and gore and needles," she said with a laugh. "By the time I got to high school, I realized how interested I was in the brain and behavior and humans in general."

During Simon's time at Tech, students from different backgrounds worked together to better coexist, she said. Simon was part of a culture and climate group that formed after some students protested in March 2015. Some participants said they organized the event because of conflicts between Somali and non-Somali students.

"I understood why they protested. The dynamic at the school at the time wasn't as welcoming as it is now," she said. "After that protest happened, the school I think changed drastically and I think it really changed for the better."

The culture and climate group worked to resolve conflicts and planned activities that celebrated diversity. After a while, Simon said, students started hanging out with kids others might not have expected them to, and participating in new activities.

Simon shared her thoughts on Tech's growing diversity in a documentary created for Tech's centennial celebration.

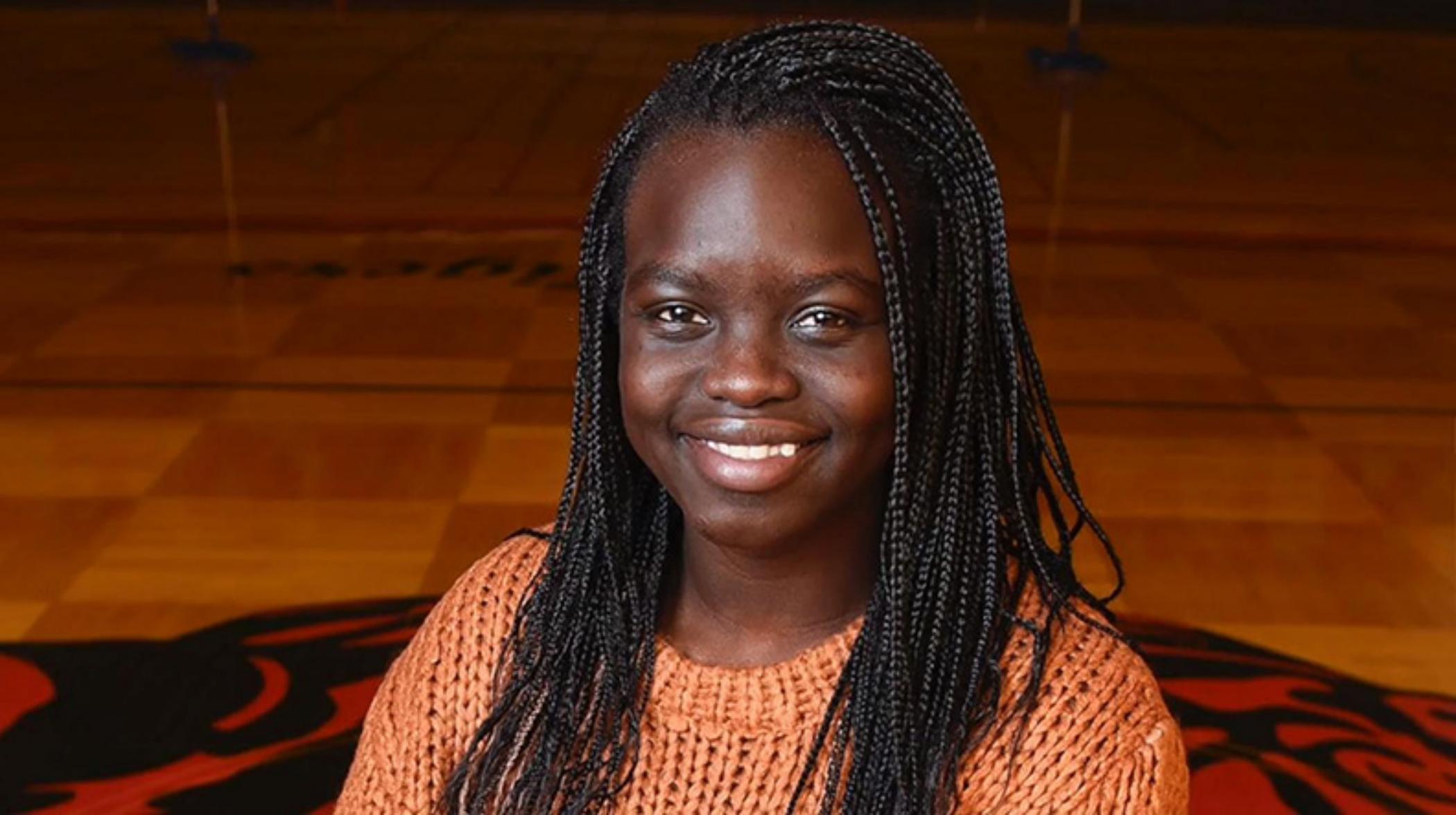
"Really I think Tech is more of a salad bowl than a melting pot," she said. "Everyone sticks out as individuals although we're all still in it together."

## **2 Under 20 winner Georgina Simon**

**Age:** 18

**Student status:** 2017 Technical High School graduate, freshman at University of Minnesota

**Parents:** Akim Simon and Anona Akway



# NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL HEART OF THE ARTS AWARD NOMINEE

(The deadline for returning the completed nomination to the NFHS is February 1, 2018)

---

Name of Nominee: Lydia Jean Mitchell

(first, middle, last)

## ***Individual Submitting Nomination:***

Name: Trudy K. Kinman

Phone: 816-383-2335

E-mail: kinman@maryviller2.com

Street Address: 35592 230<sup>th</sup> Street / School – 1503 South Munn Avenue

City, State, Zip Code: Ravenwood, MO 64479 / School – Maryville, MO 64468

Date: 1 / 15 / 2018

## ***State Association Endorsement:***

Name: Don Maurer

Title: Missouri State High School Activities Association Assistant Executive Director

Signature: [Tab here]

*Don Maurer*

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# NOMINEE INFORMATION SHEET

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X Student  Coach  Administrator  Official  Trainer  Performing Arts  
Administrator  Athletic Administrator  Other (Specify \_\_\_\_\_)

Name of Nominee: Lydia Jean Mitchell  
*(first, middle, last)*

Current Address: 7 Jackson Heights  
*(street address)*

Maryville, MO 64468  
*(city, state, zip)*

Phone: 660-215-2236

E-mail: mitclyd@maryviller2.com / lydia.jean.mit@gmail.com

School (if any): Maryville R-II High School

City: Maryville State: MO

# NOMINATION FORM

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**1. Please describe nominee's current involvement in high school. If applicable, please list any accomplishments or honors attained.**

Lydia Mitchell has a GPA of 3.89, ranks 8<sup>th</sup> in her class, and has an ACT score of 28. She is considered a "scholar" and is well-respected by faculty members and her peers. She is involved with Upward Bound, an academic advancement and college prep program with she has received the Outstanding Math Student, the Outstanding Science Student, and the Outstanding Senior Awards. Other academic achievements include the Gold Honor Roll and membership in the National Honor Society.

In activities, Lydia has been elected to Student Government position all 4 years of high school, and she is a member of Hound Howlin' City, a leadership seminar where participation is based on teachers' and advisors' endorsements. She also holds leadership positions in Octagon Club, Rotary Club, Fellowship of Christian Athletes, and Speech and Debate.

In sports, Lydia is the Captain of the Varsity Soccer Team and has been named 1<sup>st</sup> Team All-Conference and 1<sup>st</sup> Team All-District. In Varsity Cross-Country, she is a State qualifier and holds the current school record for the 5K.

In her church, Lydia is a message leader, event organizer, and mission trip leader. She helps organize the Fellowship of Christian Athletes, the Pay It Forward Project, blood drives, and the Ministry Center.

Marching Band is one of Lydia's main focuses. Elected as the drum major her junior year, she is the youngest drum major in the school's history. Re-elected her senior year, her leadership skills and encouraging temperament have been the contributing factor to the growth and success of the marching band. She is also involved in Jazz Band.

Lydia Mitchell has "heart" in academics, activities, sports, church, and community activities. Well-respected by faculty, peers, and community members, her trustworthy attitude and vibrant personality are admired traits.

**2. Please list nominee's actions or accomplishments that deem him or her worthy of the "National High School Heart of the Arts Award."**

Lydia leads by example. From her position as the major of the high school marching band to her involvement in speech and debate activities to her leadership skills on the soccer team, to her community service and church commitments, she is always "out in front" working and setting a positive role for others to follow. She displays that unique ability to stay humble, let others share in the credit, and motivate those around her to share in the leadership role.

