



# SPOTLIGHT AWARDS

Nashville High School Musical Theatre Awards

## 2024-2025 Spotlight Awards – Nashville High School Musical Theatre Awards

---

# ADJUDICATION PARTICIPATION GUIDE

Tennessee Performing Arts Center  
505 Deaderick Street  
Nashville, TN 37243

[SpotlightAwardsNashville@gmail.com](mailto:SpotlightAwardsNashville@gmail.com)

Cassie LaFevor – [clafevor@tpac.org](mailto:clafevor@tpac.org)  
Treysia Jackson – [tjackson@tpac.org](mailto:tjackson@tpac.org)



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

---

|   |
|---|
| About the Spotlight Awards Program – Page 2                             |
| Spotlight Awards Program Values – Page 3                                |
| Program Components Overview – Page 4                                    |
| Registration Guidelines – School Adjudication – Page 5                  |
| How Does the Lottery Work? – Page 5                                     |
| Requirements – Adjudication Track – Page 6                              |
| Show Selection and Casting – Page 7                                     |
| Learning and Community Opportunities – Page 8                           |
| Required Events – Adjudication Track – Page 9                           |
| Required Submissions – Page 10-11                                       |
| Adjudication Overview – Page 12-13                                      |
| Awards Rubric Overview – Page 14  |
| Encouraging a Growth Mindset – Page 15                                  |
| Preparing Students to Receive Feedback – Page 16                        |
| Honors Awards – Adjudication Track – Page 17                            |
| Award Eligibility and Guidelines- Page 18-20                            |
| Teacher Nominated Awards (Optional) – Page 21-22                        |
| Director Selections – Page 22   |
| Eligibility and Requirements – Lead Performer Nominees – Page 23        |
| Optional Student Submissions – Scholarships – Page 24                   |
| Optional Student Submissions – Lead Performer Finalist/Winner – Page 25 |
| Other Student Opportunities – Page 25                                   |
| Spotlight Awards Ceremony at TPAC – Page 26                             |
| Performances During the Ceremony – Page 27                              |
| Spotlight Awards – Adjudication Track Checklist – Page 28               |
| Save the Date Calendar Listing – Page 29                                |

## ABOUT THE SPOTLIGHT AWARDS PROGRAM

---

The Spotlight Awards program is an arts education initiative of the Tennessee Performing Arts Center which celebrates, supports, and grows the artistry and diverse community of high school theatre programs in Tennessee while developing confidence, creativity, empathy, and collaboration among schools. The Spotlight Awards strives to embody a spirit of camaraderie, diversity and inclusion, celebration for the arts, and a growth mindset.

### Program Goals

- To grow and develop artists, theatre audiences, and arts advocates in Tennessee by building a diverse high school theatre community
- To strengthen our community by instilling values of diversity and inclusion, artistic excellence, creativity, a growth mindset, and collaboration in our participants
- To provide high quality, diverse educational experiences in dance, theatre, and music for students, directors, and school arts programs
- To celebrate, support, grow, and advocate for high school theatre education by recognizing excellence in area high school theatre productions
- To engage community members, schools, and families in an inclusive celebration of theatre

*Thank you to our sponsors Nissan North America – Official Education Partner, Vanderbilt University, Piedmont Natural Gas, and KraftCPAs.*

*Special thanks to our Founding Sponsor, Lipscomb University's College of Entertainment and the Arts.*

The Spotlight Awards program is Nashville's regional awards program affiliated with The National High School Musical Theatre Awards® (the Jimmy Awards®), presented by the Broadway League Foundation. The Jimmy Awards® are a national celebration of outstanding student achievement, recognizing individual artistry in vocal, dance, and acting performance and elevating the importance of theatre arts education in schools. For more information on the Jimmy Awards, visit [www.jimmyawards.com](http://www.jimmyawards.com).

## SPOTLIGHT AWARDS PROGRAM VALUES

---

### Community

*The Spotlight Community is a loving and safe place to learn about yourself and the arts industry we all love. We invite you to attend workshops, interact with us digitally, and find ways to engage with our community – it was created for you.*

*We know that the lure of competition may be hard to ignore, but the Spotlight Awards is designed to be **celebratory rather than competitive** in nature, and the awards are only a fraction of the program. We are an Awards Ceremony 1 day of the year, **but we are an Education and Community program every day of the year** focused on goals such as encouraging collaboration and creativity, strengthening our community, championing diversity and inclusion, celebrating and supporting arts education and achievements, and developing a growth mindset.*

### Growth

*Participating schools challenge themselves to **continually grow and create the best work** in their unique circumstances. **So celebrate your achievements, and the achievements of others, and find ways to continually learn and grow along the way.** Work hard, push yourself, challenge yourself, take a step out of your comfort zone - it's in these moments that growth happens.*

### Inclusion

***Our wish for each of our participants is that they see the light in this world, in themselves, and in others.** Everyone is unique and special, and it's those unique qualities in each of us that make the world so beautiful. Be the best possible version of yourself, and choose to find the good in everyone around you and to celebrate with them.*

### Creative Excellence

*The Spotlight Awards readily recognizes that artistic excellence provides new insights of the world around us, leading us to question and appreciate what we have never experienced. Excellence in the arts occurs when **an experience affects and changes us in novel ways, providing both fresh and relevant perspectives.** We celebrate the creativity and outstanding work happening in our high school arts programs.*

## SPOTLIGHT AWARDS PROGRAM COMPONENTS

---

### Learning Opportunities and Community Building

*We feel that bringing participants together for community events will strengthen everything about our program, the community, and the arts in Tennessee.*

All participants, regardless of their participation level, receive access to learning and community building opportunities offered throughout the year. Learning opportunities are designed to help students and directors hone their skills and advance their understanding of the craft. One of the goals of the Spotlight Awards program is to strengthen our community by instilling values of diversity and inclusion, artistic excellence, creativity, a growth mindset, and collaboration in our participants.

### Professional Review

- Schools participating in the Adjudication track and Show Review track will have a panel of arts professionals (adjudicators) attend their performance to provide written feedback. Teachers and students use these insights to make their next show even stronger. Schools participating year over year have seen dramatic transformations in skill, student enthusiasm, and community support.
- Students in all participation levels may request professional review for video auditions at any time during the year.

**Recognition opportunities and Scholarships** are provided in all participation levels.

#### Adjudication track

- The school year culminates in a professionally produced Awards Ceremony held in TPAC's Jackson Hall. The Spotlight Awards Ceremony is an inclusive community celebration of arts education that acknowledges outstanding achievement, growth, and artistry in high school musical theatre and provides an opportunity for students to share their art with each other.
- Over 30 awards are presented to schools and students in the Adjudication track. Scholarships are provided for Outstanding Musical and Outstanding Lead Performer award recipients. Additional scholarships may be provided including scholarships to summer theater camps or fellowships.
- Every school will have Lead Performer Nominees included in the Closing Number performance at the Awards Ceremony. Lead Performer Nominees will also attend the Lead Performer Intensive weekend, and those in grades 10-12 have the opportunity to submit an audition video to be considered as a Finalist and award Winner.

#### All Participation Tracks (Adjudication, Show Review and Community)

- Rising Star Scholarships will be awarded to students in 9<sup>th</sup> grade based on video audition submissions.
- Arts Leadership Scholarships will be awarded to graduating seniors who exhibit the highest level of excellence in their craft and embody the leadership skills in their school and community (based on student submissions and teacher recommendation).
- Student Designers' work will be presented at the annual Design Symposium in March 2025.

## REGISTRATION GUIDELINES – SCHOOL ADJUDICATION

---

**School Adjudication (\$350)** - Schools that participate in Adjudication will have artist adjudication for their musical, receive written feedback for their performance, and are eligible for award nominations at the Spotlight Awards Ceremony. (*Scholarship application - <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/ScholarSpot>*)

### Adjudication Participation Includes:

- Free attendance for all master classes, community events and invited dress rehearsals throughout the year (guaranteed at least 2 Community events and 1 In-school event).
- Free headshot opportunity.
- Adjudication of their school musical with written feedback provided.
- Inclusion in the Awards Nominations and Ceremony (Eligibility for over 30 awards, as well as students included in the Lead Performer Intensive weekend and performing in the closing number).
- 25 free seats to the Ceremony.
- Eligibility for students to apply for Rising Star and Arts Leadership Scholarships. Student Designers eligible to have their work displayed in the annual Design Symposium.

### **Registration will be open September 16-18.**

To register, a director of the high school production should submit the online application during this date range. Schools with complete applications by September 18 will be entered into a lottery to select participants for School Adjudication. Incomplete applications will not be placed in the lottery for selection.

