

**TWENTY NATIONAL YOUNGARTS FOUNDATION WINNERS
FROM 12 STATES REPRESENTING 9 ARTISTIC DISCIPLINES
NAMED 2014 U.S. PRESIDENTIAL SCHOLARS IN THE ARTS**

50th Anniversary of the U.S. Presidential Scholars Program

U.S. Presidential Scholars in the Arts will present their work to the public through an exhibition at The Smithsonian Institution and a performance directed by Tony-Award winning choreographer and YoungArts Artistic Advisor Bill T. Jones at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts

MIAMI, FL (May 5, 2014) –The [National YoungArts Foundation](http://www.nationalyoungarts.org) (YoungArts) congratulates the 50th class of U.S. Presidential Scholars, announced today by U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan. The 20 Scholars in the Arts, all 2014 YoungArts Winners, were nominated to The White House Commission on Presidential Scholars by YoungArts, and selected based on academic, civic and artistic achievement. The award, presented on behalf of the President of the United States, is the highest honor that can be bestowed upon an artistically talented graduating high school senior. Each year, up to 141 high school seniors are recognized as U.S. Presidential Scholars for their accomplishments.

“The National YoungArts Foundation is proud to honor and celebrate the 2014 U.S. Presidential Scholars and the 50th Anniversary of this remarkable program,” said Paul T. Lehr, President & CEO of the National YoungArts Foundation. “YoungArts has a long and rich history with this high honor, and our role as the sole nominating organization for the art awards is a cherished responsibility.”

The 2014 U.S. Presidential Scholars in the Arts represent 12 states from across the country, and are filmmakers, dancers, photographers, classical and jazz musicians, actors, visual artists, singers and writers. They join an illustrious group which includes Tony Award-nominated dancer and choreographer Desmond Richardson, American Ballet Theatre Chief Executive Officer Rachel Moore, novelist and National Book Award Finalist Allegra Goodman, Grammy Award-nominated violinist Jennifer Koh, BRAVO’s “Work of Art” winner Abdi Farah, OBIE Award-winning actress Donna Lynne Champlin, and recording artist Chris Young.

U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan said, “The extraordinary young men and women being honored for the 50th anniversary of the Presidential Scholars have excelled in their educational, artistic and civic pursuits. They show all of us that when students challenge themselves and commit themselves to excellence, the results can be astounding. These scholars will help move our country forward and will have a lasting impact on their families, communities, and on our society. They represent the potential of all young citizens to lift up America.”

During the National Recognition Program on **Sunday, June 22**, all Scholars will be honored at an award ceremony in Washington, D.C. and presented with a Presidential Scholar Medallion.

On **Monday, June 23 at 8pm**, the Scholars in the Arts specializing in dance, jazz, theater, music, and voice will participate in "A Salute to the U.S. Presidential Scholars," a free public performance that celebrates all of the awardees directed by Tony Award-winner, dancer, choreographer and YoungArts Artistic Advisor Bill T. Jones at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts Concert Hall. The performance will be streamed live on PBS' Facebook page (www.facebook.com/pbs) and YoungArts' website (www.youngarts.org).

On **Tuesday, June 24 at 7:30pm** an exhibition of the work of the visual artists, writers and cinematic arts scholars will open at The Smithsonian Institution, S. Dillon Ripley Center and will remain on view through August 7.

The 2014 U.S. Presidential Scholars in the Arts are:

<i>Name</i>	<i>Hometown</i>	<i>School</i>	<i>Discipline</i>
Hanel Baveja	Ann Arbor, MI	Ann Arbor-Huron High School	Writing – Poetry
Gabriela Campo	Glendale, CA	Los Angeles County High School for the Arts	Theater – Spoken & Musical
Anna DeLoi	Plaistow, NH	DeLoi Home School	Classical Music – Harp
Thomas Doelger	West Hartford, CT	Hall High School	Theater – Musical
Joseph Ewatuya	Allen, TX	Booker T. Washington High School for the Performing & Visual Arts	Voice – Jazz
Angela Francis	Los Angeles, CA	Bishop Montgomery High School	Photography
Eden Girma	Madison, WI	Middleton High School	Voice – Jazz
Anna Han	Chandler, AZ	Arizona Virtual Academy	Classical Music – Piano
Coleman Hughes	West Orange, NJ	Newark Academy	Jazz – Trombone
Paloma Izquierdo	Miami, FL	Design & Architecture Senior High School	Visual Arts
Alicia Lai	State College, PA	State College Area High School	Writing – Poetry
Reagan Lukefahr	Houston, TX	University of North Carolina School of the Arts	Theater – Spoken
Liana Murray	Asheville, NC	Asheville High School	Visual Arts
Lance Oppenheim	Southwest Ranches, FL	Pine Crest School	Cinematic Arts
Isabella Pezzulo	Lake Worth, FL	Alexander W Dreyfoos School of the Arts	Visual Arts
Amanda Prager	Short Hills, NJ	Millburn High School	Cinematic Arts
Michael Stromile	Lancaster, TX	Booker T. Washington High School for the Performing & Visual Arts	Dance – Modern

Thomas West	Lookout Mountain, TN	The McCallie School	Voice – Baritone
Annie Wu	Pleasanton, CA	Foothill High School	Classical Music – Flute
Connor Yockus	Coral Springs, FL	The North Broward Preparatory Schools	Dance – Tap

Photos and bios are available upon request. Interviews can be facilitated.

This year **from June 16 to 23**, leading up to the National Recognition Program, YoungArts will present its seven night performance series [YoungArts@KennedyCenter on Millenium Stage](#), featuring YoungArts Alumni and former U.S. Presidential Scholars in the Arts. Performance highlights include King Pony, a jazz fusion band made up entirely of YoungArts Alumni, featuring Grace Weber and Kenyon Adams; the National Symphony Orchestra with cellist Peter Eom; a series of original theater scenes performed by Michelle Ang, Analisa Guitierrez, Steven Lee Johnson, Blaine Krauss, Michael Silberblatt and Devyn Tyler; the YoungArts Jazz Band featuring bassist and singer Zachary Ostroff; a hip-hop, tap and Irish Step Dance collaborative work showcasing the talent of Ernest Baker, Dan Mitra, and Garrett Coleman performing with musicians Mark Whitfield Jr. on drums and Dave Eggar on cello; a violin recital by Caroline Campbell; and flamenco dance by Alice Blumenfeld.

U.S. PRESIDENTIAL SCHOLARS IN THE ARTS PUBLIC EVENTS

Monday, June 23, 2014 at 8:00 p.m. / A Salute to the 2014 U.S. Presidential Scholars

An Evening of Performances by the 2014 U.S. Presidential Scholars in the Arts Directed by Bill T. Jones

The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts / Concert Hall

2700 F Street NW, Washington, D.C.

Performance at the Kennedy Center will be streamed live on PBS' Facebook page (www.facebook.com/pbs) and YoungArts' website (www.youngarts.org).

Event is FREE and open to the public, but tickets are required.

To reserve tickets, call the U.S. Presidential Scholars line after **June 2** at (202) 401-0961 or email presidential.scholars@ed.gov.

General public tickets can be picked up at the U.S. Presidential Scholars Will Call table in front of the Kennedy Center Concert Hall on **Monday, June 23**, starting at 6:45 p.m. Tickets not picked up by 7:45 p.m. will be released on a first-come, first-served basis.

Tuesday, June 24, 2014 at 7:30 pm / An Exhibition of Works

Exhibition of Artwork, Readings and Screenings by the 2014 U.S. Presidential Scholars in the Arts

The Smithsonian Institution,

S. Dillon Ripley Center, 1100 Jefferson Dr. SW

No RSVP or tickets required. Exhibition will be on view through August 7, 2014.

BECOMING A U.S. PRESIDENTIAL SCHOLAR IN THE ARTS

The first step to becoming a U.S. Presidential Scholar in the Arts is to apply to the National YoungArts Foundation. To be eligible for YoungArts, applicants must be between the ages of 15 and 18 or in high

school grades 10-12 (as of December 1, 2014), but to be further considered for a nomination as a U.S. Presidential Scholar, applicants must be high school seniors and meet all of the U.S. Presidential Scholars requirements. The 2015 YoungArts application is currently open and available online at www.youngarts.org/apply until **October 17, 2014**.