The word, "heart," in the title of this award describes Lydia's commitment and dedication. She truly does care about the freshman trombone player who has trouble manipulating the slide and keeping in step. Or the debater who goes 0 wins and 4 losses at the tournament and needs encouragement. Or the injured soccer plays who is out for the rest of the season, but still is needed as a cheerleader and statistic-person on the bench. Or the "lost soul" who really does appreciate an invitation to attend the next Fellowship of Christian Athletes meeting.

As a member of several organizations, National Honor Society, Student Government, Octagon, Rotary, and Upward Bound, Lydia can be found not only in leadership positions, but stocking food pantries, mobbing the floor at concession stands, or delivering Meals on Wheels to places that other students do not want to go.

Her community volunteer work is amazing. She stretches her time and energy for the Ministry Center, Pay It Forward projects, church mission trips, and blood drives. Her dedication to Caleb's Funds for Kids project helps other youth raise money for young kids suffering from severe brain cancer or cancer-related disabilities.

Lydia is a "PK" (Preacher's Kid), and one of her goals is be an individual making good choices, not because of the "PK" label, but because she cares about other people and the world around her.

In conclusion, Lydia Mitchell is the "heart" of our high school and the surrounding community. A scholar, an athletic, a student government leader, and a community volunteer, Lydia wears many hats. In my 47 years as a classroom teacher, I have never witnessed so much dedication.

In the words of Elisabeth Kübler-Ross, "Beautiful persons have an appreciation, a sensitivity, and an understanding of life that fills them with compassion, gentleness, and a deep loving concern. Beautiful people do not just happen." Lydia Mitchell is one of those beautiful people who have heart!



# Section 6

National High School Heart of the Arts Award

# NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL HEART OF THE ARTS AWARD NOMINEE

(The deadline for returning the completed nomination to the NFHS is February 1, 2018)

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Name of Nominee: James Tyler McPheeters  
*(first, middle, last)*

## ***Individual Submitting Nomination:***

Name: Eugenia Sears (Jean)

Phone: 918 629-8248

E-mail: jsears@rpsok.org

Street Address: 8621 S. Memorial Drive

City, State, Zip Code: Tulsa, Ok 74133

Date: Dec. 11, 2017

## ***State Association Endorsement:***

Name: MIKE PLUNKETT

Title: OSSAA Fine Arts Director

Signature: [Tab here] 

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# NOMINEE INFORMATION SHEET

---

Student    Coach    Administrator    Official    Trainer    Performing Arts  
Administrator    Athletic Administrator    Other (Specify \_\_\_\_\_)

Name of Nominee: James Tyler McPheeters  
*(first, middle, last)*

Current Address: 1902 South 69<sup>th</sup> East Avenue  
*(street address)*  
Tulsa, Ok 74112  
*(city, state, zip)*

Phone: 918 804-5059

E-mail: james.mcpheeters@rpsok.org

School (if any): Regent Preparatory School Of Oklahoma

City: Tulsa State: Ok

# NOMINATION FORM

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1. Please describe nominee's current involvement in high school. If applicable, please list any accomplishments or honors attained.

Student Council President, 2017-2018  
National Merit Commended Scholar, September 2017  
Princeton Book Award, May 1017  
Regent Preparatory School Varsity Football Team, 2013- 2017  
Regent Preparatory Varsity Soccer Team 2017  
Oklahoma Beta Club Oratory State Champion, 2016, 2017  
Oklahoma Center for the Advancement of Science and Technology  
Certificate of  
Achievement for Outstanding Performance in Physics, 2017  
Beta Club Chaplain 2016-2017  
Math Counts Certificate of Merit, 2016  
All State Football Team, Runner up, 2016  
Oklahoma State Academic Bowl Champion, team member, 2016 and  
2017

## Theater

Actor, Lead Tevye, Fiddler On The Roof 2017-2018  
Actor, Lead Dr Chausable, The Importance of Being Earnest, 2017  
Actor, Lead Cogsworth , Beauty and the Beast, 2017

2. Please list nominee's actions or accomplishments that deem him or her worthy of the "National High School Heart of the Arts Award."

"In his heart a man plans his course, but the Lord determines his steps." Proverbs 16:9 NIV

James Tyler McPheeters has the most glorious heart I have ever seen or experienced in my forty-five years of teaching. He is what I like to describe as an old soul in a young body!

I always refer to him as a teacher's dream. In our theater productions (occasionally) we have that actor who has a sudden death in his or her family or illness, and James always volunteers to memorize the character's lines that would have been missing, overnight! I don't even have to ask him to do this. During his high school years I have watched him save many shows from failing. He is also like this in football when someone has become injured. His leadership abilities are impeccable. This year I had the opportunity to have the entire football team in choir, because James enrolled in this class. That is the kind of leader he is at our school; students truly respect and follow his lead.

This past summer he did a community theaters production of, "Once Upon A Mattress. " This was his first time to do Community Theater. He played the Mute king "Sextamis". James stole the show every night, without even saying a word.

He makes the effort to really care about other students around him. Tyler is loaded with brains, talent and compassion. If he does not end up in the acting profession, he should become a doctor in my opinion. I would love to see James receive the accolades that he so rightfully deserves for his high school dedication to activities. I hope you will consider him for the "Heart of the Arts Award" with my highest of recommendation! Thank You, for your time and consideration of this exceptional young man.

Eugenia Sears-REGENT PREPARATORY SCHOOL

# NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL HEART OF THE ARTS AWARD NOMINEE

(The deadline for returning the completed nomination to the NFHS is February 1, 2017)

---

Name of Nominee: Seguin High School Marching Band  
*(first, middle, last)*

## **Individual Submitting Nomination:**

Name: Logan Lawrence

Phone: 512-232-4940

E-mail: LLawrence@uilltexas.org

Street Address: 1701 Manor Road

City, State, Zip Code: Austin, TX 78759

Date: January 29, 2018

## **State Association Endorsement:**

Name: Charles Breithaupt

Title: UIL Executive Director

Signature: Charles Breithaupt

# NOMINEE INFORMATION SHEET

---

Student    Coach    Administrator    Official    Trainer    Performing Arts  
Administrator    Athletic Administrator    Other (\_\_\_\_\_)

Name of Nominee: Seguin High School Marching Band  
*(first, middle, last)*

Current Address: 1221 East Kingsbury  
*(street address)*

Seguin, TX 78155  
*(city, state, zip)*

Phone: (830) 372-5770

E-mail: cmauldin@seguin.k12.tx.us

School (if any): Seguin High School

City: Seguin State: Texas

# NOMINATION FORM

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1. Please describe nominee's current involvement in high school. If applicable, please list any accomplishments or honors attained.

The Seguin High School Marching Band competes at the 5A level and offers a full high school music program. The band advanced to this year's UIL Regional Marching Contest.

2. Please list nominee's actions or accomplishments that deem him or her worthy of the "National High School Heart of the Arts Award."

In late August, Hurricane Harvey pounded the town of Rockport, demolishing local homes and businesses, and leaving many without shelter. As the eye of the hurricane passed over Rockport, Fulton High School seemed to take the brunt of the damage. With one wall of the gym half gone, debris littering the football field and entrances to the school almost unrecognizable, school officials were forced to temporarily close its doors.

Without a playable field, Rockport-Fulton's first home football game with Leander Glenn was moved to a neutral site 150 miles north, in Seguin. The school's marching band was unable to make the trip as they too felt the effects of the storm, losing all its instruments, stands, music library, equipment, and uniforms.

In stepped the Seguin High School Marching Band. The Mighty Matadors were there as a substitute in their place. Over 150 SHS band members volunteered their time to play for Rockport-Fulton. The band even learned the RFHS school song and fight song to help its guests feel more at home.

The support didn't stop there. The band's booster club helped raise \$5,000 in donations to help Rockport-Fulton with the loss of sheet music, uniforms and instruments. The Seguin band even donated musical instruments to replace those lost in the hurricane.

That generosity also inspired others in the Seguin community to pitch in, as the Seguin HS Sports Booster Club collected donations and even had a post-game meal for the Rockport-Fulton team.

Booster Club Vice-President Christy Scheel said, "Our goal is that they feel loved, welcomed and supported during the time they spend in Seguin."