### Applications must include the following information to be considered complete:

- Two adult contacts – 1) Show Director (must be full-time faculty member at the school)  
2) Administrative Contact (a second adult that will be in charge of all administrative communication related to Adjudication requirements) - This contact must have access to phone and email and be able to serve as a liaison between Spotlight and the director.
- Contact for who will need to sign the School Media Request (Principal, Director, PR Rep, etc.)
- Show title and proof of licensing request
- All performance dates and times, within the provided date range
- Confirmed availability to attend required events (Community Kickoff Celebration on January 25, Awards Ceremony on May 17 including sound checks if needed)
- Confirmed prerequisite attendance to Director event on September 7

## HOW DOES THE LOTTERY WORK

---

**At the end of the day on September 18 (applications must be completed by 11:59 PM), all completed applications will be collected and entered into a lottery process.**

### Lottery steps

- 1) From the full collection of school applications, 30 schools will be randomly selected.
- 2) At least 5 new schools are guaranteed; additional spots filled with a mix of new and returning schools.
- 3) After selecting 30 schools, if less than 5 of the selected schools are new schools, the remaining new school applications will be pulled for its own lottery to ensure at least 5 new schools. (If 5 or more new schools have already been selected, the selection will continue from the full collection of applications.)
- 4) Up to 36 schools total will be selected for Adjudication during the 2024-2025 school year.

Schools that apply for the Adjudication track and are not selected during the lottery process, will be notified by September 20 and will have the option to continue with the Show Review and Community tracks.

## SPOTLIGHT AWARDS – ADJUDICATION TRACK REQUIREMENTS

- Schools must be within 2 hours drive from TPAC (505 Deaderick Street, Nashville).
- High schools participating in the Adjudication track are required to select a musical included on The Jimmy Awards list of Qualifying Shows and is expected to follow the Show Selection and Casting guidelines provided. For a full listing of the Qualifying Shows, visit [www.jimmyawards.com](http://www.jimmyawards.com).
- Adjudication of musicals must take place between November 6, 2024, and April 12, 2025. Participation may be limited based on performances happening in High-Volume Weekends.
- Up to 10 tickets provided for Adjudicators and Spotlight Administration to your musical.
- Performances should be no more than 2 hours, 45 minutes in length, including intermission.
- All participants must be a registered high school/student located in Tennessee and may not participate in another Jimmy Awards regional awards program during the same school year.
- Show Director attended the Director Appreciation on September 7 as a prerequisite for participation.
- Registration fee of \$350 is due by September 30. Scholarships (partial or full) are available on request at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/ScholarSpot>.
- Additional submission requirements and event participation are **listed on pages 9-11**.

### Double Casting

Adjudication participation only accepts 1 musical submission per school, per year. If a school is presenting multiple shows during a school year or has multiple casts for the musical submitted, they will select which show/cast to submit for judging at the time of registration.

### Rights and Royalties

The Spotlight Awards program expects all participating schools to acquire the necessary rights and royalties for their musical during the school year. Spotlight Administration will request an extension to your contract from the licensing houses for the purposes of performance at the awards ceremony.

### Expectations

All participants are expected to respect the Spotlight Awards program, other Spotlight participants, and the Spotlight Awards goals throughout the year. Schools that do not demonstrate respect for the Spotlight Awards program, participants, and goals will not be accepted into the program the following year.

Additionally, schools are expected to complete all submissions and requirements of the program and to engage with the program throughout the year, whether it is through master class attendance or hosting an event at their school.

### Time Commitment

The Spotlight Awards administration knows that many hours of hard work go into preparing a high school musical theatre production. The program hopes to provide educational tools for growth and visibility for the work being produced. However, there will be some additional time commitment required of the directors/teachers in communicating pertinent information and attending required events. Additionally, if your show or students are selected to perform at the Awards Ceremony, it may require additional time committed to brushing-up, re-staging or performance rehearsals.

### Publicity

TPAC encourages high schools to announce their participation in the Spotlight Awards in school newspapers, websites, social media sites, newsletters and other materials produced by the school. Please tag @tennesseepac and @spotlightawards when posting rehearsal photos, show photos or updates about your production or program. Media interview or appearance requests regarding the Spotlight Awards Program are required to go through TPAC's Communications Department. Schools should not speak on behalf of the Spotlight Awards without contacting us first.

## SHOW SELECTION AND CASTING

### Show Choice/Casting and Scoring

Schools participating in Adjudication must select a production on The Jimmy Awards list of Qualifying Shows. School show selection and casting is solely up to the school's discretion. However, please note that show choice and casting are included in the scoring elements of Outstanding Direction's Overall Experience, which may affect the Outstanding Musical score for your school.

### Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

The Spotlight Awards is dedicated to celebrating, uplifting, and honoring the rich diversity of individuals across Tennessee. We strive to create an inclusive environment where every student, teacher, and adjudicator feels valued, appreciated, and empowered to express their authentic selves. Through ongoing dialogue and meaningful engagement with all communities, we are committed to amplifying a wide spectrum of voices, stories, and experiences, ensuring that everyone is seen, heard, and represented in this program. Our goal is to foster a space where every identity and background is recognized and celebrated.

### Show Choice

We acknowledge the educational value of using the classroom to explore a wide range of stories and experiences that expand students' worldviews. At the same time, we encourage schools to thoughtfully reflect on the diversity of their own communities and audiences when selecting shows and casting performances. With an abundance of musicals to choose from, directors are encouraged and expected to select works and make casting choices that authentically honor a variety of cultures, identities, and lived experiences, while ensuring that scripts and direction avoid perpetuating stereotypes or exclusionary narratives.

### Character Representation

When selecting a show, directors should thoughtfully consider the representation of characters in the story and how these portrayals will impact both students and the audience. It's important to choose shows that avoid objectifying women through text or costuming. Additionally, it is crucial to select shows that respect all individuals by avoiding objectification and stereotypes related to race, gender, sexual orientation, culture, identity, disability, or expression. This includes ensuring that the script and costuming do not perpetuate harmful or limiting portrayals. Directors should also ensure that all cast members, especially those from historically marginalized groups, are given the opportunity to play fully developed, authentic characters rather than being confined to one-dimensional or stereotypical roles. This approach fosters inclusivity and reflects the richness of diverse lived experiences.

### Color-Conscious Casting

A theatre that truly reflects the richness and diversity of American culture is one that resonates with everyone. We encourage the use of color-conscious casting, rather than color-blind casting. To be blind to someone's race, ethnicity, or identity is to overlook their unique experiences and contributions. Color-conscious casting embraces the differences we see and experience every day, asking how these differences can deepen and enrich the story being told, while fostering representation and authenticity on stage. This approach values each person's identity and the powerful perspectives they bring to their roles.

### Cultivating Inclusivity in your Theatre Program

- **Invite Diverse Voices:** Bring in guests from the community to enrich your classroom and rehearsal spaces with diverse perspectives. This allows for a broader representation of experiences and helps create a more inclusive environment.
- **Broad Representation in Your Program:** Ensure that diverse perspectives are reflected not only in the actors on stage but also in your designers and crew. Collaborate with other faculty members to engage participants from various clubs and subject areas, enriching your theater program with diverse talents and viewpoints.
- **Create an Inclusive Environment:** Foster an inviting and inclusive space in your classroom and theater. When everyone feels welcomed, valued, and respected, it enhances the growth and success of your program.
- **Evaluate Relevance of Character Race:** As a director, consider whether the race or identity of characters is central to the story and consult the script for relevant information. This will guide your casting decisions and ensure thoughtful, informed choices. Research and understand the issues presented in the show to create a more inclusive and positive environment.
- **Adapt Scripts Thoughtfully:** Collaborate with licensing companies to modify any problematic lines or songs in your script. Many shows offer options for updating outdated or insensitive content. Small adjustments can make a significant impact in creating a more respectful and inclusive production.

*We want the actors onstage to reflect the mosaic of the world around us. We want young people to see people who look like them onstage and think, 'Wow, there might be a job for me, I can do this too.'*  
- Tara Rubin, founder of Tara Rubin Casting



## LEARNING AND COMMUNITY OPPORTUNITIES

The Spotlight Awards presents various opportunities throughout the year just for arts teachers and students. We separate our events into 2 main categories:

- **Community Events** – These events allow participants to not only learn about the theatre industry, but also to interact with fellow arts-loving people from other schools. Throughout the year, the Spotlight Awards program presents events such as master classes, invited dress rehearsals or other events designed to bring different schools together.
- **In-School Events** – This may include a classroom workshop, rehearsal visit, invited audition panelist, hosting an event in your space or virtual Q&A in your class from TPAC staff. These events allow Spotlight administration to interact directly with teachers and students.

**A few of our annual Community Event offerings include:**

### **Director Peer Review**

The Director Peer Review program is a pathway for schools to invite another school's director to attend a rehearsal and give feedback. Visiting directors serve as another set of eyes to affirm what is working, make suggestions for improvement, etc. Requests for a peer review, scheduling and other details will be worked out between the participating directors and not through the Spotlight Awards administration.

