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Starlight Celebrates Area High School Students with 2026 Blue Star Awards Ceremony



Starlight's 24th Annual Blue Star Awards Ceremony was held Thursday, May 21, 2026.

KANSAS CITY, Mo. – Starlight is pleased to share the 2025-26 Blue Star Awards winners, who were just announced in a red-carpet ceremony at Starlight Theatre Thursday, May 21. Thirty seven winners took home the top prizes in 32 categories, and \$10,000 in monetary prizes were awarded to deserving high school students. The ceremony also featured 10 onstage performances.

Modeled after Broadway's Tony Awards®, Starlight's annual Blue Star Awards recognize achievement and excellence in musical theatre among Kansas City area high school students. In the 2025-26 Blue Star Awards season, 66 schools and 5,100 metro students participated, making it one of the largest and most respected high school musical awards programs in the nation.

The 2026 Blue Star Awards were made possible by an anonymous donor with support from Jeff Ayers, The Jeannette & Jerome Cohen Philanthropic Fund of the Jewish Community Foundation of Greater Kansas City, The Mary Elizabeth Martin Scholarship Trust US Bank N.A., Trustee, and Starlight's community engagement program benefactors.

In order of announcement at the Blue Star Awards Ceremony, the full list of winners can be found below.

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2025-26 Blue Star Awards Winners

Ceremony Ensemble

Central - Macormick Carlson

Liberty North - Lainey Beaty

Park Hill - Chamberlain Webster

St. Teresa's Academy - Lainey McManamy

Community Impact Award

De Soto

Creative Contribution Award

Olathe West - Lydia Treff for Choreography

Technical Contribution Award

Olathe West - Teddy Garcia for Publicity and Marketing

Dream Production Award

Liberty - Hannah Mees for Direction

Rising Star Scholarship – Sophomore

Pembroke Hill - Cecilia Miller

Rising Star Scholarship – Junior

Blue Valley Southwest - Aliyah Lawrence

Rising Star Scholarship – Senior

Blue Springs - Cailey Petersen

Student Reporter

Fort Osage - Malia Arnold

Lee's Summit North - Jake Johnson

Jimmy Awards – Best Actor

Megan Sheehan

Park Hill South High School

Jesus Christ Superstar

Jimmy Awards – Best Actress

Charlotte Sweet

Platte County High School

Disney's *Newsies*

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Orchestra – Tier I

Lawrence Free State - *The Addams Family Musical (School Edition)*

Orchestra – Tier II

Olathe Northwest - *Mean Girls High School Version*

Scenic Design – Tier I

Excelsior Springs - Disney's *The Little Mermaid*

Scenic Design – Tier II

Central - *Footloose*

Lighting Design – Tier I

Lawrence Free State - *The Addams Family Musical (School Edition)*

Lighting Design – Tier II

Liberty - *The Phantom of the Opera*

Costume Design – Tier I

Belton - Disney's *Descendants: The Musical*

Costume Design – Tier II

Olathe East - *Between the Lines*

Hair & Makeup Design – Tier I

Platte County - Disney's *Newsies*

Hair & Makeup Design – Tier II

Park Hill South - *Jesus Christ Superstar*

Technical Crew – Tier I

Raymore-Peculiar - *Pippin* - Costume Crew

Technical Crew – Tier II

Liberty - *The Phantom of the Opera* - Set Crew

Performer in a Lead Role – Tier I

Ruskin - *The Prince of Egypt* - Desmond Walker III as Moses

Performer in a Lead Role – Tier II

Liberty - *The Phantom of the Opera* - Olivia Dolton as Christine Daaé

Performer in a Supporting Role – Tier I

Raytown - *Hadestown: Teen Edition* - Cameron Ritchie as Hermes

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Performer in a Supporting Role – Tier II

Liberty North - *Mean Girls High School Version* - Jillian Downing as Janis Sarkisian

Performer in a Featured Role – Tier I

Lawrence Free State - *The Addams Family Musical (School Edition)* - Harper York as Grandma

Performer in a Featured Role – Tier II

Blue Valley Northwest - *Grease* - Ryan Peterson as Doody

Ensemble – Tier I

Platte County - Disney's *Newsies*

Ensemble – Tier II

Blue Springs South - *Anything Goes*

Overall Production – Tier I

Platte County - Disney's *Newsies*

Overall Production – Tier II

Liberty - *The Phantom of the Opera*

About Starlight

Opened as a theatre in 1950 and a nonprofit organization in 1951, Starlight is the largest and oldest performing arts organization in Kansas City, Missouri, and connects our community through live arts experiences that entertain, inspire, and engage audiences of all ages. Offering diverse programming year-round, Starlight presents Broadway musicals, concert events, and extensive community engagement programming, including arts access initiatives, scholarships, school partnerships, and one of the most well-regarded high school musical theatre award programs in the nation. Located on 16 acres in Swope Park, the historic, city-owned venue is the second-largest outdoor producing theatre in the country with almost 8,000 seats. Follow Starlight on social media @kcstarlight and visit kcstarlight.com for more information.

Starlight is supported in part by the City of Kansas City, Missouri Neighborhood Tourist Development Fund.

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