## **Accompanying Articles:**

### **Seguin HS marching band to fill in for Rockport-Fulton band**

Jeremy Baker, KENS 4:35 PM. CDT September 14, 2017



ROCKPORT - The Rockport-Fulton marching band lost everything to Hurricane Harvey.

The high school's football team is playing on without the band this Friday, September 15.

Fortunately, the Seguin High School marching band will fill in when the Pirates take on Leander Glenn.

Hurricane Harvey smashed into Rockport, but today those terrible memories are being replaced by beautiful music from the Seguin High School marching band. They're practicing for tomorrow night's Rockport-Fulton football game against Leander Glenn that will be hosted at Seguin's Matador Stadium.

"It went from let's play the fight song to get them on the field, to let's just hang out the whole game and we'll play for them for the whole game. We will be their band for the day," Stan Mauldin, the Director of Bands at Seguin High School said.

Close to 200 members of the Seguin Mighty Matador Marching Band were practicing the Rockport-Fulton fight song and the Rockport-Fulton Alma Mater Thursday, that will welcome the football team and the school as a whole to Matador Stadium. They all volunteered!

"It is not something you are required to do but something that's a good feeling because they literally have nothing left and this is something big," said senior Stephanie Clark. Sophomore Hailey Merkel added, "Think about if you lost everything and you didn't have anything. You would want people to help you out."

Senior Richard Rivera told us, "Everyone wants to help in some kind of way and this is the way that we can help them."

Genesis Weitman, who is also a senior added, "I know if I was in that position and I wouldn't be able to go and support my football team, that I'd want somebody else to."

Jay Seibert, the Athletic Director of Rockport-Fulton High School says the school couldn't be more grateful.

"Seguin has been pretty awesome, Its amazing from around the state the help that we've gotten from different high schools all across the state." Seibert said.

The athletic and band booster club has also been raising money for Rockport-Fulton High School to help them recover.

## SHS band to play for battered Rockport

Pirates to take the field at Matador Stadium Friday

Posted: Tuesday, September 12, 2017 12:00 am

Felicia Frazar [felicia.frazar@seguingazette.com](mailto:felicia.frazar@seguingazette.com)

As Hurricane Harvey carved out a path of destruction across the Texas coast up to the Texas-Louisiana border, it destroyed a lot of things in its path — including the town of Rockport.

But that isn't stopping the Rockport-Fulton Pirates, who are slated to line up against Glenn High School from Leander on Friday in Matador Stadium.

Their own high school, which took a beating when the category 4 storm landed, has been closed and its students scattered and left picking up the pieces.

It wasn't just the school that is bearing the brunt of the damage, as the team takes the field, they won't be joined by their band, Seguin Band Director Stan Mauldin said.

However, the Mighty Matador Marching Band has offered to step up in their place.

"What we'll end up doing on Friday night is being the Rockport High School band," he said. "We're going to play their school song and fight song and some of the things they do in the stands to help their football team and help their community a little bit."

The idea came as the band boosters began talking about Rockport-Fulton and how the town was devastated by the hurricane last month, Mauldin said.

"One of the boosters had the idea since we are off that day, if they (Rockport) wouldn't mind our band playing for them. It has kind of taken off from there," Mauldin said.

Mauldin opened the idea up to the students, inviting them to volunteer their time and play, Mauldin said.

"We have 215 kids, and we'll have about 150 to 200 of them who have volunteered to be there at the game," he said. "It is an absolute voluntary thing, so whoever shows up, shows up. We have a couple of kids who have the SAT in the morning and they don't want to stay up late. It is really a cool thing to see them volunteer."

After the hurricane hit and word began to spread about the devastation along the coast, Mauldin said the directors talked with their students about what was happening.

"We've talked about it and talked about what the kids are going through, and that Rockport right now doesn't anything," he said. "That town is just gone. They will be back in school on Oct. 6, but their band instruments are just gone. They're full of mold and stuff."

Mauldin has twice witnessed the destruction of major storms when both Hurricane Rita and Hurricane Ike ravaged the east side of Texas and knows first-hand the difficulties of getting things back on track.

"I've been in a hurricane before and usually, your library is gone, and you just don't have enough to fix what is gone," Mauldin said. "He (the Rockport director) will have uniforms that won't be any good anymore. He'll have sheet music in a library that just has to be replaced and there is never enough money to replace all of that. When it is gone, it's just gone, and it is hard to get your life back together."

The local director and his students' only hope is to give Rockport-Fulton a little normalcy, if even for a few hours.

"Anything that makes it normal again is really good for the kids and really great for the community," he said. "If we can help in any way, make things more normal for them, we're just pleased as punch to go do it. If we can help them, even just a little bit, our kids are all for it. We are a loving and caring community and the people of Rockport need our help right now. Even if our help is just coming out and yelling for their team or supporting their team. Anything we can do to help get them back to where Rockport used to be would be good on our part."

Bill Wilcox, president of the band boosters, said he is touched by the generosity of their students.

"I think the band is just happy and excited that they are able to do something," he said. "We always wonder what we could do, and this is something the band can do — play for their football team and be there for them. I think that is really awesome."

In addition to showing their support at the game on Friday, the band boosters are also working on a little something to assist the Rockport-Fulton band financially, Wilcox said.

"During our band booster meeting, we talked about it we could donate some money," he said. "Then the boosters batted around and said we could do \$500. Then it was suggested to donated \$500 to the Rockport Band Booster Program. Then it was suggested to see if the members of our booster organization could match that. Right, now we've got quite a few extra donations and we've put that out that we would try to match that and get it up above \$500 as much as we could."

The group thought about what it would take to start over again and couldn't fathom how much it would cost.

"We know it is not a lot, but we also can't imagine if we had to start over as a booster organization, with all of the things that we supply for our own band and how hard that would be," he said. "There are so many things that we store in the band hall for fundraisers and those things cost money and we save them year after year. But, if they were to disappear, it would be a huge hit on us. We also help fix instruments and pay for some of the instruments, but they've lost all of those as well. It is a big blow to that organization. Our hearts went out to them, and we thought this was the best way we could help."

In addition to the boosters collecting donations from within, Wilcox said anyone wanting to assist financially can contact him at [bwilcox@satx.rr.com](mailto:bwilcox@satx.rr.com) or by dropping off the donation at high school and say it's for the Band Boosters.

"We would like to be able to give the band director a check on Friday, when he is here," Wilcox said. "If it comes in later, we'll still accept the donation and it to them."

The coordinated efforts to assist the Rockport community include the Seguin Sports Booster Club, which has collected more than \$3,000 during the past two Matador home games to donate to the Rockport-Fulton athletic programs.

"We are also providing and serving a home cooked meal for approximately 80 people from the Rockport football team, coaches and other traveling personnel through generous donations of food, money and time from our Booster Membership, Granzins Meat Market and Faith Lutheran Church," Sports Booster Co-Vice President Christy Scheel said. "The Rockport Sports Boosters have told us that the one thing that a lot of their kids have asked for is a home cooked meal so that things can be normal for just a little bit."

Additionally, boosters are providing a post-game meal for the group courtesy of Chicken Express, Scheel said.

The Cheerleaders have also jumped on board and are volunteering to cheer for the Pirates that night.

“We are all really excited to be able to help this town and their athletic programs take some steps to get back to normal for them,” Scheel said. “Our goal is that they feel loved, welcome and supported during the time that they spend in Seguin on Friday.”

The Rockport-Fulton Pirates will take the field against the Glenn Grizzlies at 7:30 p.m. in Matador Stadium.

## Seguin HS band to play for Harvey-battered Rockport-Fulton football team

### Rockport-Fulton plays Glenn High School Friday in Seguin

By Garrett Brnger - Reporter

Posted: 5:54 PM, September 14, 2017 Updated: 5:54 PM, September 14, 2017

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SEGUIN, Texas - When the Mighty Matador band takes the stands Friday night, it won't be playing for Seguin.

Instead, the high school band members have volunteered to back the Rockport-Fulton football team when it plays Leander's Glenn High School in a neutral-ground matchup at Seguin. With Rockport's world turned upside-down by Hurricane Harvey, the band members want to set at least one part of that world right.

"I can't go out there and help in the actual affected area," said Sheldon Scholl, a brass captain in the Seguin High School band. "And this is the best thing I can do, is help the band play for Rockport."