### **School Ticket Exchange**

The ticket exchange program encourages students and teachers to see other productions and to lend support to their peers. Directors who indicate interest in the ticket exchange will receive a list of other participating schools' production dates and contact information via email. Reservations will be made between schools and not through the Spotlight Awards administration.

### **Social Media Account - @SpotlightAwards Instagram page**

The Spotlight Awards program encourages all teachers and students to join our community on instagram (@SpotlightAwards) to get all updates and added events throughout the year. Please like our page, and feel free to send us any ideas for what content you would like to see included. *(Schools will also have the opportunity to do a "Takeover" of our account to share about their theater program. Schools opting in to this will need to participate in a short online training.)*

### **Spotlight Society (Student Alumni Association)**

Spotlight students are invited to join our Alumni Group after they graduate to continue engaging with our program and the arts community. Spotlight Society members will enjoy many of the perks of participating schools, including discounts to performances and invitations to Master Classes. Additionally, special events will be created specifically for our Alumni during the year as well, including a Reunion event every May.

## REQUIRED EVENTS – ADJUDICATION TRACK

The Adjudication Track participation includes 5 required events – Director Appreciation, Community Kickoff Celebration, Awards Ceremony, 1 in-school event, and 1 additional community event.

### **Director Appreciation Event – September 7, 2024**

Any school theater director interested in participating with the Spotlight Awards and/or TPAC Education this year are invited to attend an event created to celebrate them! Held on TPAC's Jackson Hall stage, this event will provide lots of fun, food, prizes and giveaways - with a little bit of business sprinkled in. *Directors applying for Adjudication are required to attend this event as a prerequisite to registration. Directors that do not attend this prerequisite event are ineligible to participate in the Spotlight Awards adjudication track.*

### **“Road to the Ceremony” - Community Kickoff Celebration – January 25, 2025**

Participating Schools will join us for a celebration to kick off the road to the ceremony! Participants will celebrate the new year, participate in fun workshops and games, get free headshots, and interact with other schools. *Schools participating in the Adjudication track are required to participate in this event.*

### **Spotlight Awards Ceremony**

The Spotlight Awards Ceremony is an inclusive community celebration of arts education that acknowledges outstanding achievement, growth, and artistry in high school musical theatre and provides an opportunity for students to share their art with each other. The Spotlight Awards Ceremony will take place May 17, 2025, 7:00-10:00 pm in TPAC's Jackson Hall (505 Deaderick Street, Nashville). Participating schools arrive by 5:45 to be seated and get information about the evening.

### **Learning and Community Events**

Schools participating in the Adjudication track are required to participate in 2 community events (including the Kickoff Celebration) and 1 in-school event.

- **Community Events** – These events allow participants to not only learn about the theatre industry, but also to interact with fellow arts-loving people from other schools. Throughout the year, the Spotlight Awards program presents events such as master classes, invited dress rehearsals or other events designed to bring different schools together.
- **In-School Events** – This may include a classroom workshop, rehearsal visit, invited audition panelist, hosting an event in your space or virtual Q&A in your class from TPAC staff. These events allow Spotlight administration to interact directly with teachers and students.

## REQUIRED SUBMISSIONS

### Licensing Information

All schools are expected to acquire the necessary rights and royalties for their musical during the school year. Participating schools are required to share proof of licensing request at the time of registration. A copy of the full agreement is due by January 15, 2025.

### Media Releases – School and Individual

During the year, Spotlight Awards administrators may photograph/video students, faculty, and others involved with your production or attending events. Please be aware that participation in this program gives full rights and permissions to the Spotlight Awards and Tennessee Performing Arts Center for the use of such video and photos.

- **School Release** - Each participating school is required to submit a school media release to TPAC by September 30, 2024. Media Releases will be digitally signed through DocuSign by a Theatre Director or Administrator at the participating school.
- **Individual Release** - Individual media releases (one release form for every individual involved with your show) are required for anyone who may be in your photographs or on stage for the ceremony. Schools are required to submit a list of all individuals participating in their show, including email addresses for signees. Releases will then be digitally signed using DocuSign. Schools will submit this information as soon as their musical is cast using a provided template.

### Production Detail Form

2 weeks prior to their show opening, schools submit this form to be shared with adjudicators attending their show. This form provides detailed show information such as eligibility for awards, show title, etc., as well as supplementary information on your production such as resources available, director's notes, and rationale of artistic choices. Submit form online here – <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/ProdDetail25>

### Show Program Submission

Each school must submit their show program by the opening night of their performance. It is strongly encouraged that show programs **include headshots of actors to assist in nominations**. Programs are used to verify titles, spelling, names, etc., so inform Spotlight Administration immediately if anything on your program is incorrect.

#### How to submit:

1. Submit a digital copy to Spotlight Administration in a PDF format and include any notes on pronunciation or spelling that the Spotlight Awards administrators may need. **\*\*A link to a digital playbill does not meet this requirement. Please print a PDF version of the pages to submit digitally.**
2. For adjudicators, please ensure that a printed hard copy is available with their tickets when they attend the performance. **\*\*If you use a digital playbill, directors should print a hard copy of program pages for each adjudicator to pick up with each set of tickets.**

### Participation Statement Graphic for Programs

Schools are required to include the Participation Statement Graphic in their performance program to highlight their participation in the Spotlight Awards program. A copy of the graphic will be provided digitally to directors. Please ensure that you are using the **current year's graphic** when creating your program.

This production is part of the Spotlight Awards presented by Tennessee Performing Arts Center. The Spotlight Awards program is an arts education initiative which celebrates, supports, and grows the artistry and diverse community of high school theatre programs in Tennessee while developing confidence, creativity, empathy, and collaboration among schools. The Spotlight Awards strives to embody a spirit of camaraderie, diversity, and inclusion, celebration for the arts, and growth mindset.



*Example graphic only – Please use the digital file provided to you.*

## REQUIRED SUBMISSIONS (CONT.)

### Ceremony Information Form

As the ceremony nears, additional information will be required such as attendance count, transportation, arrival, etc. This form is due by May 1 - <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/CeremonyInfo25>

### Performance Photos

Schools should submit up to 6 production photos – images should show any standout design elements of the production (such as special lighting, costume or set pieces, especially student designed/created items), as well as production images highlighting your students that represent the overall feel of the performance.

Photos must be received no later than March 31, no exceptions. Photos should be in a .jpg format, horizontal, at least 300 dpi (preferable 600 dpi). Submitted photos may be used during Spotlight events, by panelists when selecting nominees, and during the Awards Ceremony.

- **Submit Photos by using this request link - <https://www.dropbox.com/request/5e4xE19nioDhmjNJaB7i>**
- To submit your photos, you will need to title the files PRIOR to uploading to this link. Please label all files with School Name and what file you are uploading (Ex. Production Photo 1; Student Lighting Design Image, etc.). Once your files have been titled correctly, use the dropbox link to upload directly to Spotlight Administration.

### Performance Information Form

Performance Information Form will be submitted by any individual or school group that will be performing at the Ceremony, including the School Nominees for Outstanding Musical, Crowd Pleaser Pairings, and by each of the Outstanding Lead Finalists individually. This form is due by May 1, and should be submitted using the online form - <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/Perform25>

### Tracks for School Performances

Schools that are performing during the Spotlight Awards Ceremony in May will submit tracks by May 1.

- **Submit Tracks by using this request link - <https://www.dropbox.com/request/5e4xE19nioDhmjNJaB7i>**
- To submit tracks, you will need to title the files PRIOR to uploading to this link. Please label all files with School Name, Show Name, Song Title. Once your files have been titled correctly, use the dropbox link to upload directly to Spotlight Administration.

### Spotlight Awards Instagram Page Takeover

Participation in a takeover is optional, but those who opt to participate are required to complete a brief video training prior to their takeover dates.

***\*Failure to submit all required items may result in disqualification from nominations.***

## ADJUDICATION OVERVIEW

Adjudicators will evaluate each school independently based on how well a school is meeting or exceeding their own potential with their unique resources and challenges, regardless of budget or size of the production. Different teams of adjudicators attend each production, however, to ensure consistency at least one Lead Adjudicator will attend each school's performance. Adjudicators are asked to provide valuable feedback, **not in comparison**, but rather in the hopes of celebrating the achievements of each production and offering insights for strengthening future shows.

### Community not competition

The Spotlight Awards is designed to be celebratory rather than competitive in nature. Participating schools are not directly competing against each other, but rather challenging themselves to continually grow and create the best possible work they can in their unique circumstances regardless of budget or size of the production. The Spotlight Awards strives to embody a spirit of camaraderie, diversity and inclusion, celebration for the arts, and a growth mindset.

