

Press Release – 42nd Spotlight on Talent Celebrates Winners!
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SPOTLIGHT TALENT 2025
WINNERS AND SCHOLARSHIPS

MATINEE SHOW

CATEGORY 1

- 1ST – Adelynn Erickson – Contemporary Dance
- 2nd – Amber Luu - Piano
- 3rd – Addie Pereira - Piano
- 4th – Ruby Ricardo – Musical Theater

CATEGORY 2

- 1ST – Akshath Anand – Vocal & Piano
- 2nd – Gabriella Tigley - Piano
- 3rd – Savanna Nelson – Ballet Dance
- 4th – Naomi Reed - Piano

CATEGORY 3

- 1st – Kennedy Kring – Pointe Dance
- 2nd – Chloe Adams – Contemporary Dance
- 3rd – Tenley Ryman – Contemporary Dance
- 4th – Jacob Burkett – Piano
- 5th – Penelope Whipple – Lyrical Ballet

YOUNGER GROUPS

- 1st - Avery & Kailani – Contemporary Dance
- 2nd – Velvet Voices – Vocal Duet
- 3rd – AIM’s Melodic Stars – Vocal
- 4th – Titanic Duo – Violin & Piano

EVENING SHOW

CATEGORY 1

- 1ST – Tavin Grooms – Musical Theater
- 2nd – Paul McGill - Piano
- 3rd – Rio Ricardo – Musical Theater
- 4th – Jerry Lee - Piano

CATEGORY 2

- 1ST – Makenna Henry – Contemporary Dance
- 2nd – Naomi Lopez – Lyrical Dance
- 3rd - Anna Hutchinson – Jazz Dance
- 4th – Logan Gilbreath - Guitar
- 5th – Srikruthi Neralla - Vocal

CATEGORY 3

- 1ST – Conway Theel - Piano
- 2nd – Samuel Wu - Piano
- 3rd – Reagan Ricardo – Musical Theater
- 4th – Larkin Mainwaring - Vocal
- 5th – Alynza McBride – Ballet Dance

OLDER GROUPS

- 1ST – AIM Stars Acting - Acting
- 2nd – AIM’s Harmonic Stars - Vocal
- 3rd – Star Company I – Contemporary Ballet

PASCO HERITAGE SCHOLARSHIPS:

- Conway Theel – Piano
- Larkin Mainwaring - Vocal

Above are the winners named at the 42nd annual "Spotlight on Talent" Performing Arts Competition, held recently (March 15) at the Center for the Arts at Wesley Chapel High. The Matinee showcased younger students and groups, and the Evening Show, older students and groups. Each of these outstanding talented young people very much deserves recognition in our area newspapers! A special feature article we definitely feel is called for. Please go to our website at www.heritagearts.org, to pull up some excellent digital photos, all labeled and ready to go.

Here are some additional facts we'd like you to use. Over 120 talented young people from ages 6 to 18 were given the opportunity to perform onstage at this first-rate facility in front of 2 enthusiastic crowds and 2 panels of professional judges. The non-profit Heritage Arts Center Assoc. is the organization that produces this show each year. A 15 member Board of Directors worked for 3 months, and the final production team included 8 additional community friends who gave of their time. Exec. Producer was Barbara Friedman, and Asst. Producers were Laretta Brown, Michelle Twitmyer and Laurel Weightman. 31 different corporate/community sponsors generously donated toward the over \$6,000 cash prizes, trophies and ribbons that were distributed. Our Masters of Ceremonies were Clint Roberson, lawyer, and David West, Rotarian and Pastor.

The big excitement this year was that, because HACA received a generous grant from Suncoast Credit Union, they were able to award two \$1,000 Pasco Heritage Scholarships to the graduating seniors from Pasco with the highest judges scores, instead of the usual one. The two talented seniors awarded this year were pianist Conway Theel, and vocalist Larkin Mainwaring. Then in May they will give another two \$1,000 scholarships to talented visual artists with their Nereim Fine Arts Awards. Our Masters of Ceremonies was Ben Alexander, whose banter tried to calm the nerves of the nervous parents.

This competition was the vision of a handful of people in 1983, led by Sally Blackwood, of a non-profit, volunteer group in order to promote performing and visual arts opportunities in this once rural and agricultural area. Spotlight on Talent has grown from 30 acts held at the county fair, to an \$18,000 event with two entertaining shows and professional judges, held at Wesley Chapel's stage-of-the-art Center for the Arts.

It was a very full day, showcasing the amazing talents of 120 young people. Hard work, discipline, great instruction and sacrificial parenting paid off with a demonstration of the wonderful and inspiring gifts that the performing and visual arts can be to our lives – fulfilling the vision that Sally Blackwood had in 1983.

Please put in as much as you can, and please call me if you need any other information.