Rockport, a small city near Corpus Christi, was slammed by Harvey when it made landfall as a Category 4 hurricane. While the football team has continued to play, SHS band director Stan Mauldin said the 80 members of Rockport-Fulton's band are either at a nearby school district or spread as far north as Dallas.

"Those kids may or may not move back home again, and so that band is going to change for quite a while," he said.

The matchup between the two, out-of-town football teams predated Harvey, but the idea to play for Rockport-Fulton started with a conversation at a booster club meeting.

"Basically, one of the booster parents said, 'Wouldn't it be neat if we could just play the fight song and the school song for them?'" Mauldin said.

The idea of helping out hit the right note for the band members, and Mauldin said he expects 180 to 190 of the 213 band members show up Friday.

Practicing the fight and school songs for the first time Thursday, band members said volunteering to play was the right thing to do.

"There's a lot of people that have nothing," drum major Chloe Luna said. "And I want to be able to say I made their life normal for even a few minutes."

Mauldin said the band boosters are also raising money for Rockport-Fulton's band program to help with the loss of sheet music, uniforms and instruments. They hope to collect \$5,000 in all.





SEGUIN  
LOVES  
RockPort! 😊

GO PIRATES  
ARE YOU READY  
TO WIN

LET'S GO  
YOU  
ROCK PIRATES

WE LOVE  
YOU  
pirates!!!!





# Section 7

National High School Heart of the Arts Award

# NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL HEART OF THE ARTS AWARD NOMINEE

(The deadline for returning the completed nomination to the NFHS is February 1, 2018)

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Name of Nominee: Kenzie Hutchings  
*(first, middle, last)*

## ***Individual Submitting Nomination:***

Name: Sharon Wall

Phone: 435-896-8247

E-mail: Sharon.wall@seviersd.org

Street Address: 495 West Center

City, State, Zip Code: Richfield, Utah 84703

Date: January 10, 2018

## ***State Association Endorsement:***

Name: Jan Whittaker

Title: Utah High School Activities Association Assistant Director

Signature: Jan H. Whittaker

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# NOMINEE INFORMATION SHEET

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Student    Coach    Administrator

Athletic Administrator    Other (Specify \_\_\_\_\_)

Name of Nominee: Kenzie Hutchings  
*(first, middle, last)*

Current Address: 246 North 400 West  
*(street address)*

Richfield, Utah, 84701  
*(city, state, zip)*

Phone: 435-201-4645

E-mail: kenziehutchings@yahoo.com

School (if any): Richfield High School

City: Richfield State: Utah

# NOMINATION FORM

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1. Please describe nominee's current involvement in high school. If applicable, please list any accomplishments or honors attained.

Kenzie began at a young age developing her love for dance. High school was a new avenue for her to pursue her dreams of being a dancer. She has taken every opportunity to do that and be the best that she could be.

Kenzie is a member and officer of Orchesis Dance Company at Richfield High School and has been for three years. During this time she has competed at the Shakespeare Competition at SUU and helped her ensemble group to place 1<sup>st</sup> in their division. She has also participated and competed at the Utah High School Dance Festival. Kenzie has been on the drill team for the past three years and is an All-State recipient. She has choreographed and danced for assemblies; Jr. Prom floorshow; half-times; school plays and many community events. She has won numerous awards in dance competitions. Kenzie auditioned and danced in the Macy's Parade 2016; Outback Bowl Half-time 2017 and was a "Specialty Dancer" for Stadium of Fire 2017. Kenzie is also an honor student, student-body officer, and a member of this year's girl's basketball team. She is the 2018 RHS Dance Sterling Scholar for Richfield High School.

2. Please list nominee's actions or accomplishments that deem him or her worthy of the "National High School Heart of the Arts Award."

Kenzie has attended numerous dance workshop and camps to further her training, using that knowledge to not only improve herself, but to help her peers and younger girls. Some of the workshops she has attended include; New York Dance Alliance, Jump dance convention, Broadway Dance Center in New York, UVU High School Workshop and SUU High School Workshop just to name a few. She has choreographed and taught younger girls routines for parades, athletic events, and other community events.

Kenzie, has used her dance training to create a platform to raise confidence in young girls, ages 5-12. She has provided free workshops for these girls to attend in which they were taught several dances and participated in other activities to help them build their courage and confidence. Her workshops were titled "Capes of Confidence" using actual capes she had made for the girls to put on during some of the activities.

Kenzie has been an outstanding representative to her peers and younger girls. She is dependable, positive, hard-working, and a joy to work with.

She plans on attending a University in Utah next year to pursue a degree in dance.



# Section 8

National High School Heart of the Arts Award

# NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL HEART OF THE ARTS AWARD NOMINEE

(The deadline for returning the completed nomination to the NFHS is February 1, 2018)

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Name of Nominee: JARED ALLAN HELM  
*(first, middle, last)*

## ***Individual Submitting Nomination:***

Name: JULIE HAMMONS

Phone: 208-375-7027

E-mail: HAMMONSJ@IDHSAA.ORG

Street Address: 8011 USTICK RD

City, State, Zip Code: BOISE, ID 83704

Date: 1/31/18

## ***State Association Endorsement:***

Name: JULIE HAMMONS

Title: ASSISTANT EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, IHSAA

Signature: 

# NOMINEE INFORMATION SHEET

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Student    Coach    Administrator    Official    Trainer    Performing Arts Administrator    Athletic Administrator    Other (Specify \_\_\_\_\_)

Name of Nominee: Jared Allan Helm  
*(first, middle, last)*

Current Address: 873 West Willow Lake Loop  
*(street address)*

Coeur d'Alene, Idaho, 83815  
*(city, state, zip)*

Phone: 208-413-2659

E-mail: jaredahelm@gmail.com

School (if any): Coeur d'Alene High School

City: Coeur d'Alene State: Idaho

# NOMINATION FORM

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1. Please describe nominee's current involvement in high school. If applicable, please list any accomplishments or honors attained.

Jared Helm is a teacher, coach, and director for grades 9<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> at Coeur d'Alene High School in Coeur d'Alene, Idaho. Mr. Helm has taught at CHS for ten years and currently teaches Theatre One, Theatre Two, Stagecraft, Improvisation, and Play Production, while producing two full staged productions and competing in the Idaho High School Drama Competition each year. It is evident that Jared immerses himself within his school theatre community by supporting and honoring the individual students in hopes to create an appreciation for the theatrical arts.

Jared started his work in theatre at the age of six and has never looked back. As a performer himself, it is evident that Mr. Helm shares a respect and understanding of the art and its application outside the theatre. He has an appreciation for the ability to focus on the student helping them to become a better communicator on an interpersonal and intrapersonal level. He often says that the key to his coaching is goodwill; this can be seen in his students. Mr. Helm has shown his focus and dedication to art through his six 5A Idaho State Drama Championship titles. It is evident in his students that the focus is not on the win – it is on the process. The desire and drive to become more accepting and generous humans in a world where human connection is needed more then ever.

Not only does Jared give in the classroom and on the stage, he is a leader amongst his peers. He has served as District One President for the Idaho Speech Arts Teachers Association and District One Drama Manager. Both of these positions have given Jared the opportunity to help guide and support his peers throughout the state – allowing North Idaho to have a voice amongst the organization. Jared has been recognized by his peers for his work, and continues to lead. Jared has also demonstrated his leadership with his efficient and generous spirit while hosting two State Drama competitions in his ten years of coaching Jared has gone above and beyond in his hospitality to all theatre students in the state. He takes pride not only in his school, but also in the state of drama across Idaho. He truly has a heart for the arts in Coeur d'Alene, Idaho, and beyond!

Jared has served two years on the CHS Leadership team and has found a great appreciation and desire to lead and serve his greater school community. His desire to create ideas is proven in his open style of communication with a constant focus on process. Jared has always had an objective to serve his community through art and various other applications. He has been dedicated to the power of giving back, and is currently teaching a cross-district class on service learning in the classroom. Jared understands and applies the power of art in and out of the classroom giving his students the opportunity to discover self, and in turn empower creation.