### About our Adjudicators

Spotlight Administration conducts an open application period, pre-screening, demo adjudication review, and holds a Spotlight-specific training every year for all adjudicators. Our adjudicators have substantial education, experience, and passion for the performing arts. The Spotlight Awards administration makes every effort to send adjudicators skilled in various areas of theatre production to each school and to rotate the pool so that the same adjudicators do not attend shows at the same school in consecutive years. To ensure consistency across the process, at least one Lead Adjudicator will attend each school's performance.

Spotlight Awards Adjudicators will have:

- Demonstrated experience in or knowledge of musical theatre;
- And/or a degree in a relevant field (music, theatre, dance, etc.);
- And/or extensive work experience in one of those disciplines on a professional or academic basis;
- And/or are professional artists or educators with knowledge of the American musical theatre canon.

### Conflict of Interest

Adjudicators and/or School Directors are required to alert the Spotlight Awards administrators immediately if there is a conflict of interest with a participating school. Adjudicators having a relationship, either professional or personal, with a particular school are not assigned to evaluate that school's production.

### Anonymity

The Spotlight Awards strongly recommend schools allow the adjudicators to attend performances anonymously, so they can fairly evaluate the production without lobbying from cast members' families and friends or other school representatives. Adjudicators should not receive preferential seating, treatment or gifts of any kind. Schools may be disqualified for providing special treatment.

### Questions for the Director

After the show closes, adjudicators may have questions. If so, you will hear from Spotlight administration with those questions. Please answer them as quickly as possible so that ballots and feedback can be completed. Adjudicators will NOT stay after the performance to speak to school representatives.

### Headshots Requested

Please include student headshots (with their name and role listed) in the program or in the lobby to help with nominations. Having this element will allow more of your students the chance for nominations, especially those in ensemble roles that may be more difficult to identify from a cast list alone.

### Performance Tickets

Up to 10 complimentary tickets should be placed at will call for Opening Night of your performance. These tickets will be used by adjudicators, Spotlight Awards administrators, and their guests. Please remember to respect the anonymity of the adjudicators. Do not provide preferential treatment (*i.e., if your seating is General Admission, do not save seats*). Seating on aisles or towards the rear of the theatre is preferred.

Tickets should be listed under the name Jimmy Ward and separated into groupings of 2. Each set of 2 tickets should have at least 1 printed program included with it for adjudicators to pick up.

### Opening Night Adjudication

Every effort is made to send all adjudicators to the same performance – Opening Night of your show. This guideline is set for several reasons –

1. Nothing beats the energy of Opening Night, and adjudicator scores reflect this positively.
2. Sending all adjudicators to the same show allows scoring to be based on the same experience instead of varying based on incidents on different nights.
3. Student health and voices are still at their best at Opening. By the end of a show run, student voices start to strain affecting their scores. Additionally, understudies may be performing by the end of a run due to vocal strain or illness, which greatly affects scoring and nomination eligibility.

If adjudicators cannot be scheduled for Opening Night, we will let you know as soon as possible. During High-Volume show weekends in March and April, it is likely that several schools will have a mix of attendance dates.

### Written Feedback

Each adjudicator is asked to focus their feedback in a positive way, with the goal of encouraging and growing the arts in our community in mind. Adjudicator feedback is meant to serve as an educational tool, for teachers and students to use these insights to make their next show even stronger.

The ballot includes two parts, a scoring sheet and written feedback. The scoring sheet is an internal form. We do not share scores with schools or nominees, just as the Tony Awards do not share the numbers of votes each nominee gets. It is up to the discretion of the director to share any or all feedback with their students.

Adjudication feedback is at the discretion of the Spotlight Awards administration, which reserves the right to amend rules as necessary to maintain a fair process.

*Adjudicators have up to 1 week to submit ballots to the Spotlight administrators. Every effort will be made for schools to receive their feedback within 2 weeks of their performance close.*

### Confidentiality

Adjudicator feedback is submitted through a secure online form. Adjudicators will not provide oral critiques following the performance, nor should teachers or students expect to speak to the adjudicators at all.

Adjudicators are not allowed to discuss the results, evaluations, scores, or feedback with anyone other than Spotlight Awards administrators in any format. This includes, but is not limited to: faculty, staff and students from a participating high school, other adjudicators, colleagues, social media networks, etc.

### Determining Nominees

To determine nominations and recipients of each award, the nominee selection panel considers a variety of factors, and looks at all eligible candidates with a fresh perspective by thoroughly reviewing the Adjudicator feedback, scoring, photos, and mandatory support material. All decisions of The Spotlight Awards administrators and nominee selection panel are final.

**All questions or comments about adjudication should be directed to Spotlight Awards administration – not to adjudicators.**

## AWARDS RUBRIC OVERVIEW

### In the theater, we tell stories.

The Spotlight Awards adjudicators review the storytelling abilities put to work in each production. We are looking for an authentic tale well told, by your production team, ensemble, and individual performers.

We want to see how well you use the elements of theatre to tell the story you have chosen:

- ✓ How well does your company understand the story they are telling? How clearly do they relate that story and its themes to the audience?
- ✓ How passionately do your actors embody their characters and express their journey through this story?
- ✓ How do your actors use the performance skills of musical theatre (singing, dancing, and acting) to enhance the story?
- ✓ How collaborative was your company in presenting a unified concept for the audience to engage with?
- ✓ How did you showcase the unique talents and resources of your school and cast to advance the story and concept you created?
- ✓ How creatively did your company transfer the story from page to the stage?
- ✓ How does your storytelling create a memorable experience, emotion and change in your audience?

### Adjudicator Rubric Scoring

Each award category available for adjudication has a rubric with detailed descriptions of the scoring. An overarching look at the scoring guidelines is below.

| DEVELOPING (1-4)  | PROFICIENT (5-9)   |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presented the story practically, so that the events logically transpired but without impact to the characters. At times the effort to improve skills supersedes the story.</li> <li>• All technical elements served the basic requirements outlined in the script, but there is no evidence of collaboration with other areas to present a unified concept.</li> <li>• The musical selection was not appropriate, included harmful content or stereotypes, or did not showcase the school/cast talents and resources and produced few engaging moments.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Created a layered story with clear, evolving characters through a practical approach with moments of creativity evident.</li> <li>• An attempt was made to present a unified concept with input from all technical and performance components.</li> <li>• The musical selection rarely showcased the school/cast's diverse talents and resources, producing some interesting and engaging moments with some obvious missed opportunities.</li> </ul>  |
| SKILLED (10-15)   | ADVANCED (16-20)   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strong storytelling with solid, believable characters and a creative approach.</li> <li>• A clear vision of the concept for the production was carried out with some evidence of creative collaborations from technical and performance areas.</li> <li>• The musical selection was appropriate and showcased some of the diverse talents of the school's performers and technicians, producing mostly strong elements of musical theater.</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Masterful storytelling with authentic, emotion-driven characters and a meaningful, memorable, and unique approach.</li> <li>• A clear, focused vision of the concept for the production was fully integrated with creative collaboration from each technical and performance area to ensure design consistency and advance nuanced themes.</li> <li>• The musical selection was appropriate and showcased the diverse talents of the school's performers and technicians, producing elements of quality musical theater.</li> </ul> |

## ENCOURAGING A GROWTH MINDSET

Feedback can be daunting, especially for young performers just starting their journey to the stage. The Spotlight Awards encourages the development of a growth mindset, helping participants to recognize feedback as an opportunity to hone their ever-evolving skill sets.

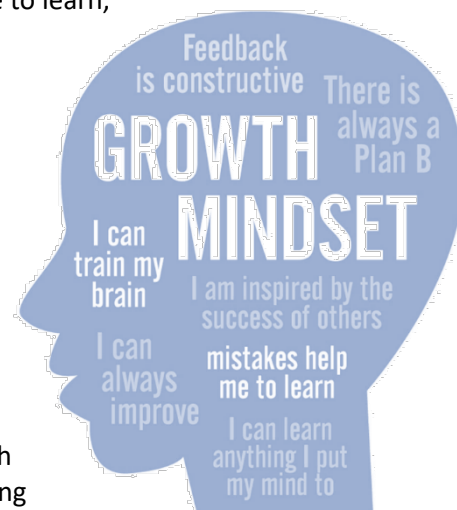
### What is a growth mindset?

- The belief that success comes from ongoing personal development, and your skills and abilities can grow through effort, learning and practice.
- A focus on development in setbacks - You bounce back, pick yourself up, and try again. A growth mindset embraces challenges and views failure not as evidence of limitations, but as a springboard for growth.
- Focus on continuously improving your skills and abilities, rather than “winning”.
- Open to constructive criticism, realizing it creates growth and the chance to learn, improve and develop skills.

### Strategies for Fostering a Growth Mindset in the Classroom

Helping students develop a growth mindset requires deliberate effort from teachers, but many of the methods can be easily integrated into existing practices.

