



N F A A

NATIONAL FOUNDATION FOR ADVANCEMENT IN THE ARTS
INSPIRING YOUNG ARTISTS FOR AMERICA'S FUTURE

youngARTS™

Media Contacts:

Kate McPherson

305-377-1140 x 1203

kmcpherson@youngarts.org

NATION'S BEST YOUNG ARTISTS TO BE HONORED BY THE WHITE HOUSE!

20 youngARTS™ Finalists Named Presidential Scholars in the Arts, Winners to Perform at Prestigious Kennedy Center and Exhibit at Smithsonian American Art Museum

MIAMI (May 4, 2009) During difficult times it can be hard to find promising signs for our country's future. **National Foundation for Advancement in the Arts (NFAA)** however, has news to the contrary. Twenty of NFAA's youngARTS™ Finalists have just been named **Presidential Scholars in the Arts**, which offers great hope for the arts in America. After anxiously waiting for nearly three months to hear the results, these exceptionally talented students have officially been named Presidential Scholars in the Arts – the highest honor bestowed on the nation's graduating high school seniors – by U.S. Department of Education and The Commission on Presidential Scholars. Dedication and commitment to their academics, combined with brilliant artistic abilities has helped these twenty youngARTS Finalists prove that they are the top student artists in the nation, a truly extraordinary achievement. The newly named Presidential Scholars in the Arts will be honored in a highly anticipated **White House** ceremony in June where President Obama may be on hand to congratulate the Scholars and present them with their medallions. In addition, the artists will exhibit their artwork at the Smithsonian American Art Museum and perform at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts.

From Florida to Oregon and Minnesota to Mississippi, from the inner city to rural America, these 20 remarkable student artists represent 17 states and nine artistic disciplines including Cinematic Arts, Dance, Jazz, Photography, Music, Theater, Voice, Visual Arts and Writing. Each took their own unique path to receiving this honor but their dedication to academic and artistic excellence and a strong support system of family, teachers and friends is the common thread binding them together.



NATIONAL FOUNDATION FOR ADVANCEMENT IN THE ARTS
INSPIRING YOUNG ARTISTS FOR AMERICA'S FUTURE

youngARTS™

This outstanding achievement comes as a direct result of their participation in the prestigious youngARTS Week. NFAA, through its youngARTS Program, is the sole nominating agency for the division of the U.S. Department of Education and the Presidential Scholars in the Arts. Each year, NFAA begins with more than 6,000 applicants to its youngARTS Program and through a rigorous adjudication process nominates 60 youngARTS Finalists for consideration by the Commission on Presidential Scholars, from which 20 are ultimately named Presidential Scholars in the Arts.

"I am so proud of the 2009 Presidential Scholars in the Arts," Christina DePaul, NFAA President and CEO says. "Everything they have accomplished in such a short amount of time is truly remarkable, they are the best of the best and I am thrilled to see them get the recognition they deserve."

Being among the select few named as Presidential Scholar in the Arts helps to open many doors for these students. Doors that may not have been known to them were it not for their passion and dedication to the arts and their involvement in NFAA's youngARTS Program. In an era of shrinking budgets, the arts are often the first programs cut by local school districts, students and parents are often left without resources to develop these skills to their full potential.

Added DePaul, "We, as a nation, benefit from the progressive thinking of our artistic leaders. Whether our Presidential Scholars in the Arts choose to embark on a traditional career in the arts or choose something else entirely, the creative skills and innovative thinking that a lifetime spent in the arts fosters will be critical not only to their individual success but to that of our nation in the years to come."

The 2009 class of Presidential Scholars in the Arts joins an illustrious fraternity which includes Tony Award nominated dancer and choreographer Desmond Richardson, American Ballet Theatre Executive Director Rachel Moore, novelist and National Book Award Finalist Allegra Goodman, Grammy Award nominated violin soloist Jennifer Koh, OBIE Award-winning actress Donna Lynne Champlin and acclaimed visual artist Kevin Berlin.

Inclusion in the Presidential Scholars Program, now in its 45th year, is one of the highest honors bestowed upon graduating high school seniors. Each year 141 Scholars, including up to 20 Scholars in the Arts, are selected on the basis of superior academic and artistic achievements, leadership qualities, strong character and involvement in community and school activities. This year, over 3,000 students are eligible for the program's academic component, based on outstanding scores on the SAT or ACT exam. Of these, 121 will be selected as Presidential Scholars.