Jared has worked with numerous students to help them find their way during times of hardship. He is currently working with a student who he has taught, mentored, and directed for four years. This student lives her single mom who is striving to make ends meet each month. Mr. Helm has made a life long connection with this young lady helping to inspire her to follow her dreams, and more specifically believe in herself. This young lady has not only conquered her own fears, but has learned her personal strengths and used them to create on the highest level. Mr. Helm has acted as a male role model leaving a lasting impression on her life and ultimately her career. It is evident that he respects his students for who they are and not the obstacles they have. This young lady has taken numerous state titles including #1 in solo musical theatre for the past two years in the state of Idaho. Jared knows how to inspire optimism and dedication within his students and beyond. This young lady has already been accepted to a collegiate level program, and is headed to general auditions in LA within the month. She is sure to shine with generosity and goodwill while blowing her audience away with her pure talent and passion for the art of storytelling.

Coeur d'Alene High School Theatre Coach/Director	2008-Current
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>It's a Wonderful Life</i> – Fall 2017</li> <li>• <i>Wizard of Oz</i> the musical – Spring 2017</li> <li>• J.M. Barrie's <i>Peter Pan</i> – Fall 2016</li> <li>• <i>Cinderella</i> the musical – Spring 2016</li> <li>• <i>The Giver</i> – Fall 2015</li> </ul>	
CHS Leadership Team	2016-Current
Idaho Speech Arts Teacher Association Region 1 President	Fall 2015-Current
District One Drama Manager	Fall 2015-Current
Idaho State Drama Tabulation Room Judge Assigner	Fall 2012-Current
Cross District Collaboration Instructor	2014-Current
Theatre Arts Curriculum Writing Team	2014-Current
District Curriculum Adoption Team/Performing Arts	2016-2017
CHS Staff Advisory Team/Department Chair	Fall 2012-Spring 2016

2. Please list nominee's actions or accomplishments that deem him or her worthy of the "National High School Heart of the Arts Award."

Idaho State Drama 2017 – 5A State Champions	December 2017
Idaho State Drama 2016 – 5A State Champions	December 2016
Idaho State Drama Competition Host	December 2016
Idaho Drama Teacher of the Year	October 2016
Idaho State Drama 2015 – 5A State Champions	December 2015
Idaho State Drama 2014 – 5 A State Champions	December 2014
Teacher of the Year Nominee	2013-2014
Idaho State Drama 2013 – 5A Runner-up	December 2013
North Idaho Student Teacher Achievement Recognition	May 2013
KHQ/Easter Washington Teacher of the Month	May 2012
Idaho State Drama 2012 – 5A State Champions	December 2012
Idaho State Drama 2012 Competition Host	December 2012
Teacher of the Year nominee	2011-2012
Idaho State Drama – 5A State Champions	December 2011
CHS Rookie Teacher of the Year	2010-2011
CHS Rookie Teacher of the Year	2008-2009

# JARED HELM: Making a difference right now

By MAUREEN DOLAN  
Staff Writer

**COEUR d'ALENE** —  
"Life is a journey, not a destination."

"Life is not a dress rehearsal."

For many, those phrases are simply sayings, cool statements to make on T-shirts or social media posts. But for Jared Helm, the idea that a process is as important as its product is a way of life.

It's a personal philosophy Helm, 31, embodies every day as he leads the drama program at Coeur d'Alene High School, encouraging students to appreciate and get the full benefit from every moment of the learning process, even the failures.

"Education has become so product-based, and today, students can find any bit of information they need, but they need to know the process to find and evaluate that information," Helm said, during an interview

Wednesday at the high school. "Art has always been process-based, and there is something so beautiful about that."

The artistic process was in high gear last week as Helm and his students put the finishing touches on their production of "The Wizard of Oz." The show opened Thursday and continues this week on Thursday, Friday and Saturday at 7 p.m. at the high school, 5530 N. Fourth Street.

Tickets for the show had already become a hot commodity by Wednesday. More than 1,000 tickets had already been sold.

"It has the opportunity to be one of the most attended musicals in Coeur d'Alene this year. It's that big," Helm said. "I only had this kind of sales for 'Les Mis' and we turned away 100 people closing night for that play."

Sitting in his office, a personal space tucked away off-stage in the Coeur d'Alene High

## In Person

School auditorium, Helm spoke about his own experiences as a performer and the path that led him to a career as an educator.

The idea of giving, of service, is also a central theme in Helm's life.

He speaks often of "service-learning," lessons garnered through real-life experiences while serving the community.

Helm's contributions to the Lewiston community earned him the "Spirit of Idaho" award from Sen. Mike Crapo in 2004. Helm was a senior at Lewiston High School at the time, on track to graduate as class valedictorian.

Still, when he started teaching, he didn't know if he would always teach.

"But I've learned in nine years of doing this that it's what I want to do. It's where I belong," Helm said. "Sometimes you want to change the world, and sometimes

you just need to know that you're changing it right now. You're making a difference right now, even if it's just one person or it's 200 people, you're changing people's lives, and you never know what they're going to remember."

**PRESS:** Can you describe your earliest memory of performing in front of another person?

**HELM:** It was kindergarten, and I was in a little play called "Stone Soup," and it was during a choir concert. I just remember that sense of feeling so loved in that moment ... I remember I got done and my grandma looked at me and she said, "Jared, you're such a ham." That really never went away. Then that summer, we went to see my friend in "Wizard of Oz" at the Lewiston Civic Theater. I remember, I looked at my grandma and I said, "Grandma, I'm really

See IN PERSON, C2

## IN PERSON

from C1

upset that he's in the play and I'm not." And she said, "But Jared, you didn't audition." And I said, "Well then, I need to start auditioning." She got me into the summer camp that summer at the Lewiston Civic Theater and I never turned back.

**PRESS:** What was it that made you decide to go into teaching?

**HELM:** For my ninth birthday present my dad built me a fort in the back. He called it a fort, and I called it my schoolhouse. I loved that sense

of sharing knowledge but also what you get in return from sharing that knowledge, the knowledge that students and people could provide me an education. I just got this addiction for education and being taught and teaching others, and this idea that it reciprocates, and it goes around and around and around, that there is learning on all sides.

**PRESS:** What's your favorite personal acting experience?

**HELM:** About six or seven years ago, I started working a little bit with a local talent agency. At that time, there was a good amount of film

happening up here from Hollywood, small budget films. Cuba Gooding, Jr. was doing a lot of work up here, and a few other actors and actresses. Auditioning for film was so exciting because it was so different than theater. Theater you often can take personally because you know they could choose five different people for that role. In film, they need the specific person. They need somebody this tall, that looks this way, and I have such a distinct voice that I know that always was a factor, one way or the other, but I'd get called back all the

See IN PERSON, C3

## IN PERSON

from C2

time.

And finally, it was at my fourth or fifth film I auditioned for, I got cast. It's called "The River Murders." Ving Rhames is in it. Christian Slater is in it, and Ray Liotta is in it. I got cast as the blind date the woman detective meets at the coffee shop. And so me, being this Idaho kid that had not done a lot of acting on film at all, I'd show up on set, and I have my trailer, and these actors and actresses think that I'm from Hollywood. They'd ask, "Where do you work? Where do you live?" And I'd say, "I'm a school teacher over in Coeur d'Alene."

I had my one line, and I gave my line while practicing the scene in the coffee shop. One of the producers who was acting opposite me said, "He needs another line. And he needs a name." I thought, "Oh my gosh! I'm going to get a name."

Then she said, "Well, what do you think your name is?" And I thought about it, and I said, "It can be Jimmy. I think it's Jimmy." She said, "No, it's not Jimmy. How about Leonard?"

My jaw dropped because my grandfather's name is Leonard, and my uncle's name, his son, is Leonard. It was just like whoa, and I looked at her, and I said, "Leonard it is."

**PRESS:** Do you teach drama classes? What are they like and what are the goals for students?

**HELM:** I am very lucky. I teach 10 classes over the course of a year, so five a semester, and nine of those classes are drama-related. I get to teach each beginning classes like Theater 1 and Theater 2. I get to teach in improvisation class and I get to teach a play

production class that is kind of an upper level class. And then, the class that's just the thing that kids want to take, miles away, is stagecraft. They love building, painting and doing things. I think this generation doesn't really get the opportunity to paint their walls the color they want ... There's just this sense of the creativity to just craft and make something that isn't there. And these kids eat it up, and they love it. I don't push necessarily acting on a lot of kids. There are some. The beauty of acting is that it's about becoming a better person. The best actor is somebody who is open to the world around them, lacking judgment, lacking confrontation. They really are free to be themselves. So I guess the main thing we teach is, how can you better be yourself? A lot of people have this idea that acting is pretending, and I really don't like that. Because to me, acting is simply being yourself, combined with elements of a character in a certain situation with a certain mood, and specifically driven by a certain desire or motivation.