- Normalize struggle and provide challenges. Struggle is part of the learning process and emphasizing and reinforcing that idea helps students react positively when they feel challenged. Part of developing a growth mindset is teaching students to overcome obstacles.
- Embrace the word “yet”. If someone makes the statement “I’m not a math person,” adding a simple qualifier will signal that a process exists for gaining ability. “You’re not a math person yet.”
- Demonstrate mistakes and celebrate corrections. Mistakes should be viewed as learning opportunities. Teachers can model this outlook in reactions to their own mistakes and steps they take to correct a mistake.
- Reward improvement rather than results. When praising someone for a job well done, highlight the **journey** they took rather than an end product. When we recognize the effort and persistence behind a good result, rather than attributing it to innate qualities, our feedback is more meaningful, and encourages the recipient to revisit those positive behaviors when faced with their next challenge.
- Set goals. Helping students set incremental, achievable goals demonstrates the attainability of growth and progress.
- Develop cooperative exercises. Working together to solve problems emphasizes process and reinforces the importance of getting help and finding solutions. It also deemphasizes individual outcomes.
- Don’t oversimplify. “You can do anything!” may feel like harmless encouragement, but if students aren’t put in a position to overcome challenges, they’ll conclude that such statements are empty, and the feedback will lose credibility.
- Celebrate growth. This reinforces the emphasis on effort and process. It also provides opportunities to share valuable learnings.





## PREPARING STUDENTS TO RECEIVE FEEDBACK

Giving and receiving feedback are skills that take practice. When giving feedback, students may worry that they will hurt their peers, or may simply state if they liked something instead of providing useful feedback. When receiving feedback, students may misinterpret or internalize it and think they're being criticized rather than viewing it as an opportunity to learn and grow. How can you help prepare your students to give and accept feedback to improve and develop skills, as well as gain resilience and confidence?

### Feedback is not the same as criticism.

This is difficult for many students to grasp. Feedback is not a personal attack or inherently negative; in fact, it can include praise and compliments as well as advice, suggestions, and observations. There is a difference between feedback (which can be positive or negative but is meant to help students improve) and criticism (which is generally negative). **Receiving feedback does not mean that the student is a bad actor/writer/student/person – it means someone sees potential for improvement and cares enough to help them grow.**

- **Activity to try:** As a class, brainstorm examples of feedback they've experienced in the past that they thought were criticisms or that they took personally. Then examine each piece of feedback and rewrite it to demonstrate how students can frame the comment in a way that helps them improve rather than as a personal attack. For example: "I couldn't understand what you were saying during your monologue" doesn't mean "I'm a terrible actor who nobody can understand." A student can turn that into "Next time I will slow down and enunciate more clearly."

### Feedback is necessary for improvement.

Without feedback, students won't know how they are progressing or what they can do to improve in the future. Emphasize to students that they will receive feedback for the rest of their lives, particularly when they enter the workforce. Remind students that every job in existence (performing arts-related or otherwise) comes with feedback in various forms, such as auditioning for roles, applying for positions and/or promotions, receiving client testimonials, and getting performance reviews. Accepting feedback gracefully and being able to apply it and move forward are necessary parts of students' growth and development.

- **Activity to try:** Divide students into pairs to prepare a brief scene – improvisation, mime, tableau, or a scripted short scene. After rehearsal time, combine two pairs together to perform for each other. Ask each group to prepare 2 pieces of feedback, one to give verbally and one to give as written feedback.

---

*We as educators must take seriously our responsibility to create growth-mindset-friendly environments – where kids feel safe from judgement, where they understand that we believe in their potential to grow, and where they know that we are totally dedicated to collaborating with them on their learning. We are in the business of helping kids thrive, not finding reasons why they can't. – Carol Dweck*

---

### Help your students develop self-awareness.

Most students are aware of their efforts and when asked, will give a fairly honest assessment of their work. Asking students during rehearsals how they thought a run-through went often brings out responses that are on point for what needs to be fixed or adjusted. In a classroom setting, this can be applied to how an exercise went and could be done together as a class or individually as an exit slip or reflection.

- **Activity to try:** Ask students how they think they did. Was the run-through ready for an audience? How could they improve next time? What do you think the group needs to do to make this sequence better?

*Content on this page adapted from Theatrefolk.com's blog Giving and Receiving Feedback by Kerry Hishon*

## HONORS AWARDED – ADJUDICATION PARTICIPATION TRACK

Based on adjudicator feedback, panel selections and/or teacher nominations, schools and individuals will be nominated in specific categories to be recognized at the Spotlight Awards Ceremony at TPAC on Saturday, May 17, 2025. Participation in the Spotlight Awards program does not guarantee nominations or awards.

### Award Categories for 2024-2025 (Details for each award on following pages):

#### School Production and Design Awards

- Outstanding Cast Vocals
- Outstanding Orchestra
- Outstanding Small Ensemble
- Outstanding Large Ensemble
- Outstanding Costume Design
- Outstanding Hair and Makeup Design
- Outstanding Lighting Design
- Outstanding Set Design
- Outstanding Sound Operation
- Outstanding Design Concept
- Outstanding Choreography
- Outstanding Music Direction
- Outstanding Direction
- Outstanding Musical \*

#### Outstanding Lead Performers\*\*

- 1 student nominated by director
- Additional judge selections possible
- *Finalists and Winners chosen from separate audition submissions*

#### Individual Student Awards

- Outstanding Dancer
- Outstanding Vocalist
- Outstanding Ensemble Performer
- Outstanding Supporting Role Performer
- Outstanding Comedic Performer
- Outstanding Dramatic Performer
- Outstanding Solo Performance
- Outstanding Scene Partner

#### Teacher Nominated Awards

- Outstanding Community Engagement
- Outstanding Technical Achievement
- Outstanding Stage Manager
- Outstanding Student Designer
- Founder's Award
- All-Star Cast
- All-Star Crew

\* 10 Nominees for Outstanding Musical are invited to perform at the Spotlight Awards Ceremony.

\*\* All Outstanding Lead Performer Nominees are invited to perform the Closing Number at the Ceremony.

*Outstanding Lead Finalists selected by judging panel will perform solos at the Spotlight Awards Ceremony.*

#### Award Nomination Selection

Nominees for all awards will be announced on April 17, 2025. Eligibility for awards is at the discretion of the Spotlight Awards administration, which reserves the right to amend rules, overrule adjudicators, or select additional nominees as necessary to maintain a fair process.

#### Special Recognition Awards

The Spotlight Awards is a non-competitive program and wishes to honor the schools for their work to the highest degree. Because of this, there is the possibility that a school could receive an honor not listed. For example, if a Spotlight adjudicator finds a particular element of the production was outstanding or worthy of honorable mention, an award may be created specifically for that school. Some examples could include Fly Crew, Program Art Design, Props Team, or Front of House Crew.

#### Other Recognition Opportunities and Scholarships

Separate application information will be provided for other opportunities such as Rising Star Scholarships (awarded to students in 9<sup>th</sup> grade based on video audition submissions), Arts Leadership Scholarships (awarded to graduating seniors who exhibit the highest level of excellence in their craft and embody the leadership skills in their school and community), and the annual Design Symposium (student designer public gallery).

## ELIGIBILITY GUIDELINES – SCHOOL PRODUCTION AND DESIGN AWARDS

*Outstanding Cast Vocals, Outstanding Orchestra, Outstanding Small Ensemble, Outstanding Large Ensemble, Outstanding Costume Design, Outstanding Hair and Makeup Design, Outstanding Lighting Design, Outstanding Set Design, Outstanding Sound Operation, Outstanding Design Concept, Outstanding Choreography, Outstanding Music Direction, Outstanding Direction, and Outstanding Musical*

- We encourage participating schools to use readily available school resources, faculty, and students. (Faculty is defined as any full-time or part-time staff member at the school who is paid by the school district on an annual basis. One who is hired or volunteers to work on select productions or who is paid by the school in another manner, does not qualify as faculty.)
- The use of a professional/guest/parent artist will disqualify the school from that category.
- Most school award scores are a combination of design/storytelling interpretation added to execution of the element for a total score. Execution refers to the effectiveness of the design to the overall story and performance needs.

### **Outstanding Cast Vocals**

All schools are eligible for this award. Scoring is based on the combination of musical technique with storytelling interpretation and emotional understanding.

### **Outstanding Orchestra**

The orchestra must consist of at least 75% students and/or faculty. Schools using more than 25% professional/guest/parent musicians are not eligible. Schools using tracks are not eligible.

### **Outstanding Sound Operation**

Schools are eligible for this award if the design AND execution during the show are done by students or faculty. Schools using a professional/guest/parent in these roles are not eligible. Scoring is based on balancing all levels and implementing cues smoothly.

### **Outstanding Small Ensemble / Outstanding Large Ensemble**

All schools are eligible for an Ensemble Award. Scoring is based on the full ensemble working as a cohesive group and used creatively to drive the story while actively engaging each individual character in the performance. Casts of less than 35 performers are eligible for Small Ensemble nominations, while casts of 35 or more are eligible for Large Ensemble nominations.