2009 Presidential Scholars in the Arts:

Holden M. Brown, Cinematic Arts, Mandeville, LA

Ernest F. Baker II, Dance, Opa-Locka, FL
Daniel Mitra, Dance, Woodstock Valley, CT



NATIONAL FOUNDATION FOR ADVANCEMENT IN THE ARTS
INSPIRING YOUNG ARTISTS FOR AMERICA'S FUTURE

youngARTS™

Kathryn L. Davis, Jazz, West Linn, OR

Andrea C. Jarrett, Music/Instrumental, Saline, MI
Leann N. Osterkamp, Music/Instrumental, Boulder, CO
Nathaniel P. West, Music/Instrumental, Columbus, OH
Allen Yueh, Music/Instrumental, Bridgewater, NJ

Joshua A. Arky, Voice, Brooklyn, NY
Julian A. Cook, Voice, Chicago, IL

Julia A. Kellman, Photography, Pacific Palisades, CA
Annie M. Wentzell, Photography, Ocean Springs, MS

Rachel A. Clausen, Theater, Moorehead, MN
Steven L. Johnson, Theater, Rockford, IL
Devyn A. Tyler, Theater, Pearland, TX

Priscilla S. Aleman, Visual Arts, Miami Lakes, FL
Peter C. Ferguson, Visual Arts, Fairfield, PA
Meagan C. Jenigen, Visual Arts, Richmond, VA

Celia D. Bell, Writing, Baltimore, MD
Maggie R. Millner, Writing, Cherry Valley, NY

For information about how to register for the 2010 NFAA youngARTS program, please call 1-800-970-ARTS (2787) or visit www.youngARTS.org.

###

About NFAA and youngARTS™:

youngARTS™, the core program of the National Foundation for Advancement in the Arts (NFAA), identifies the nation's most talented high school seniors and other 17 and 18-year olds in nine disciplines in the performing, literary and visual arts. Based on the belief that the arts can be sustained only if they are continually renewed and refreshed by the vigor and perspective of young artists, the program offers unique educational opportunities, scholarships and awards to exceptionally talented artists. Since 1981 NFAA has facilitated over \$80 million in college scholarships and gifted over \$6 million in awards. NFAA is the exclusive nominating agency to The Commission on Presidential Scholars in the Arts; a select few receive their awards at the White House each summer. Alumni include Broadway actors, award-winning playwrights, authors, musicians, vocalists and visual artists. Additionally, Educate America has designated NFAA as a "Best Charity in America." For more information, please visit www.youngARTS.org.

About Presidential Scholars: A complete list of 2009 Presidential Scholars will be available on the program's web page at <http://www.ed.gov/programs/psp/awards.html>



NATIONAL FOUNDATION FOR ADVANCEMENT IN THE ARTS
INSPIRING YOUNG ARTISTS FOR AMERICA'S FUTURE

youngARTS™

(case sensitive). News media without Internet access may call 202/401-1576 for a list of awardees by state. For more information about the student(s), contact the student(s) directly. The United States Presidential Scholars Program was established in 1964, by Executive Order of the President, to recognize and honor some of our Nation's most distinguished graduating high school seniors. In 1979, the Program was extended to recognize students who demonstrate exceptional talent in the visual, creative and performing arts. Each year, up to 141 students are named as Presidential Scholars, one of the Nation's highest honors for high school students. The Scholars represent excellence in education and the promise of greatness in young people. In honoring the Presidential Scholars, the President of the United States symbolically honors all graduating high school seniors of high potential.

About the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts

As the nation's performing arts center, the Kennedy Center's impact and responsibility extends far beyond its doors—it reaches across America and into the future. Nowhere is this goal more truly achieved than in the Center's education programs. For more than 35 years, the Kennedy Center Education Department has provided quality arts experiences for students, teachers, families, and the general public throughout the United States. In the past year, the Center's education programs have directly impacted more than 11 million people. The mission of the Education Department is to foster understanding of and participation in the performing arts through exemplary programs and performances for diverse populations of all ages that represent the unique cultural life and heritage of the United States. For more information, visit the Center's web site at www.kennedy-center.org/education.