**PRESS:** As a performing arts instructor, what gives you the greatest joy?

**HELM:** When my students realize that it truly is about the process and not the product, and that no matter what happens along the way, that's the learning moment. That's the moment they need to grab a hold of and run with. As a society we're so product-based. It's the play that I'm putting on ... People always ask me, "Are you excited about the play?" "Are you nervous about the play?" Well, the play is just part of the process. You think of it as a product, and yes, I have to show that moment to the audience,

but it's just one small moment in that process, and the next night will be another moment in that process. When we take the set down, that's another moment. Then, the next character they create, they're going to be that much more advanced because they learned from that process.

**PRESS:** What are the challenges?

**HELM:** For any teacher, I think it's playing counselor. You want to be there for all your students and you are there for all your students. Between my classes and my kids in the play, I have over 200 students I'm in contact with throughout the day. Sometimes it's really difficult to give them the time you want to give them. You want to help them, you want to guide them, you want to teach them, but sometimes you're being pulled in a million directions. For example, right now, it's the box office. I'm constantly having to sell tickets. I'm having to work on the set. I'm having to go to Lowe's. I'm having to buy another gallon of paint.

**PRESS:** If you could teach just one thing to your students, what would that be?

**HELM:** That they're worth it. That their individualism and their uniqueness is worth them taking risks, failing and growing, and making the best them they can possibly make. And that that best them isn't a paycheck. It isn't a certain look or a certain personality. It's them at their truest and most honest self. To me, when they show that, what I tell my students all the time, is they begin to glow. And when you glow as a person, people want to be around you."



LISA JAMES/Pre

Jared Helm has been the drama teacher at Coeur d'Alene High School for nine years.

## Meet Jared Helm

**Born and raised:** Lewiston

**Education:** University of Idaho, Bachelor of Science in secondary education with an emphasis in theater/speech

**Favorite book:** "The Giving Tree" by Shel Silverstein

**Favorite movie:** "Mr. Holland's Opus" and "Sister Act"

**Favorite musical genre:** indie folk, modern folk, 60s and 70s folk

**Quality you admire most in someone else:** "Good will. I love when people don't need a reason why. They just do. They give."

**Favorite quote:** "If music be the food of love, play on." -From Shakespeare's "Twelfth Night"

# NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL HEART OF THE ARTS AWARD NOMINEE

(The deadline for returning the completed nomination to the NFHS is February 1, 2018)

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Name of Nominee: ERIK ENGBRETSON

(first, middle, last)

## ***Individual Submitting Nomination:***

Name: JOANNE AUSTIN

Phone: (406) 442-6010

E-mail: jpaustin@mhsa.org

Street Address: 1 SOUTH DAKOTA AVE

City, State, Zip Code: HELENA MT 59601

Date: FEBRUARY 1, 2018

## ***State Association Endorsement:***

Name: MARK BECKMAN

Title: EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Signature: 

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# NOMINEE INFORMATION SHEET

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Student    Coach    Administrator    Official    Trainer    Performing Arts  
Administrator    Athletic Administrator   **XXX Other (Specify-BAND DIRECTOR)**

Name of Nominee: ERIK ENGEBRETSON  
*(first, middle, last)*

Current Address: MALTA HIGH SCHOOL --- PO BOX 670  
*(street address)*

MALTA MT 59538  
*(city, state, zip)*

Phone: (406) 654-2002

E-mail: eengebretson@hotmail.com

School (if any): MALTA HIGH SCHOOL

City: MALTA State: MONTANA

# NOMINATION FORM

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1. Please describe nominee's current involvement in high school. If applicable, please list any accomplishments or honors attained.

Erik Engebretson has been a band director for 32 years, most of which have been at Malta High School in Malta, Montana. His current affiliation with the Montana High School Association is his role as chair of the MHSA Music Committee, a position he has held since 2010. It is the fervent wish of the MHSA staff that Erik continues in that role indefinitely.

In addition to his current service as chair, Erik's resume includes the following distinctions:

NFHS Outstanding Music Educator Award Recipient  
Montana High School Association Service Citation Recipient  
Past President of Montana Music Educators Association  
Past President of Montana Bandmasters

His continuing service to his local school district, the surrounding region and the entire state is remarkable and seemingly limitless: he is an educator, director of curricular band, director of pep band, adjudicator, festival chair, committee chair and music adjudicator.

[For reference and detail, the previous NFHS Outstanding Music Educator nomination form for Erik is attached.]

2. Please list nominee's actions or accomplishments that deem him or her worthy of the "National High School Heart of the Arts Award."

Erik embodies the Heart of the Arts award, specifically the statement, *"This award seeks to recognize those individuals who exemplify the ideals of the positive heart of the arts that represent the core mission of education-based activities."*

It's difficult to capture a person's character on paper, but this nomination seeks to convey the collective experiences that MHSA staff, board members, administrators and students have shared with Erik.

At the local school district level, his involvement is unsurpassed. In the words of his school superintendent, he has "boundless enthusiasm." His 32 years as a music educator have kept him young, and his \*fever\* is contagious among the students he teaches. Even in the year he had back surgery, he never missed a tournament appearance. For many years he served as the assistant speech and drama coach while completing his tasks as band director.

Within his region, he is a true music leader, hosting numerous district music festivals and more importantly mentoring other music directors in that task. He never denies a request from his fellow directors or from the MHSA to assist in organizing or staging any music event. That includes serving as an adjudicator throughout Montana, and this is a big state!

At the state association level, Erik serves as the MHSA Music Committee Chair. However, that statement is not fully reflective of his true contributions. While his local district is rural and relatively small, he manages to maintain a global view of music programs of every size. He truly unifies the work of the Committee through his constant involvement in all aspects of Association-based programs as well as community and college affiliations. In recent years he offered what no other chair before him has: he volunteered specifically to serve as the liaison between the MHSA and Montana's All-State Festival sites, two of which are conducted on university campuses. This task involves constant communication among the site hosts, the Montana Music Educators Association, the University System and the MHSA, which he willingly accepted having recognized the need for consistency and expertise in staging these annual events. The impact of his volunteerism is evidenced by the improved festival experiences for everyone involved.

He was the driving force in implementing online auditions, which have streamlined the process, increased submissions and eliminated any perception of bias in the audition screenings. As music educators know, audition materials involve tremendous detail, in part because of ongoing changes in copyright and availability. Erik regularly performs the enormous task of reviewing audition materials.

All of the service noted above clearly shows his commitment to music education, but what is harder to convey is his never-ending positivity. In all his interactions with students and adults he demonstrates a constancy that connects individuals to a single purpose. His gentle and welcoming demeanor is evident in all his human interaction, from his family to his community to the greater sphere of education.

His educational contributions are obvious, and his character, caliber and spirit are incomparable.

Thank you for this opportunity to share the accomplishments of an exceptional educator. Montana High School Association unreservedly submits this Heart of the Arts nomination for Erik Engebretson.



NFHSMUSIC ASSOCIATION

P.O.Box 690  
Indianapolis, IN 46206  
Phone 317/972-6900  
Fax 317/822-5700

## OUTSTANDING MUSIC EDUCATOR NOMINATION 2006-2007

The National Federation of State High School Associations recognition of high school or college band, choral or orchestral directors, supervisors and adjudicators is awarded to individuals whose contributions have impacted high school activities programs. Nominees must exemplify the highest standards of ethical conduct, and carry the endorsement of their respective state high school association.

**Significant and/or long-term contributions to interscholastic high school music activities will be an important criterion in evaluating candidates.**

The NFHS Music Award recipients will be selected at the annual NFHS Music Advisory Committee. One music educator may be nominated from each state for this honor. Each state will determine its own procedure. **Section I through V are to be completed by the nominee and section VI should be completed by the nominator. Do not include any information beyond this four-page form. Extra documents will not be copied or distributed to the NFHS Awards Committee.**

### Return Procedures

1. If your nomination is being submitted by state association office, please complete and return to the NFHS by mail or e-mail.
2. If more than one association is participating in candidate selection, please determine the process of selection and forward your nomination to:  
Angela Hays  
NFHS  
PO Box 690  
Indianapolis, IN 46206  
ahays@nfhs.org
3. Return by **October 1st**.