### **Outstanding Costume Design**

Schools are eligible for this award if the design is created by students or faculty. Schools using a professional/guest/parent designer are not eligible. Volunteers may help with construction/build of costumes, as long as the design is created by students or faculty. Schools which recreate a Broadway designed show are not eligible for this award and should credit the original designer.

- Includes all costumes, hats, and accessories. (Wigs are included in Hair and Makeup Design.)
- At least 60% of the costumes must be newly designed/created or changed from previous use versus pulled from stock/rented. Schools that rent, purchase as final product, or borrow more than 40% of costumes are not eligible.
- Scores are a combination score of design/storytelling added to execution of the element for a total score. For this award, execution refers to the effectiveness of the design to the overall story and performance needs, and not to the quality of the costume construction.

## ELIGIBILITY GUIDELINES – SCHOOL AWARDS (CONTINUED)

### Outstanding Lighting Design

Schools are eligible for this award if the design is created by students or faculty. Schools using a professional/guest/parent designer are not eligible. Volunteers may help run the lighting board during the show as long as the design is created by students or faculty.

### Outstanding Choreography

Choreography must be created by students and/or faculty at the school. Schools using a professional/guest/parent choreographer are not eligible. Schools which recreate Broadway (or other) choreography for their show are not eligible for this award and should credit the original choreographer.

- Scores are a combination score of design/storytelling interpretation added to execution of the element for a total score. Execution refers to the effectiveness of the choreography to the overall story and performance needs, and appropriate movement based on student ability.

### Outstanding Hair and Makeup Design

Schools are eligible for this award if the design is created by students or faculty. Schools using a professional/guest/parent designer are not eligible. Volunteers may help apply the designs during the show as long as the design is created by students or faculty. Schools which recreate a Broadway (or other) designed show are not eligible for this award and should credit the original artist.

- Includes makeup, facial hair, hair, and wigs. (Hats and accessories are included in Costume Design.)
- Scores are a combination score of design/storytelling added to execution of the element for a total score. Execution refers to the effectiveness of the design to the overall story and performance needs. Problems with application may be mentioned in written feedback but will not affect the design score.

### Outstanding Set Design

Schools are eligible for this award if the design is created by students or faculty. Schools using a professional/guest/parent designer are not eligible. Volunteers may help with set construction long as the design is created by students or faculty. Schools which recreate a Broadway (or other) designed show are not eligible for this award and should credit the original designer.

- At least 60% of the set must be new or changed from previous use. Schools that rent, purchase as final product, or borrow more than 40% of their scenery are not eligible.
- Currently we do not have a separate award for Props, and they are included in scoring for Set Design.
- All School award scores are a combination score of design/storytelling interpretation added to execution of the element for a total score. Execution refers to the effectiveness of the design to the overall story and performance needs, not to the quality of the actual construction.

### Outstanding Design Concept

Schools are eligible for this award if the design is created by students or faculty. Schools using a professional/guest/parent designer are not eligible. Volunteers may help apply the designs during the show as long as the design is created by students or faculty. Schools which recreate a Broadway (or other) designed show are not eligible for this award and should credit the original artist.

### Outstanding Music Direction

Schools using live music accompaniment or tracks are both eligible for this award. Schools using a professional/guest/parent musical director are not eligible.

## ELIGIBILITY GUIDELINES – SCHOOL AWARDS (CONTINUED)

---

### Outstanding Direction

This category includes combined scores for Direction Concept and Creativity, Staging & Movement, Pacing & Preparedness, Character Coaching/Ensemble Work, and Overall Experience. Schools using a professional/guest/parent director are not eligible. If faculty are part of a directing team, all members of the directing team must be made of students or faculty to be eligible for this award.

### Outstanding Musical

This category combines scores from several award categories (Outstanding Direction, Outstanding Cast Vocals, Outstanding Ensemble, and Outstanding Design Concept) as an indicator, but final decisions are made by the nominee panel. **Schools that are ineligible for any of the included award categories will not be eligible for Outstanding Musical nominations.** *Spotlight is a non-competitive program, and schools are not compared against each other during adjudication. The 10 nominees for Outstanding Musical are not titled, or considered to be, the “Top 10”. Nominations will include top scoring schools as well as Judge’s Choice selections.*

## ELIGIBILITY AND REQUIREMENTS – INDIVIDUAL STUDENT AWARDS

---

*Outstanding Vocalist, Outstanding Dancer, Outstanding Ensemble Performer, Outstanding Supporting Role Performer, Outstanding Comedic Performer, Outstanding Dramatic Performer, Outstanding Solo Performance, Outstanding Scene Partner*

- Eligible performers must be registered in grades 9-12. Roles performed by a professional/guest performer, faculty members and K-8 students are not eligible for award nominations, but do not affect the overall eligibility for the musical.
- Schools are permitted to present a co-production, share performers with another school, or cast homeschool students. However, students may only be nominated for their role in one musical.
- If a school has multiple casts performing the musical, the school must select one cast to be adjudicated and eligible for awards.

### Role Category Notes

- **Lead Roles** include at least one solo song, appearances in more than one scene with spoken dialogue, and appear in both or all acts. Additionally, Lead Roles that are on the Jimmy Awards list of Qualifying Roles will be scored in the Outstanding Lead Performer category.
- **Supporting Roles** are scripted, named characters with either spoken or sung dialogue which help drive the action of the play forward.
- **Ensemble Roles** are named or unnamed characters with less than 5 lines of spoken or sung dialogue.

### Individual Nomination for Awards

The Individual Student Awards will have 10-12 nominees and 2 award winners. While adjudicators will attempt to maintain an equal mix of gender identities in their nominations, it is not a required limitation to their selections.

## OPTIONAL TEACHER NOMINATED AWARDS

---

Any Teacher Nominations for awards requiring additional submissions are due by March 31. Submissions will be reviewed by the nominee selection panel, and nominees will be identified for each award category on April 17, 2025, during the Nominee Announcement.

### Outstanding Technical Achievement

This award is intended to recognize a high school student who has given their time and talent in a backstage capacity (i.e., deck/set crew, board operator, dresser) for their current year's musical. To recommend a student for this award, teachers should submit a Letter of Nomination discussing the student's contribution to the production and to the school's musical theatre program overall.

Teacher Letter of Nomination should include:

- How your musical theatre program benefits from the crew member
- 1 way the crew member contributed to this year's musical technical implementation, flow and execution

### Outstanding Stage Manager

Behind every successful production is a skilled stage manager. This award celebrates the organization, dedication, and hard work of a student stage manager. Student stage managers must be involved in the entire production process including supporting auditions, assisting with rehearsal scheduling, and supporting all rehearsals and performances.

To recommend a student for this award, teachers should gather and submit the following:

- Letter of Nomination from director including examples of how the stage manager showed leadership, exemplified the goals of the Spotlight Awards program, and contributed overall to this year's musical.
- At least 2 examples of production documents created by the student stage manager (Examples may include a page from a promptbook including blocking notation and technical cues, props list, costume change plot, rehearsal calendar, call sheets, rehearsal reports, scene change assignments, etc.)
- Written response (1-2 paragraphs) from the nominated student describing their personal techniques utilized to stay organized and ensure quality communication with all involved in the production, and any adjustments that were made during the performance process.

### Outstanding Community Engagement Award

To be eligible for this award, school applications must demonstrate how they integrated their production and its theme/message in a meaningful way to make a difference in their community. This award challenges schools to use their musical productions to creatively make connections, provide services, or engage their community in other unique ways.

When designing a community engagement project, schools are encouraged to consider:

- Was the musical chosen to coincide with a social, economic or community initiative?
- Is there contextual information you are providing to your audience in innovative ways such as post-show discussions, lobby displays or innovative programs with partner organizations?
- How has positive change or learning come about as a direct result of working with the community?
- What will the impact of this production be after the show has closed?

**To apply for this award**, teachers should submit a written summary of your project, 2 photos of the project, and any supplementary materials that demonstrate its implementation. In your summary, please clearly articulate the project's goal, any partners and how it relates to the specific themes or messages of the show you produced.

## OPTIONAL TEACHER NOMINATED AWARDS (CONTINUED)

---

### Outstanding Student Designer

Teachers can nominate student designers by submitting a Letter of Nomination and providing up to 3 work samples that showcase their talents. Students can be nominated for ANY design area of your musical. *Note: Student submissions to the Design Symposium will also count as a nomination for this award. Spotlight Administration may reach out to request any additional information needed to complete the nomination.*

Letter of Nomination should include:

- How the student designer contributed to this year’s musical and exemplifies the goals of the Spotlight Awards program, as well as a description of the design area and work done by the student designer, including how it fit into the Director’s Concept and vision

Sample Options: Work samples may include, but are not limited to, sketches, renderings, models, light plots, sound effects, ground plans, production photos, photos of finished pieces, drafting, research images, etc.