YoungArts Winners demonstrating excellence in the visual, literary, performing or design arts are selected annually through a blind adjudication process. From this pool, approximately 170 Finalists from across the nation are invited to National YoungArts Week in Miami each January, where winners participate in a week of intensive master classes and workshops with internationally renowned artists, and have the opportunity to share their work in performances, readings, exhibitions and screenings that are open to the public. During National YoungArts Week and YoungArts' regional programs, eligible students are further evaluated, award levels are determined, and nominations are made for that year's U.S. Presidential Scholars in the Arts.

If students have any questions, they can reach programming staff at (305) 377-1140 or apply@youngarts.org.

ABOUT U.S. PRESIDENTIAL SCHOLARS

In 1964, the U.S. Presidential Scholars Program was established by executive order of President Lyndon B. Johnson to recognize and honor the nation's top graduating high school seniors. In 1979, the program was extended to recognize students who demonstrated shining talent in the visual, creative and performing arts.

Scholars are selected annually by the United States Department of Education and the White House Commission on Presidential Scholars, appointed by the President, based on their academic success, artistic excellence, essays, school evaluations and transcripts, as well as evidence of community service, leadership, and demonstrated commitment to high ideals. This year, more than 3,900 candidates qualified for the 2014 program determined by outstanding performance on the College Board SAT and ACT exams, and through nominations made by Chief State School Officers or the National YoungArts Foundation.

Since its inception the U.S. Presidential Scholars Program has honored more than 6,000 of the nation's top-performing students. During the National Recognition Program excited scholars are flown to D.C. to receive a Presidential Medallion which is given to honorees during the annual ceremony in Washington, D.C. The scholars are also provided the opportunity to attend educational briefings, visit museums, monuments, attend performances, receptions and ceremonies.

The 2014 U.S. Presidential Scholars are comprised of one young man and one young woman from each state, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico, and from U.S. families living abroad, as well as 15 chosen at-large and 20 U.S. Presidential Scholars in the Arts.

To be selected as a U.S. Presidential Scholar in the Arts, candidates must be a senior in high school, and participate in and receive a nomination from the National YoungArts Foundation. Each year, YoungArts receives more than 11,000 applications. After a rigorous adjudication process, YoungArts nominates 60

awardees for further consideration to the White House Commission on Presidential Scholars. Finally, the Commission on Presidential Scholars select up to 20 U.S. Presidential Scholars in the Arts each year.

ABOUT THE NATIONAL YOUNGARTS FOUNDATION

The National YoungArts Foundation was established in 1981 by Lin and Ted Arison to identify and support the next generation of artists, and to contribute to the cultural vitality of the nation by investing in the artistic development of talented young artists in the visual, literary, performing and design arts. YoungArts provides emerging artists with life-changing experiences with renowned mentors, access to significant scholarships, national recognition, and other opportunities throughout their careers to help ensure that the nation's most outstanding emerging artists are encouraged to pursue careers in the arts.

To date, YoungArts has honored more than 20,000 young artists with over \$6 million in monetary awards; facilitated in excess of \$150 million in college scholarship opportunities; and enabled its participants to work with master teachers who are among the most distinguished artists in the world, such as Mikhail Baryshnikov, Plácido Domingo, Renée Fleming, Frank Gehry, Denyce Graves, Bill T. Jones, Quincy Jones, Joan Lader, Rosie Perez, Robert Redford, Martin Scorsese, Marisa Tomei, Kathleen Turner, and Rebecca Walker.

YoungArts alumni who have gone on to become leading professionals in their fields include actresses Vanessa Williams, Viola Davis, and Kerry Washington; actor, musician, and filmmaker Adrian Grenier; four-time Tony Award nominee Raúl Esparza; Chief Executive Officer of American Ballet Theatre Rachel Moore; recording artists Nicki Minaj and Chris Young; musicians Terence Blanchard, Eric Owens, and Jennifer Koh; choreographer Desmond Richardson; visual artist Hernan Bas; and internationally acclaimed multimedia artist Doug Aitken.

[Watch a brief video about YoungArts](#)

www.youngarts.org



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