**COMPLETE INFORMATION NECESSARY!** You may wish to send a copy of this form to the nominee to be completed and returned to you.

NOMINEE'S NAME: Erik Engebretson \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS - HOME: Box 702 \_\_\_\_\_

CITY, STATE, ZIP: Malta, MT 59538 \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS - BUSINESS: Malta High School 1 High School Lane Box 670 Malta, MT 59538 \_\_\_\_\_

CITY, STATE, ZIP: Malta, MT 59538 \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE - HOME: 406/654-1732 \_\_\_\_\_ BUSINESS: 406/654-2002 \_\_\_\_\_

E-MAIL ADDRESS(ES): [keep@ttc-cmc.net](mailto:keep@ttc-cmc.net) and eengebretson@hotmail.com \_\_\_\_\_

I. Career description as a music educator. (Give complete background and information pertaining to involvement in music activities, degrees obtained, teaching positions, tenure, etc.)

B.A.- Music Education-Luther College-1982

- - Trumpet soloist with Luther College Symphony Orchestra
- - Section Leader- Luther College Concert Band

M.S.- Music Education –University of Illinois-Champaign-Urbana-1986

- - Studied conducting with James Keene
- - Studied conducting with Elizabeth Green

Wolf Point Public Schools-1982-1985

-Co-Chaired District Honor Band-1984

- - Band received superior rating-1985
- - Many students received superior rating during 3 year tenure

Malta Public Schools-1986-current

- - Co-Chaired District Honor Band
- - Co-Chaired District Music Festival-1987,1992,1999,2003,2007
- - Chaired District 12 Middle School Festival-1999-2007
- - Director of Bands-Grade School, Junior High and High School, Jazz Combo
- - Bands have received superior ratings from 1987-current
- - Jazz Band and Combo consistently receiving super ratings

II. List personal honors and awards (excluding students' achievement)

- - President of Montana Music Educators-2005-2007
- - President of Montana Bandmasters-1995-1997
- - Frequent Guest Conductor-1998-2007
- - Frequent Adjudicator-1995-2007
- - Clinician-Montana Music Educators Convention-1994, 2006

- - Presenter-MENC National Assembly-2003
- - Delegate-National Church-wide Assembly-Evangelical Lutheran Church of America-1999
- - Married to wife Jeanne for 22 years

III. List student and ensemble honors/achievements (under your direction)

- Malta Concert Band-Performed at Northwest MENC Conference-1993
- Several Students selected to All-Northwest Honor Groups
- Students in Montana All-State Band and/or Orchestra-1986-2006
- First Chairs in Montana All-State Band-1991, 2005
- Students receiving Best Soloists-Buddy DeFranco Jazz Festival
- Commissioned Works-Malta High School and Junior High Bands
  - Hymn Tune Fantasy-Russ Newbury-1995
  - Up The Ashes-Craig Naylor-1998
  - - Montana Bound-Walter Cummings-2004
  - - A Touch of Americana-James Eversole-2005
  - - Most exciting event-All Three Children-Kristen(Clarinet1), Peter (Trumpet 2) and Elizabeth (Flute 2) in Montana All-State Band-2005

IV. Professional affiliations and service (state, regional or national organizations – offices held, committee service, etc.)

<b>Organization</b>	<b>Service</b>	<b>Tenure</b>
Montana Music Educators	President	2005-2007
Montana Music Educators	President-Elect	2003-2005
Montana Bandmasters	President	1995-1997
Montana Bandmasters	Eastern Representative	1989-1995
Montana High School Association	Music Committee	2005-Current
Malta Lutheran Church	Lay Minister	1988-current

IV. Write a short narrative describing the nominee's contributions to high school music programs (overall record, outstanding seasons, etc.)

- - Erik Engebretson has been nominated for this award due to his long record of leadership in Montana, the number of positions of leadership that he has held, and the excellence that he achieves with his students on a regular basis.
- - Mr. Engebretson has been involved in serving Montana students since 1984. He has co-chaired local events such as District Honor band and District music Festivals. His leadership spread statewide with his election to President of the Montana Bandmasters in 1995, and even further with his election to President of the Montana Music Educators Organization in 2005. Among his duties were organizing a statewide convention for all music educators in his capacity as MMEA president, and organizing the band portion of workshops for that same convention as MBA president. He has been a member of the Montana High School Association Music Committee since 2005.
- - Although Erik teaches in a very small, rural school of less than 200, his students achieve an incredible amount of individual and group honors. Erik is frequently requested as an adjudicator and guest conductor, and has presented at the National MENC convention. His band was selected to perform at the Northwest MENC Conference in 1993.

#### VI. Nominator's Recommendation.

Erik Engebretson has made a tremendous impact on the music programs in Montana and has served Montana music educators in many capacities. He has been President and President-Elect of the Montana Music Educators; he has been President and Eastern representative of the Montana Bandmasters; and he has been a member of the Montana High School Music Committee for two years. In these roles, Erik has been respected for his calm, sensible "for the kids" leadership. He travels hundreds of miles to attend meetings, to prepare for conventions, and serve on committees – even through tough Montana winter conditions. Locally, Erik has Co-Chaired the District Honor Band, and District Music Festival. He is a frequent guest conductor and adjudicator around the state – known for his tremendous knowledge and the quality of his work.

Although he lives and works in a very rural area in Northeastern Montana in a High School of less than 200, Erik and his students have achieved some incredible honors. While the Malta band students always perform well at District Honor Band, District Music Festival and State Music Festival – earning many superior ratings, their most impressive honor was that the Malta Concert band was to be selected to perform at the Northwest MENC Conference in 1993. Malta students are regularly selected to perform in All- Northwest and All-State Honor groups – twice earning first chair honors at All-State. His students have been recognized as outstanding soloists at Jazz Festivals, and perhaps most notable of all of these honors are that Erik's own children were all selected to the Montana All-State Band in 2005. His musical impact truly has reached the next generation! I recommend Erik Engebretson wholeheartedly for this award.

NOMINATOR'S NAME: Mary Senvold

DAYTIME PHONE: 406/377-5265 FAX PHONE: 406 /377-8206

E-MAIL ADDRESS(ES): senvold@glendiveschools.com

MAILING ADDRESS: Dawson County HS 900 N. Merrill Ave.

CITY, STATE, ZIP: Glendive, MT 59330

STATE ASSOCIATION NOMINATING CANDIDATE: Montana High School Association

ENDORSEMENT OF STATE ASSOCIATION OFFICER:

NAME/TITLE: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

IS PHOTO INCLUDED?  Yes  No

# NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL HEART OF THE ARTS AWARD NOMINEE

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Name of Nominee: Emma Jane Dobesh

## ***Individual Submitting Nomination:***

Name: Jen Loeung

Phone: 503-762-6180x5526

E-mail: [Jen\_Loeung@csd28j.org]

Street Address: 3505 SE 181<sup>st</sup>

City, State, Zip Code: Gresham, OR 97030

Date: 1/31/18

## ***State Association Endorsement:***

Name: Cindy Simmons

Title: Assistant Executive Director

Signature: 

## NOMINEE INFORMATION SHEET

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Student    Coach    Administrator    Official    Trainer    Performing Arts  
Administrator    Athletic Administrator    Other (Specify \_\_\_\_\_)

Name of Nominee: Emma Jane Dobesh

Current Address: 2930 SW Brixton Ave

Gresham, OR 97080

Phone: 503-329-0512

E-mail: Emma.Dobesh@frontier.com

School (if any): Centennial High School

City: Gresham   State: Oregon

# NOMINATION FORM

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**1. Please describe nominee's current involvement in high school. If applicable, please list any accomplishments or honors attained.**

Emma Jane Dobesh is a senior at Centennial High School in Gresham, OR. Out of 400 students, she is currently ranked 7<sup>th</sup> in her class with a 3.97 un-weighted GPA and a 4.1 weighted GPA. Her GPA is significant for several reasons. She has taken almost every advanced course, ranging from Chemistry freshman year and AP environmental science to serving as a peer tutor for AP environmental science. She took every honors English class available freshman and sophomore year along with AP Language her junior year and College English her senior year, earning her WTG 121, 122 and 123 credits. She has taken classes ranging from Pre-Calculus for college credit and AP psychology and AP statistics to AP US government, and earned A's with college credit in speech for SP221A, B and C.