### Founder’s Award *presented by Lipscomb University’s College of Entertainment and the Arts*

Lipscomb University’s Founder’s Award is presented to a student who exhibits a strong sense of community and qualities that exemplify the goals of the Spotlight Awards program. To recommend a student for this award, teachers should submit a Letter of Nomination, as well as a Letter of Nomination from another student.

Letters of Nomination should answer the following topics including specific examples:

- How does the nominee demonstrate consistent dedication, motivation, positive attitude, collaboration, and enthusiasm?
- How does the nominee model respect and create an inclusive and supportive environment for those around them?
- How does the nominee exhibit community engagement in your school and the larger community?

## DIRECTOR SELECTIONS

---

Director Selections for All-Star Cast, All-Star Crew and Lead Performer will be made on the Production Detail Form. Teachers can choose to share these nominations with their students at any time or let them be surprised during the Nominee Announcement.

### All-Star Cast

The All-Star Cast will include 2 students from each school who are nominated by their teachers. The term “all-star” is defined as a group composed of outstanding performers, so nominations should be for 2 students with a standout performance. Members of the All-Star Cast can be in lead, supporting, or ensemble roles.

### All-Star Crew

The All-Star Crew will include 2 students from each school who are nominated by their teachers for crew members that stand out as deserving for demonstrating teamwork, a spirit of camaraderie and collaboration, leadership skills, and hard work.

### Outstanding Lead Performer – Director Selection

Each participating school director will select 1 student for nomination in the Outstanding Lead Performer category, regardless of gender identity, to participate in the Lead Nominee Intensive and perform in the Closing Number at the Awards Ceremony. Details can be found on the following page.

## ELIGIBILITY AND REQUIREMENTS – LEAD PERFORMER NOMINEES

All Lead Performer Nominees are invited to participate in the Lead Performer Intensive Weekend and to perform in the Closing Number at the Awards Ceremony. Detailed information for Lead Performer Nominees can be found in the **Lead Performer information packet**.

### Outstanding Lead Performer Nominations

Outstanding Lead Performer nominations must be based on the National High School Musical Theatre Awards Qualifying Roles list. To view the full list, visit [www.jimmyawards.com](http://www.jimmyawards.com).

- Each participating school director will select 1 student for nomination in the Outstanding Lead Performer category, regardless of gender identity, to participate in the Lead Nominee Intensive and perform in the Closing Number at the Awards Ceremony.
  - **Directors should choose a student that most deserves this nomination, not relying on scores and adjudicators to select them.**
  - Directors have the option to waive this opportunity if they prefer the adjudicators select all of their school nominees.
- Judges may select additional Lead Performer nominees from schools to participate as well.
- The full listing of Lead Performer Nominees will be a combination of teacher selected students and judge selections, regardless of gender identity.

### Lead Nominee Announcement and Acceptance

Award Nominations will be announced on April 17, 2025. Lead Performer Nominees need to accept their nomination by completing an online form by April 23 at 5:00 PM. Otherwise, an alternate candidate will be contacted. Directors will get an email after the announcement on the 17<sup>th</sup> with information for Lead Nominees and their parents, and should forward this information as soon as possible to them.

- Nominees and a Parent/Guardian should complete the online form together.
- Nominees may opt out of their nomination on this form if they do not wish to participate or are not available for rehearsals.

### Next Steps for Lead Nominees

- ✓ All Nominees are invited to participate in the Lead Performer Intensive weekend and to perform in the Closing Number at the Spotlight Awards Ceremony.
  - Lead Performer Intensive will take place April 26-27, 2025, 9:00 AM – 6:00 PM each day
  - Closing Number rehearsals will take place at the Intensive, as well as on the Ceremony day May 17, 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM. Nominees that are unable to attend the rehearsals will not perform in the ceremony.
- ✓ Nominees that wish to be considered for Semifinalist, Finalist and Award Recipient categories must submit an audition video by April 23 for review. Details on this can be found in the Lead Performer Guide.



## OPTIONAL STUDENT SUBMISSIONS - SCHOLARSHIPS

---

There are a few opportunities for students to submit applications/auditions themselves. These elements are open to all participation tracks.

Scholarship Applications will be due by January 15. Scholarship recipients (multiple honorees in each category) will be announced at the Kickoff Celebration on January 25.

### Rising Star Scholarships

Nominations awarded to students in 9<sup>th</sup> grade based on video audition submissions. (Number and type of scholarships provided varies (may include monetary, and/or free registration to camps and workshops.)

Students applying will submit the following materials via dropbox file request.

- Headshot for the nominee – must be high-res jpg files (8"x10 at 300 DPI)
- Resume for the nominee – one (1) page
- Media Release (signed by parent/guardian through DocuSign)
- Audition Video Including:
  1. Student introduction (Name, School, Grade, selected song tiles/show)
  2. 1 song from a Broadway musical, Songs should be between 2-2.5 minutes in length each

### Arts Leadership Scholarships

Nominations will be awarded to graduating seniors planning an arts career who exhibit the highest level of excellence in their craft and embody leadership skills in their school and community. Applications will include student submissions indicated below.

Students applying will submit the following materials via dropbox file request.

- Headshot for the nominee – must be high-res jpg files (8"x10 at 300 DPI)
- Resume for the nominee – one (1) page
- Media Release (signed by student or parent/guardian through DocuSign)
- Teacher Recommendation letter
- Application online, including a brief written description of what leadership means to you
- Topic Response Video Including:
  - Student introduction (Name, School, Grade, selected song tiles/show)
  - Topic Response – Students will submit a 3-5-minute video of themselves responding to the following concepts: *Why is theatre meaningful to you? Why is theatre important in the world today? How do you hope to bring the arts to others in your life/career?*

## OPTIONAL STUDENT SUBMISSION – LEAD PERFORMER FINALIST/WINNER

---

### Lead Nominee Announcement and Acceptance

Award Nominations will be announced on April 17, 2025. Lead Performer Nominees need to accept their nomination by completing an online form by April 23 at 5:00 PM. Otherwise, an alternate candidate will be contacted. Directors will get an email after the announcement on the 17<sup>th</sup> with information for Lead Nominees and their parents and should forward this information as soon as possible to them.

- Nominees and a Parent/Guardian should complete the online form together.
- Nominees may opt out of their nomination on this form if they do not wish to participate or are not available for rehearsals.

### Next Steps for Lead Nominees

- ✓ Nominees that wish to be considered for Semifinalist, Finalist and Award Recipient categories must submit an audition video by April 23 for review.

Details on this can be found in the Lead Performer Guide.

## OPTIONAL STUDENT SUBMISSIONS - OTHER OPPORTUNITIES

---

### Design Symposium Gallery

Student Designers' work will be presented at the annual Design Symposium in March 2025. The Design Symposium will be an artistic display of theatrical design renderings as well as images and displays of fully realized creations. Application will be due January 15. Details can be found in the Community Participation guide and will be provided to participating schools by December.

### Professional Review

Students in all participation tracks may request professional review for video auditions at any time during the year. To do this, students should contact Spotlight Administration at [education@tpac.org](mailto:education@tpac.org) for instructions on submitting their videos. Written feedback will be provided within a week of video submission and will be based on the Audition Rubric found on the Spotlight website.

## SPOTLIGHT AWARDS CEREMONY AT TPAC

---

The Spotlight Awards Ceremony is an inclusive community celebration of arts education that acknowledges outstanding achievement, growth, and artistry in high school musical theatre and provides an opportunity for students to share their art with each other.

### **Time and Place**

The Spotlight Awards Ceremony will take place May 17, 2025, 7:00-10:00 pm in TPAC's Jackson Hall (505 Deaderick Street, Nashville). Doors will open to the public at 6:30 p.m.

### **Awards Ceremony Attire**

The Spotlight Awards is a red-carpet-style event based on the Tony Awards. The dress for this event is formal.

### **Arrival and Seating**

All participating school groups will need to arrive prior to the opening of the house doors. Schools are asked to arrive no later than 5:45 p.m. to check in. We will begin seating schools at 5:45.

### **School Welcome**

All schools should be seated checked in and seated between 5:45-6:15 at the latest. All school attendees will need to be seated and remain seated during this time. We will have a school welcome at 6:20 from the stage to give any needed instructions for the evening, and walk-through backstage paths as needed. At 6:30 p.m. doors will open to the public and school attendees can again move around the space as needed.

### **Transportation**

Bus parking around TPAC will be provided for those bringing school buses. Cars will need to find parking in one of the lots downtown but be aware that many lots do have parking costs. Plan ahead for your parking if you are coming in cars – and remind parents of this as well.