Emma has served in multiple official and unofficial roles on Centennial's Speech and Debate team ranging from the information hub coordinator (keeping track of team information and events) for two years to serving as our Public Relations officer (writing all our PR notes to the public, helping with team promotion and speaking events within the district for elementary and junior high schools). She is the unofficial team encourager, peace keeper and community builder. Emma placed 2<sup>nd</sup> in open extemporaneous in 2017 at the Sandy High School tournament.

In addition, this will be Emma's third year serving in outdoor school (she spent two years at Canby Grove working with 6<sup>th</sup> graders and teaching field studies to sixth graders about soil via hands on activities such as having them "mine" the chocolate chips out of a cookie to demonstrate how mining destroys the earth). She will be working with 4<sup>th</sup> graders in the Oregon Trail program this spring.

She has been active in her college-possible program and has participated in track and field. Ironically, Emma is not one of those "popular" girls, so it was a complete pleasure to see her win Winter Court Queen and to hear underclassmen say they voted for the nice girl who smiles and/or helps them in class.

**2. Please list nominee's actions or accomplishments that deem him or her worthy of the "National High School Heart of the Arts Award."**

Amidst her parents' divorce, and wanting to support her parents, her twin sister and her younger brother, Emma has not let circumstances such as not being able to see her mother for almost a year due to living circumstances or now shuttling between houses consume her focus. Instead, she has turned hurt into compassion towards everyone she meets on the team, in the class or outside school. She has reframed economic barriers into gratitude when clothes were donated to our school and a hip attitude to embrace non-brand clothes to show creativity that celebrates each individual and their own style (and it's been an encouragement to other students who do not have her projected self-confidence). She is always amongst the first to volunteer when we make and bring community food to share at every tournament so that everyone has food to eat, regardless of if a parent does or does not support their student. That willingness to share has helped girls who, time and again, have parents that do not see the worth in their daughter. One of these young woman won at state. Emma makes sure that those who need help getting to events are cared for and she shares clothes with others if it will support them.

Many people, given her circumstance, learn to take on what is not their responsibility, such as caring for others emotions, taking care of last minute projects a family member forgot to do or negotiating as a peace keeper between parents and siblings. She has learned and practices setting healthy boundaries, identifying individual responsibilities and learning to advocate for herself, such as getting help for her anxiety. She so beautifully has taken these life lessons and gently but firmly learned to be healthy. In turn, I have seen her step up as she prepares for the day every morning at 6:50am and insert comments that deny a bully his say, she holds them accountable for the words spoken and ends with the phrase, "that's not cool." Emma stops negative self-talk with any kid in the room who wants to quit because they've never placed at a tournament or their feedback seems discouraging. She is persistent and tenacious. She never

placed during her first three years as a speaker, and she's only placed once her senior year, but she is not bitter or jealous. She is thrilled at her accomplishment in an area that scares her to death! She celebrates and encourages her teammates, offers insight and is such a strong role model. She sites her own experience and tells them to never give up and then shares the benefits that speech has made in her life. She has learned to say no and has taught other over-achievers on the team that it's okay to set boundaries. She always ends with an encouraging word and the sometimes dismal and negative undertones that can be present in high school are always negated with the encouragement and smile. Centennial High School is a brighter place because of Emma.

Emma has learned compassion and to help those who are in need outside of her world. She has spent three summers volunteering with her youth group at First Nation reservations such as Warm Springs in Oregon or Lapwai in Idaho. The service for each week ranges from repairing and painting a long house and benches to items needed for ceremonies. She has helped establish and plant a community garden to feed the hungry in the community. On one trip students worked in the food bank and made an uninhabitable house into a home for a family. All trips include playing with children for 2-3 hours daily, providing food, fun and connecting cultures and generations. This summer Emma will travel with the youth group to Houston, TX to Ground Zero to help the flood victims.

Emma's dream is to attend Penn State, study Environmental studies and become a park ranger because she wants to "connect the natural world to the world of humans."

Family and building bridges is important to Emma. She spent the summer of her sophomore year in Montana with her grandparents to help them with gardening and hearing their stories related to their life. She cooked for and transported them to appointments and helped them downsize, all out of love and a desire to strengthen generational bonds. I saw the same love shared with her grandmother in Gresham. Even though her grandmother didn't recognize her, she faithfully spent time with her until she passed.

Finally, Emma has made it a mission to make sure that every person is included on the speech team. "I want it to be a family set apart from other groups in the school. We are small but mighty and we respect each other's opinions on the team. We can live together and take care of each other from sharing food, clothes, rides and homework help." Speech is a place where individuals and community grow and the door that welcomes all has been held wide open the past four years by our senior, the incredible Emma Dobesh.



# NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL HEART OF THE ARTS AWARD NOMINEE

(The deadline for returning the completed nomination to the NFHS is February 1, 2018)

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Name of Nominee: Lynnwood High School Chapter of the Tri M honor Society. Amy Stevenson  
and Phillip Onishi Advisors (affiliates of WMEA and NAFME)

*(first, middle, last)*

## ***Individual Submitting Nomination:***

Name: Scott Ketron

Phone: 425-712-9632

E-mail: scott.ketron@wmea.org

Street Address: 19105 36<sup>th</sup> Ave. W. Suite 213

City, State, Zip Code: Lynnwood, WA 98036

Date: January 29, 2018

## ***State Association Endorsement:***

Name: Andy Barnes

Title: Assistant Executive Director

Signature: [Tab here]

# NOMINEE INFORMATION SHEET

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Student    Coach    Administrator    Official    Trainer    Performing Arts  
Administrator    Athletic Administrator    Other (Specify \_\_\_\_\_)

Name of Nominee: Lynnwood High School Tri M Chapter: Amy Stevenson and Phillip Onishi  
(advisors) \_\_\_\_\_  
*(first, middle, last)*

Current Address: 18218 North Rd, \_\_\_\_\_  
*(street address)*  
Bothell, WA 98012 \_\_\_\_\_  
*(city, state, zip)*

Phone: (425) 431-7520 \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: [stevensona@edmonds.wednet.edu](mailto:stevensona@edmonds.wednet.edu) and [oniship@edmonds.wednet.edu](mailto:oniship@edmonds.wednet.edu) \_\_\_\_\_

School (if any): Lynnwood High School \_\_\_\_\_

City: Lynnwood \_\_\_\_\_ State: WA \_\_\_\_\_

# NOMINATION FORM

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1. Please describe nominee's current involvement in high school. If applicable, please list any accomplishments or honors attained.

The Tri M Chapter is a High School Honor Society for is a program for high school music students under the umbrella of the National Association for Music Education, (NAfME). Washington Music Educators Association is a federated affiliate member of NAfME. Lynnwood High School has the largest and most active Tri M chapter in the State of Washington. The chapter has over 80 students who are active members in the school's band orchestra and choir programs as well as extra-curricular activities such as district and state solo and ensemble contests and the athletic bands. The programs are robust yet very few of the student's families can afford private lessons so they are learning together in the school setting and are considered very active and accomplished music program by any standard. Their Tri M activities set them apart from everyone else.

2. Please list nominee's actions or accomplishments that deem him or her worthy of the "National High School Heart of the Arts Award."

The Lynnwood High School Tri M chapter serves the community in some ongoing programs. The two major ones are their annual Blood Drive and Food Drives. As well as assisting WMEA in preparing Conference Packets for our annual continuing education conferences. Their blood drive is the largest, single day blood drive in the state of Washington every year. This year registered 219 donors who saved 549 lives. Over the last 24 years over 5,000 members of the LHS community have donated blood and saved over 12,500 lives. This project was in partnership with Blood Works Northwest

Just before the Thanksgiving Holiday, the Lynnwood High School Tri M club organized its 6th annual food drive consisting of 110 Volunteers working over 400 hours to solicit donations from 9AM-7PM in front of 10 local grocery and drug stores They collected nearly 11,000 food items, weighing over 8,000 pounds as well as \$6100 to benefit the Lynnwood Food Bank. Over the last six years the Lynnwood High School Tri M Club has donated nearly 100,000+ "cans" of food and nearly \$22,000 to the Lynnwood Food Bank!

The two events were organized and executed the same week with the blood Drive on November 21, 2017 and the food drive on November 22, 2017. There is a real sense of pride and community among the students seeing how motivated people working together can make a difference in a community.