### **Ticketing for Schools**

Schools participating in Adjudication will get a small group of free tickets to the Awards Ceremony in the orchestra level. Additional seats can be purchased for tier or balcony seating. Schools should not expect their entire group to be seated together in the orchestra, regardless of performances or nominations.

### **Ticketing for Guests (Friends, Family and the Public)**

Tickets are very limited for the Spotlight Awards Ceremony beyond the participating school attendees. This event is specifically designed to allow the students and teachers to celebrate and share art with each other., therefore school group tickets will be confirmed before opening any seats to the public. Tickets can be purchased at [www.tpac.org](http://www.tpac.org) once tickets are on sale in the Spring.

### **Award Presentation**

The Spotlight Awards will present both school and individual awards for those participating in the School Adjudication track and will acknowledge both students and teachers. The full outline of the ceremony and award presentations will be provided as we get closer to the ceremony.

## PERFORMANCES DURING THE CEREMONY

---

### School Performances

The 10 selected nominees in the Outstanding Musical category will perform a 3-minute production number. Consider which number best showcases your production and how to remount it on TPAC's stage. Additionally, other performances may be included each year, such as Crowd-Pleaser selections.

### Encore Ensemble

All Community track participants will have the opportunity to include students in the Encore Ensemble performance during the Spotlight Awards Ceremony. Students in the Encore Ensemble will be required to attend rehearsals for this performance.

### Outstanding Lead Performer Finalists

The Outstanding Lead Finalists will each perform a solo from their nominated role during the awards ceremony. Solos should be approximately 2 minutes in length, no longer than 2.5 minutes.

### Closing Number Performance

The group of Outstanding Lead Performer Nominees are invited to perform the closing number of the Awards Ceremony. Lead Nominees will rehearse at the Lead Performer Intensive sessions on April 26-27 and on May 17 at TPAC. Nominees who are unable to attend these events will not perform in the ceremony.

### Costumes and Props

Costume accessories and hand-held props that can be easily transported and kept by the student in their seat may be utilized to suggest character, time, and place if needed. There are no dressing rooms available for changing into costumes. Directors should consider the formal dress of the evening when preparing for performances. Students may need to add tights to their dress or take off shoes for dance numbers.

### Sound Check

All those performing at the awards ceremony are required to attend sound check. Sound checks for Outstanding Lead Performer Finalists will take place around 1:30-2:15 p.m. on May 17. Sound checks for Outstanding Musical will be 10 minutes per school during the evening of May 16 or the afternoon of May 17. Sound check time slots will be assigned the first week of May.

### Technical Elements

No scenic elements will be allowed for the performance. All performances will take place on a bare stage. A lighting "look" will be created for your performance by a TPAC lighting designer based on information provided by the director on the mood of the scene.

### Microphones

Up to 10 handheld mics will be provided to students when they line up backstage Right. These microphones will be returned to a stagehand Stage Left when exiting. There will also be four "shotgun" microphones on the downstage edge of the stage.

### Accompaniment

A piano will be available on stage (Upstage Left) for your use and will not be moved during the event. Schools may choose to supply a musical track or provide their own accompanist. School-provided accompanists will need to be present for sound checks as well as for the ceremony and should be included in your school ticket count for seating.

## SPOTLIGHT AWARDS – ADJUDICATION TRACK CHECKLIST

### DIRECTOR APPRECIATION - SEPTEMBER 7, 2024

- Director Appreciation Event Attendance

### REGISTRATION - SEPTEMBER 16-18, 2024

- Registration includes show title, dates and times, and proof of licensing request
- Registration includes 2 adult contacts, and email for contact signing School Media Release
- Registration complete and submitted by the 18<sup>th</sup>.**

### SEPTEMBER 20, 2024

- Lottery Results Announced

### DUE BY SEPTEMBER 30

- Adjudication track payment due (\$350)
- School Media Release – digitally signed

### DUE BY NOVEMBER 1

- Social Media Takeover Training Video completed (Fall Shows)
- Community Kickoff Celebration – Rough Attendance Count

### DUE BY JANUARY 15, 2025

- Social Media Takeover Training Video completed (Spring Shows)
- Copy of full contract due
- Community Kickoff – Firm Attendance

### JANUARY 15, 2025 (*Student Deadline*)

- Rising Star, Arts Leadership and Design Symposium Applications due*

### JANUARY 25, 2025

- Community Kickoff Celebration Event
- Rising Star and Arts Leadership Scholarships Awarded

### DUE MARCH 31, 2025

- Rough Estimate Ceremony Attendance
- Performance Photos due
- Teacher nominations due

### DUE 2 WEEKS PRIOR TO YOUR SHOW OPENING

- Individual Media Release template completed
- Production Detail Form submitted online
- Adjudicator tickets and programs at will-call for opening under “Jimmy Ward”.
- Digital copy of your show program submitted (including Participation Statement Graphic)

### APRIL 17, 2025

- Nominee Announcement all day on @SpotlightAwards Instagram page
- Share Lead Performer information emails with Lead Nominees and Parents

### APRIL 23, 2025 (*Student Deadline*)

- Lead Performer forms and Video due*

### APRIL 26-27, 2025 (*Student Deadline*)

- Lead Performer Intensive Weekend*

### DUE BY MAY 1, 2025

- Performance Information Form submitted online
- Performance Tracks submitted
- Ceremony Information Form submitted online
- Updated Ceremony Attendance Count

### MAY 16-17 2025

- Sound Check Attendance for School Performances
- Spotlight Awards Ceremony

***\*Failure to submit all required items may result in disqualification from nominations.***

## 2024-2025 SPOTLIGHT AWARDS – SAVE THE DATE INFORMATION

*Check out some of the upcoming events planned for this school year.  
More details will come out for each one along the way.*

### SEPTEMBER 16-18, 2024

Registration and scholarship applications open for all tracks.  
(*Show Review/Community track register through Jan. 15.*)

### SEPTEMBER 19

Vocal Master Class with Natalie Weiss  
<https://natalieweissofficial.com/>

### SEPTEMBER 20, 2024

Adjudication lottery selection

### NOVEMBER 6, 2024

Performance Window Opening (*Ends – April 12, 2025*)

### NOVEMBER 6, 2024, 7:30 PM

Invited Dress Rehearsal for MTSU's performance of *She Loves Me*.

### NOVEMBER 11, 4:30-6 PM

Acting Master Class with Ashley Nicole Anderson  
*\*Some will need to have a prepared monologue or song.*

### NOVEMBER 12, 2024, 7:30 PM

Invited Dress Rehearsal for Belmont University's performance of *Twelfth Night*.

### DECEMBER 10, 5-6:30 PM

Master Class with Laura Michelle Kelly  
<https://www.lauramichellekelly.net/>

### DECEMBER 17, 2024

Spotlight SINGS! Support our program and join us for this fantastic night of Broadway and Winter songs performed by our talented Spotlight Society Alumni members.

### JANUARY 17-18, 2025

Thespian Conference – Come visit us in our sessions

### JANUARY 25, 2025

Spotlight Awards Community Kickoff Event

### FEBRUARY 6, 2025 5:00 PM

Director Orientation Refresher (Virtual)  
Optional Orientation Refresher – For those that need a refresher on the requirements for the Spring semester.

### FEBRUARY 10, 2025

Bloody Valentine Event, hosted by Rockvale High School

### FEBRUARY 12, 2025

Virtual Panel with Spotlight Alumni in the theatre business and on tour!

### FEBRUARY 2025

Master Class TBD

### FEBRUARY 26, 2025, 7:30 PM

Invited Dress Rehearsal for MTSU's *Our Town*

### MARCH 2025

Master Class TBD

### MARCH 27-31, 2025

Design Symposium at Tennessee State University  
Gallery Opening Reception for designers and guests on  
March 28, 5:00 PM.

### APRIL 12, 2025

Performance Window Closes

### APRIL 17, 2025

Nominee Announcement on the @SpotlightAwards  
Instagram page throughout the day

### APRIL 26-27, 2025

Lead Nominee Intensive - All Outstanding Lead Performer  
Nominees will attend a weekend of getting to know each  
other, rehearsals, workshops and auditions.

### APRIL 28, 2025

Finalists and Parents Meeting - Finalists will be announced  
on April 28, and we will hold a meeting for those Finalists  
and their parents/guardians to go over the additional  
schedule and submissions.

### APRIL 28, 2025

Virtual Master Class with Telly Leung  
<https://www.tellyleung.com/bio>

### May 5, 2025

Virtual Master Class with Adam Kantor

### MAY 14-16, 2025

Encore Ensemble (Community and Alumni Performance)  
and Lead Nominee Closing Number Rehearsals

### MAY 16-17, 2025

Sound Checks for School Performances

### MAY 17, 2025

Lead Nominee Rehearsal 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM  
Schools arrive to be seated 5:45 PM  
School Welcome 6:15 PM  
Spotlight Awards Ceremony – 7:00-10:00 PM

